

DISSERTATION

MAPPING THE JOURNEY TOWARD THE PRINCIPALSHIP:  
A MIXED METHODS DESIGN

Submitted by

Cerissa Stevenson

School of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Summer 2008

UMI Number: 3332737

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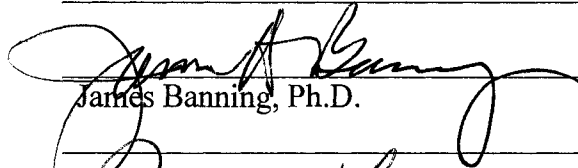
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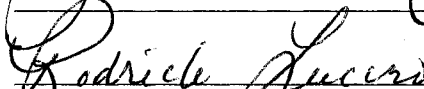
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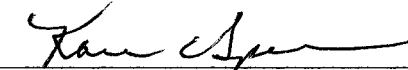
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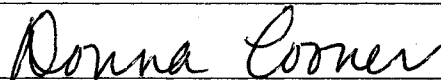
Committee on Graduate Work

  
Gene Gloeckner, Ph.D.

  
James Banning, Ph.D.

  
Rodrick Lucero, Ph.D.

  
Karen Spencer, Ph.D.

  
Advisor: Donna Cooner, Ed.D.

  
Department Head/Director: Timothy Davies, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

MAPPING THE JOURNEY TOWARD THE PRINCIPALSHIP:

A MIXED METHODS DESIGN

The intent of this study is to learn about principal intern perceptions of their grasp of the eleven identified state principal standards for Colorado. Three components of principal preparation programs were isolated for this study: standards, internships, and reflection. Journey Mapping, “a real-time internet-based reporting system that promotes reflective practice and continuous learning for students” (Westmoreland, 2003, p.1), supported the reflective process and data collection. Principal interns logged on at regular intervals and completed open-ended questions (identifying successes, challenges and concerns) and rated themselves on their knowledge of principal standards on a six-point scale. Longitudinal data from two academic years and three principal cohorts were collected. The design was a concurrent triangulation mixed methods design (QUANT + QUAL). The quantitative analysis for this inquiry was a non-experimental comparative approach. The qualitative analysis was done using template analysis. Matrices were created using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, which aided in the mixed analysis.

Data were analyzed based on time of journal entry (initial, mid-year, and final), gender, and years of experience. A statistically significant difference for initial to mid-year and mid-year to final scores was found. There was not a statistically significant difference between male and female participants and their overall scores. A mixed ANOVA also showed a statistically significant increase of scores over time, however, the other factors, years of experience and gender, were not found to have a significant

interaction with overall scores. All standards were addressed throughout the journal entries under specific categories: successes, challenges, and concerns. While there were a few areas of improvement discovered (e.g. more practice with *Supervision of Personnel and Resources*), this analysis revealed the increased knowledge gained during the principal internship. Several standards; *Foundations of Leadership*, *Contextual Understanding*, *Planning and Organization*, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction*, and *Supervision of Student Conduct*, were especially strengths gained from the internships. Few differences were discovered through the narratives for gender. Challenges varied for the different levels of experience, but not for successes or concerns.

Results of this study revealed the value of the combination of internships, standards, and reflection in preparing future principals.

Cerissa Stevenson  
School of Education  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523  
Summer 2008

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Donna Cooner. Her wisdom, guidance, and support have been invaluable, as she has guided me through this journey. She has afforded me countless opportunities to grow professionally and personally. She is an inspiration to me.

I would also like to thank the methodologists on my committee, Dr. James Banning and Dr. Gene Gloeckner. I appreciate their willingness and patience in assisting me through the data analysis process. They also supported me in using a mixed methods design, which was relatively new for Colorado State University.

I thank Dr. Rodrick Lucero and Dr. Karen Spencer for their time and commitment to serving on my committee.

I am very grateful for the unwavering support from my husband, Mark Stevenson Jr. His love, patience, and understanding kept me going when I needed it most. Not to mention his willingness to listen when I needed to process ideas (often on late night walks).

My parents, grandparents, family and friends have supported me throughout this journey as well. I appreciate their patience and understanding while I've spent time working towards this goal, and have not always been available to them.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Today's principals are faced with many challenges. They are no longer solely managers of a school. He/she is expected to be an instructional leader, who facilitates collaboration, builds cohesion among all stakeholders, and influences student achievement (Robertson, 2000; Wilmore, 2002). In their international study, Bush and Jackson (2002) found "the connection between the quality of leadership and school effectiveness is demonstrated by research in many parts of the world" (p. 417). A correlation between principals and student achievement has also been examined in a quantitative analysis of 30 years of research and a large effect was found (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). This further supports the need for effective school leadership. Tucker and Judy (2002) write, "We need people who can lead and manage the school to much higher levels of student achievement at little or no increase in cost, in an environment in which they have much less control over the key factors that determine the outcome than similarly situated leaders and managers in most other fields" (p. 4). A result of this increased demand on principals is the need for principal preparation programs to prepare their students accordingly.

### Statement of the Research Problem

Critiques of principal preparation programs however, disclose principals are not being prepared to lead in today's educational system. Reported shortages of principals reveal a lack of qualified candidates not a lack of certified candidates (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, & Hill, 2003). Programs have been identified as having failed to keep pace with the changing demands of society (Hess & Kelly, 2006; Fullan, 1998). Although efforts to improve principal preparation began in 1987-1993 through the Department of

Educational Administration Development Program (LEAD) (Hale & Moorman, 2003), criticism remains prevalent. In Arthur Levine's report, which is widely discussed and quoted, he expresses his view of current principal preparation programs,

...many university-based programs designed to prepare the next generation of educational leaders are engaged in a counterproductive 'race to the bottom,' in which they compete for students by lowering admission standards, watering down coursework, and offering faster less demanding degrees (2005, p.10).

Levine goes on to criticize the intentions of many of those entering the program.

Districts often offer higher pay to teachers who complete university credits and obtain advanced degrees. This results in many students who have no intention of pursuing the principalship, yet they are enrolled in principal licensure programs. Jianping, Cooley, and Wegenke, however, discovered the rationale for seeking principal positions to be much more complex (2004).

Although criticism is pervasive, many programs have made efforts to improve. Holloman, Rouse, Ringler, and Bradshaw (2007) found in their study on the quality vs. quantity of principal candidates and preparation programs that, "although there has been criticism of programs, many have used input from leaders in local school districts to make improvements...principal programs across the nation have redesigned their programs to provide theory, knowledge, and practices to develop effective school principals" (p.4). Because preparing principals, particularly in the current context, is very complex, several components of improvement efforts could be examined (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002). Narrowing the scope to a few aspects for analysis is germane. Researchers can better isolate variables and develop suggestions for principal preparation when the inquiry is focused. Standards, internships and reflective practices, are prevalent

in preparation programs (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2001; Williamson & Hudson, 2001) therefore the combination of the three will be the focus of this inquiry.

## Standards

The standards movement in the United States, the implementation of educational leadership standards, and the influence of standards on principal preparation are all aspects for consideration. Standards have become a part of American education from pre Kindergarten to the university level (Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000; Ravitch, 1995). They were established for educational leadership in late 1990s (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). The Interstate Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards are the most widely used. In a recent policy analysis, Roach (2007) discovered the ISLLC standards had been adopted by nearly all 50 states. The Interstate Leadership Licensure Consortium designed the standards to promote improvement in educational leadership. In the discussion on the rationale for developing the ISLLC standards, Joseph Murphy (2005) states “considerably more effort needed to be devoted to developing alternative blueprints that might be productive to follow in rebuilding school administration and in securing and arranging the raw material to be employed in the construction process” (p. 158). Murphy goes on to clarify the research used to determine the standards. Few studies since their inception, however, have been completed to examine the influence of standards on principal preparation (Levine, 2005).

## Internships

The internship experience is an important, if not necessary, aspect of principal preparation (Wilmore, 2002). During the discussions of the Executive Committee of the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) on recognizing signature

pedagogy for educational leadership preparation they determined a necessary component for licensure to be the internship experience (Black, & Murtadha, n.d.). The internship concept is grounded in the need to blend principal leadership theory and practice for participants. Critics of principal preparation programs have also recognized the importance of the internship, or field-based experiences (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Levine, 2005; Williamson & Hudson, 2001). Brown-Ferrigno and Rodney Muth report, “preparing future school leaders requires that candidates be immersed in authentic learning activities that produce real products used by schools where the work is conducted” (2004, p. 476). Although internships contribute to quality principal preparation, downfalls have been recognized. The ideal internship “(such as the Educational Leadership UTA program at the University of Texas at Arlington) is a full-time, year-long paid internship” (Wilmore, 2002, p.105). Most participants, however, are teaching full time while completing their internships at their home schools (Levine, 2005). There is rarely the opportunity to seek out a principal in another building. Successful internships have master principals who are also quality mentors. An excellent principal or excellent mentor alone does not have the same impact (Williamson & Hudson, 2001). When internships are limited to completion at the home schools, it becomes problematic; there is truly no guarantee for the quality of the internship experience.

## Reflection

The process of reflection, however, has been identified as a way to positively enrich internship experiences. It provides interns with the opportunity to reflect on neutral ground (Williamson & Hudson, 2001). It also has been identified as an

important exercise in learning and retaining information (Gilley & Maycunich-Gilley, 2003, hooks, 2003). Reflective journaling over time is one way to guide the interns through this kind of reflective process.

### Journey Mapping

Reflection, however, has been difficult to monitor and assess (Cooner, Dickman, & Dugan, 2006). Journey Mapping (Kibel, 2004) is a resource that may help rectify the issues of assessment and data collection. Researcher Donna Westmoreland describes Journey Mapping as “a real-time internet-based reporting system that promotes reflective practice and continuous learning for student” (2003, p.1). The Journey Mapping program allows for flexibility in questioning and analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative data can be collected. In this study principal interns logged on at regular intervals throughout their internship to an Internet journaling site, with the Journey Mapping framework, and responded to a set of open-ended questions and Likert type scaled questions.

The combination of standards, internships and documentation of learning is especially complex. By examining principal intern perspectives over time using a mixed methods approach, the principal internship experience can be better understood. With this understanding, researchers can better isolate variables and develop suggestions for improving principal preparation. Preparation programs can be designed to ensure more appropriate preparation for principals. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate both scaled scores and narratives from open-ended questions via the Journey Mapping program to measure perceived standards acquisition and analyze reflection throughout the principal internship experience.

## Purpose Statement

The intent of this study is to learn about principal intern perceptions of their grasp of the identified state principal standards for Colorado. A triangulation mixed methods design was used, a type of design in which different but complementary data is collected on the same topic. In this study, survey data was used to measure the interaction between factors (e.g. gender and years of experience) and Likert-type scaled scores. Concurrent with this data collection, qualitative open-ended journal questions were used to explore the factors for principal intern perceptions' of standards acquisition at Colorado State University. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was to best answer the research questions. One approach alone was not considered sufficient.

## Research Questions

For decades principal preparation programs have been faced with criticism (Bridges, 1977; Cooper & Boyd, 1987; Crowson & McPherson, 1987; Griffiths, 1988; Levine, 2005; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1989), however, there continues to be a deficit of empirical evaluation of such programs. A longitudinal, in-depth analysis of perceived standards acquisition via the internship journaling experience will add to the principal preparation knowledge base. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate principal intern perceptions of their grasp of the identified state principal standards for Colorado.

With the focus of inquiry being on standards acquisition during principal internships, the research questions were:

1. What are the differences between initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
2. What are the differences between male and female students in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
3. Is there an interaction between teaching experience and gender in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores for the principal interns?
4. What standards are recognized as part of what worked well and was successful during the internship?
5. What standards are recognized as part of challenging situations during the internship?
6. What standards are recognized as part of concerns during the internship?
7. How does gender and years of teaching experience influence the placement of standards mentioned; success, challenge or concern?
8. To what extent do the open-ended themes support the scaled scores results?

#### Definition of Terms

CSU Principal Internship – This term refers to the internship guided by the Colorado Principal standards comprised of a 300 hour experience completed at either the elementary (Kindergarten-6) level or secondary (6-12) level. Artifacts are compiled into a portfolio demonstrating competencies in each standard.

ELCC Standards - This term refers to the Educational Leadership Constituent Council's standards which were merged with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) with the purpose of better preparing school principals and further develop working principals.

Interns -This term refers to the participants in the study.

ISLLC Standards – This term refers to the Interstate Leadership Licensure Consortium standards finalized in 1996 with the intention of improving educational leadership.

Journey Mapping - This term refers to an on-line program designed to facilitate reflection over time. Both quantitative scaled questions and open-ended questions are used.

Likert-type scaled scores – This term refers to the traditional Likert 5-point attitudinal scale, however, a 6 point scale is used with modified wording.

Mentor Principal – This term refers to the designated principal to work with, guide, and provide learning experiences for a principal intern.

Mixed Methods – This term refers to the use of both quantitative and qualitative data to best answer a particular research question. The quantitative and qualitative data are collected within the same study, and both sets are analyzed with an effort to mix the two in the final analysis.

Pragmatist – This term refers to those who believe multiple paradigms can be used to answer a research question (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

Standards acquisition – This term refers to the gained knowledge outlined in the principal standards to ensure the preparation for the principalship.

Triangulation (for mixed methodology) – This term refers to a type of research design in which different but complementary data will be collected concurrently on the same topic.

### Delimitations

The study is delimited to Colorado State University's principal preparation program. Students from the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 academic years participated in the study.

### Potential Limitations

The sample examined is from one university principal preparation program. The nature of self reported data might affect the relationships found in the analysis. It is assumed participants have honestly and accurately assessed their knowledge of the standards. Although there is no control over the population, it should be noted that each participant in the study has met the set admission standards and has been accepted into



the program. All principal interns were required to complete 300 hours of internship responsibilities. During the internship year, there was no control over the number of quality of experiences encountered by the principal interns. Each intern was at a different school with a different mentor principal.

Another limitation to the study is the need for the use of the Colorado Principal Standards versus the ISLLC Standards, which would increase generalizability. The interns are required to demonstrate knowledge of the Colorado Principal Standards as a requirement of the state licensure program; therefore it is not appropriate to use the ISLLC standards. The Colorado standards predate the ISLLC standards because they were established in 1994. The ISLLC standards were finalized in 1996 (Murphy, 2005). The researcher, however, has linked the eleven Colorado standards to the ISLLC standards. See Appendix A. The Colorado Principal Standards emphasize the need for understanding the Colorado Model Content Standards for students. “This explicit link between the student and administrator standards, presumably, promotes a specific focus on student learning as defined in Colorado in a way that the generic ISLLC standards cannot” (Roach, 2007, p.11). This analysis from Virginia Roach supports linking the more specific Colorado standards to the more general ISLLC standards (Appendix A).

### Significance

Because of the need for empirical inquiry of principal preparation programs, one form of data was not considered sufficient to answer the research questions. The combination of standards, internships and documentation of learning is also rather complex. Therefore, a mixed methods design was utilized. Using both quantitative and qualitative data will allow for a more thorough analysis than if one were used

individually. Suggestions and implications will not be descriptive in nature; rather they will be from empirical analysis, which is greatly needed. This comprehensive study has the potential to significantly contribute to the understanding of preparing future principals.

### Researcher's Perspective

My aspirations include pursuing an elementary school principal position therefore; I completed the Colorado State University Principal Licensure and Master's in Educational Leadership program in 2004. Although I did not use the Journey Mapping program, I did complete the 300-hour internship. I have admiration for the program chair, and had a positive experience throughout the program. I utilized the systematic analysis of the data to control for my bias. This included following the quantitative analysis guidelines for a non-experimental comparative approach of inquiry (Creswell, 2002; Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2005; Morgan, Gliner, & Harmon, 2006; Morgan, Leech, Gloekner, & Barret, 2004). For the qualitative analysis multiple cases (three cohorts and two academic years) will be analyzed. Miles and Huberman (1994) state "the aim of studying multiple cases is to increase generalizability, reassuring yourself that the events and processes in one well-described setting are not wholly idiosyncratic" (p.172). The analytical deductive coding (template analysis) will be the approach used to analyze the journal entries. The established codes prior to analysis were the principal standards.

The NVivo 7 computer assisted qualitative data analysis software was used to perform the initial coding, as well as for creating matrices to examine both the quantitative and qualitative data together. The use of NVivo 7 for mixed analysis was guided by the workshop presented at the annual Mixed Methods Conference (Pare', 2007).

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

The definition of the principalship continues to change as the context of education changes; i.e. greater accountability, high-stakes testing and market competition. There is a constant stream of political and social pressure to reform education. Educational leaders are called to meet the demands of high-stakes improvement. This in turn, has increased the need to prepare future educational leaders with a different approach than previously established, or to examine what is established with a different lens. As a result, principal preparation programs have been called to reform. The perceived reluctance and slowness to change has been met with overwhelming criticism. The preparation of principals, however, is very complex and there is an overall deficit of empirical inquiry on the subject. An overview of the principalship, principal preparation programs and the components: standards, internships, and reflection will be presented. Although many aspect of principal preparation could be considered, it was determined to narrow the review to the three. Standards and internships are particularly prominent in principal preparation programs and reflection has been identified as an essential element to better prepare principals. Including all aspects of principal preparation programs would be unrealistic for the purpose of an individual study; therefore, the focus was narrowed to the three.

### The Principalship

The job description of school principals has changed dramatically. Beyond the traditional administrative roles of a principal they are now expected to be “accountable

instructional leaders, constructive political leaders, and responsible managers” (Normore, 2004, p. 107). Tucker and Coddling (2002) outline the realities of today’s principalship [level not defined]:

The typical principal supervises thirty professionals and fourteen support staff. There is no assistant principal in his school. This means the average principal is responsible for a span of control six to ten times what is normal in private industry...the typical principal works an average sixty-hour workweek, compared to forty-five hours for a typical teacher...principals have less political power and public support than teachers...the hourly salary rate for principals is often actually lower than for teachers...states have adopted some form of school site governance...so the principal has even less authority than before while being expected to accept much more responsibility (pp. 2-3).

After a decade of working with the Danforth Foundation’s Forum for the American School Superintendent (60 superintendents), Cambron-McCabe and Cunningham (2002) describe the conditions facing several school administrators in the U.S. as “crisis conditions” (p. 290). They go on to express their concern for the manner in which principal preparation programs are preparing principals in such a troublesome climate.

#### Principal Preparation Programs

The criticism of principal preparation programs has been published for decades (Bridges, 1977; Cooper & Boyd, 1987; Crowson & McPherson, 1987; Griffiths, Levine, 2005; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1989). Several events have impacted the current dismay with principal preparation programs. Historically school principals in the United States have completed their credentials in the University setting (Daresch & Male, 2000) therefore the focus of preparing principals is on the universities. With the development of the global economy, higher education has been called to change; which has put all programs in a position of scrutiny (Burkhalter, 1996). The *Nation at Risk* report from President Reagan’s administration in 1983, which argued

“public schools had failed” (Fowler, 2004, p. 120), also impacted education programs at higher education institutions. The report created a demand for improved educational leadership, which increased the demand for improved preparation of school leaders (Milstein, 1997). The National commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEE), sponsored by the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) also issued a report in 1987, which identified problems with principal preparation programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002, p. 192). Most recently, Arthur Levine (2005), president of Teachers College, published the report, *Educating School Leaders*. This highly publicized and often cited report is very critical of educational leadership programs in the United States. In his description of what he calls a “race to the bottom”, Levine outlines problems in programs as; 1, irrelevant curriculum; 2, low admission and graduation standards; 3, weak faculty; 4, inadequate clinical instruction; 5, inappropriate degrees; and 6, poor research (p. 25-47). Levine concludes with six recommendations:

1. Alternatives to salary scales that increase pay for credits
2. Financial programs to strengthen universities, and create higher standards
3. Weak programs either strengthened or closed
4. New degree in Masters of Education Administration proposed
5. Ed. D. should be eliminated
6. Ph. D. should be reserved for preparing researchers

These recommendations have particularly gotten the attention of educational leadership schools (Flessa, 2007).

Flessa (2007) responds to Levine’s recommendations by addressing what the researcher believes to be ironic: Levine criticizes the programs, yet he entrusts them to make the changes he recommends. He goes on to explain the value of the university setting as a place where “a greater premium can be placed on struggling with questions than on knowing answers, and that from struggling with questions might come the

personal and professional insights to change practice” (p. 205-206). Finally, Flessa calls for the need to continue to question and answer why universities should prepare educational leaders.

This question has also been challenged in state legislatures where alternative licensure has been examined. An analysis of the decertification of principal licensure in Florida was conducted, which questioned the traditional preparation of principals (Herrington & Wills, 2005). When Florida deregulated the licensure process and made way for alternative licensure, the results indicated “no evidence that principals entering the profession under the alternative certification route were any more or less effective at meeting state academic standards” (p. 197). The results, however, only reflect one out of 67 school districts that took advantage of the alternative license. Even though the district used alternative licensure, they required a master’s degree, at least five years of teaching experience, and completion of a district designed online training program, prior to considering someone for a principal position. The district also decided to work towards a partnership with a state university in the future to train principals. The case study analysis of Florida determined that although alternative licensure may be available, districts do not accept them in practice. If they do, they still hold to traditional ideologies of preparation (Herrington & Wills, 2005). Perhaps this is because of the important role the university can play in preparing principals. In a longitudinal quantitative study on principal preparation of exemplary programs identified by Stanford University, Orr (2007) found her second hypothesis to be: “graduates of high quality leadership preparation programs ARE more likely to report more effective leadership practices than graduates of conventional programs” (p. 18). It should be noted that Orr

did not articulate the criterion for exemplar programs during the presentation of the research, other than to mention the identification was conducted through the Stanford University School Leadership Study.

Motivation of alternative licensure often comes from the need to fill principal positions. The National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals reported after a study on the pool of principal candidates that about half of the districts were experiencing a shortage of principals (Guterman, 2007). The principal shortage in the U.S. is often mentioned (Jianping, Cooley, & Wegenke, 2004; Reyes-Guerra & Mountford, 2007). Other studies have found a lack in qualified candidates versus certified candidates (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, & Hill, 2003; Holloman, Rouse, Ringler, & Bradshaw, 2007)

Levine (2005) attributes the lack of qualified candidates to low admission standards of programs as well as the pay incentives offered at the district level. He believes the raising of salaries based solely on the acquisition of credit attracts teachers to principal preparation programs who have no intention of becoming school principals; which waters down the programs. Others have found the complexity of the rationale for entering programs far too great to simply say it is for more money. Jianping, Cooley, and Wegenke (2004) surveyed teachers, principals, and superintendents (n=874) with a questionnaire asking them to rate the influence on their application for principal positions on a six-point scale.



Eight factors were found to be related to the application of principal positions:

- a) workload and compensation
- b) macro-constraints of the position
- c) the impact of the position on the individual and family
- d) intrinsic rewards which include the individual's status within the community
- e) work environment
- f) school district characteristics which include the location, size, and reputation of the district
- g) community characteristics
- h) safety and support (pp. 62-63).

This clearly demonstrates that even though students may receive higher pay for completing principal preparation programs, the decision to enter can be quite complex.

The need for universities to collaborate with districts has also been suggested to ensure more qualified candidates. Rather than self-selecting into programs, districts can identify promising candidates for the universities (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, & Hill, 2003; Clark, & Clark, 1997; Normore, 2004). Districts have also been mentioned as needing to take responsibility for their part in the preparation of principals. Universities are responsible for getting candidates on their way, but the district needs to take it from there (Guterman, 2007). The synergistic effect from collaboration could contribute to the improvement of principal preparation.

Hess and Kelly (2006) are also critical of principal preparation programs. In their study from Harvard they used a stratified sample to examine four core syllabi in 56 programs including an overall 2,242 course weeks. Prestigious and typical programs were included in the sample. Syllabi were used under the assumption they express the general content and perspective of the courses being taught, even though they do not capture the tone. "The evidence indicates that preparation has not kept pace with changes in the larger world of schooling, leaving graduates of principal preparation

programs ill-equipped for the challenges and opportunities posed by an era of accountability” (Hess & Kelly, 2006, p. 36). Although the outlook may seem bleak, the positive perspective is the opportunity for growth and improvement. When Hess and Kelly examined the most widely read text in principal preparation programs, many authors they considered important were missing (Paul Hill, Larry Cuban, William Boyd, Michael Kirst, & Jim Guthrie, p. 33); however, many were included (Terence Deal, Allen Odden, Kent Petersen, Michael Fullan, Lee Bolman, Thomas Sergiovanni, Richard Elmore, Linda Darling-Hammond & Deborah Meier, p. 31-32).

Although there is an abundance of criticism, preparation programs have made efforts to improve. Young, Petersen, and Short (2002) point out “that over the past decade, leaders in the field and the professoriate have responded to the need for change in educational leadership preparation and practice proactively” (p.140). Exceptional programs have also been identified by Jackson and Kelley (2002). They identify commonalities of quality programs as having a, “clear vision that drives programmatic decisions and provides students with opportunities to connect the knowledge base through carefully designed field experiences integrated into the academic program” (p.192). Innovative work all over the country in several graduate programs is highlighted in an article by Orr (2006). Among other aspects of innovation, Orr mentions the focus on “student selection, curriculum and course content, pedagogical strategies, and internships and field experiences” as foci for many universities (p. 494). She also explains the integration of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as a tool to evaluate programs and “by 2005, one-third of all institutions

nationally had gained ELCC recognition for their leadership preparation programs based on the new standards” (p.493).

Criticism of principal preparation is very evident in the research, but the aspects of principal preparation are complex. Isolating specific aspects of programs for empirical inquiry to inform the continued improvement of programs is greatly needed. Principal internship opportunities may have the potential to improve programs and add to the needed increase of authentic experiences throughout principal preparation. Several authors of educational leadership also support the alignment of standards with programs to ensure improvement. Finally structured, meaningful reflective activities are said to add the quality of preparation.

### Principal Internships

Principal internships are widely agreed upon as a necessity to best prepare future principals. “They are unique, important, and irreplaceable aspects of effective preparation programs” (Milstein & Krueger, 1997). “The traditional internship presently serves as the vehicle for aspiring principals to practice their problem-solving and instructional leadership skills” (Creighton, 2001, p. 3). They should prepare principals for the realities of the job, and apply the skills they have learned, and prepare them to lead change; according to the 2005 SREB report. Preparation programs need to allow for practice of what happens in the field (Mullen & Carins, 2001). As Hay (1995) states, “academic coursework without authentic field-based experience offers theory without practice, therefore remains empty” (p. 59). Bingham (1995) describes doing theory as imperative to preparation. In an early empirical study (1965-1969), however, the findings indicated there wasn’t any hard data to support the internship. What was

significant was the perspective of the interns; all of them said the internship was a valuable experience (Sweeney, Huth, & Engel, 1981). The researchers also mention in their conclusion that their measures of decisions made for implementations, may not be encompassing enough to determine the entire value of the internship, which implies a need for further studies. In a research proposal presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting (Reyes-Guerra & Mountford, 2007), a description of implementing a program to improve the internship experience is shared. In the implication sections the need for isolating the internship experience in research is mentioned. Although internships are rarely isolated to one study, they are overwhelmingly recognized as essential components to principal preparation.

Defining the internship experience, however, is more problematic. The ideal internship may be what Wilmore (2002) describes as a full-time, yearlong paid internship (such as the Educational Leadership UTA program at the University of Texas at Arlington). The realities of funding and program offerings, however, do not allow this to happen in many places. Alternatives have ranged from The Principal Excellence program (PEP) in Kentucky, which is a collaboration with the university and district to develop future and current principals with release days offered to participants once per week (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004) to teachers working full time while completing internship hours. Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2004) recognize that the full time more intensive programs are more costly and require deep participation and commitment from all who are involved. In an evaluation of successful programs Jackson and Kelley (2002) examine six programs identified by leaders in the field. The internship experience is included in the tables describing the aspects of these programs (pp. 200-

201). As seen in table one, even within these programs the internship experience varies greatly.

Table 1

*Description of Internships at Identified Successful Programs*

University of Washington	East Tennessee State University	California State University, Fresno	University of Louisville IDEAS Program	Wichita State University	San Antonio Region 20 Service Center
Mentors nominated and carefully screened (mentors submit a portfolio of their work); 700-1400 hours; requires half-time release; three different placements, at least one different level of administration and at least one in different context (urban/rural)	Students select their own placements; 540 hours; no release required, students conduct internship after hours and through interviews with current administrators; six different placements: elementary, middle, high, community service, central office.	120 hours as master teacher to develop instructional skills.	100 hours	Courses are field based, focused on research studies, with reduced class contact hours.	Paid Internship: candidates must spend 70% of their day in a leadership capacity: districts identify mentors who are trained in NASSP mentoring/coaching model.

Many aspects of the internship, beyond the structure, are also important. Participants gain the most from the field-based practice when they are engaged in authentic leadership responsibilities. Unfortunately McKerrow (1998) discovered in a content analysis of daily logs of internship activities for 45 interns, that little or no time was spent in the actual role of administrator. In fact, two-thirds of the intern's time was spent in "meetings, office work, or supervising students" (p.171). The interns were engaged in what McKerrow called a typical internship experience, as most were working as teachers and completing the internships part-time. The researcher does not suggest, however, simply increasing the time spent in the internship, rather time should be spent monitoring the quality prior to adding to the quantity of the experience. She also points out that mentor principals shouldn't be expected to hand over the reigns initially, but in time should be willing to give the interns more complete responsibility of the job. Much like a student teaching experience is conducted. The mentor principal then plays a major role in the success of the internship. Master principals who are also quality mentors are necessary for successful internships (Williamson & Hudson, 2001). Because most internships are conducted at the intern's home school while she/he is teaching full time (Levine, 2005), the partnering of the mentor is often by chance. University guidelines, alignment with standards (Wilmore, 2002), and reflection may, however, increase the quality of the internship experience.

Other suggestions have been made for the internship. Gray (2001) provides a testimonial for what worked well and did not work well during her internship. She was working full time as an intern and began her work prior to the staff arriving at school.

Her situation is clearly atypical of many interns; however, she provides five tips for a successful internship:

1. Integrate the intern into the school
2. Develop a vision for the internship experience
3. Gradually increase the responsibilities of the intern
4. Provide time for continuous evaluation
5. Rely on the university supervisor when problems arise

Additional inquiry is clearly needed to assess the impact of principal internships. Seeking solutions within the constructs of the university and evaluating them will further the principal preparation knowledge base. For example, aligning the internship with standards, as suggested by Wilmore (2002), and assessing the impact. Reflection has also been identified as a tool for improving the internship experience (Williamson & Hudson, 2001).

### Standards

American education has experienced a surge of nationally identified standards at all levels. The national standards movement began with President George H. Bush's agenda to set national education goals. The National Council for Teaching Mathematics (NCTM) was among the first to offer national guidelines for teaching math. Then President Clinton's Goals 2000 furthered the identification of standards among other subjects (Ravitch, 1994). In 2002 the George W. Bush Administration's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act amended the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Linn, Baker, & Betelenner, 2002). NCLB requires schools to demonstrate Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), which is measured by state assessments. The assessments are aligned with standards, which have increased the national attention on standards. Currently all 50 states have identified standards for K-12 education. Standards have also been



determined for state institutions of higher education, with the expectation of compliance. Teacher preparation was the initial focus while school leaders went unnoticed. However, in the late 1990s discussion of leadership (principal) standards began to appear in educational reform papers (Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000).

Standards have been used as a guide throughout the effort to implement needed change. Murphy notes, “They provide a platform for the reconstruction of leadership preparation programs” (2001, p. 2). Prior to the national movement, most standards were designated within individual states. Then an effort was made to establish national standards in order to more uniformly guide state standards. Most current principal preparation standards are rooted in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards established in the late 1990s (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). The ISLLC standards were developed using the framework: leaders as community servants, organizational architects, social architects, and moral educators (Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000). The central tenets agreed upon were: 1) Foundations are similar for all leaders, therefore a set of standards work for all educational leaders; 2) the core of productive leadership is the focus for each standard; 3) they should help to move the profession to a higher level (Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000). Specific standards identified from the consortium all begin with: *A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success for all students by...* Proceeded with:

1. facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

4. collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context.

The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards also contributed to the standards widely used throughout the nation, including the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to accredit programs (English, 2006). The ELCC standards incorporated the ISLLC standards along with the NCATE's performance based objectives. Although both sets of these standards have been accused of neither being empirically sound nor research based (English, 2000), Murphy (2005) counters with, "these standards rest heavily on the research on productive schools and districts and on investigations of the women and men who lead schools where all children are well educated" (p.169). Murphy does go on to clarify the regret of the consortium in not systematically describing the evidence supporting the standards.

Prior to the establishment of national standards, Murphy (2001) stated: "the problem with educational leadership preparation programs today is that they are driven by neither education nor leadership" (p.1). Although efforts have been made to improve principal preparation through the establishment of standards, much criticism of the standards still exists. The Executive director of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), Michelle Yung, mentioned a laissez-fair attitude generally held by faculty about the adoption of standards (As cited in Hale & Moorman, 2003). Fenwick English (2006) has also written about standards as a delimitation of principal preparation programs. He especially believes this to be problematic in the case of accreditation and program evaluation.

Standards, however, continue to be an integral part of national educational policy. In an analysis of policy trends, Virginia Roach found “ISLLC standards have had a great impact on state administrative policy and the standards are infused throughout policy...” (2007, p. 20). Implementation of standards within colleges, however, has been slow to happen. Therefore, states have taken measures to ensure the alignment of standards with curriculum. To encourage the use of standards in preparation programs, many states have aligned licensure exams to the standards. Other states have developed reform initiatives tying program authorization to the use of standards (Murphy & Shipman, 2000).

#### Influence of Standards on Principal Preparation

Current evidence supporting the influence of standards on principal preparation is scant. Referring to the ISLLC standards, Brown-Ferrigno and Johnson-Fusarelli (2005) write, “An intriguing finding from reviews of literature about the contemporary principalship is the lack of disciplined inquiry about the impact adoption of these blue prints have made” (p. 129). “Murphy and Vriesenga [also] found that more than 2,000 articles on preparation had been published in leading school leadership journals from 1975-2002, but less than three percent were empirical studies” (Levine, 2005, p. 46). Evaluation of programs would further inform change through the examination of the importance and impact of standards integration. Superintendent and principal views however, have been examined.

Using the ISLLC standards, superintendents from a random sample (n=500) were asked to rate the value they placed on the individual standards. The study indicated they placed high value on the standards; however, they did not incorporate them in their day to day performance at high levels. This implied that more instruction on incorporating

standards into day to day activities was needed in preparation programs (Boeckmann & Dickinson, 2001).

In another study, David Barnett examined the practice of standards among principals, supervisors, and superintendents; as well as their feelings of preparedness as a result of their preparation programs (2004). He also used the ISLLC standards. Respondents were asked to determine the frequency in which they practiced the standards, then to rate the effectiveness of their graduate program preparing them for the identified standard. In all cases frequency of completing the task were greater than the effectiveness they had received in their preparation program. Standards were also recognized as being in line with the daily activities of the leader. This is contradictory to Boeckmann's findings, which indicated a need for further inquiry of this kind. Recommendations from this study included the need for more authenticity of practice, such as internships, in preparation programs.

### Reflection

Dewey (1933) defined reflection as “an active persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further consideration to which it tends.” Engaging in reflection has been identified as an exercise in learning and retaining information (Gilley & Maycunich-Gilley, 2003; hooks, 2003). When principal interns begin to conceptualize the role transformation from teacher to principal (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004), reflecting on the process is invaluable. Normore (2004) explains the importance of the reflective process in transitioning to the principalship: “The transition from being a teacher to becoming an

administrator is an intricate process of reflection and learning that requires socialization into a new community of practice and role identity” (p. 109). In a two-part phenomenological and case study methodological study Bingham (1995) ties in what he learned to do in his preparation program to his current work as a principal. He believes, “(a) the scarcity of a principal’s time for reflection is exceeded only by the need for it, and (b) the meaning of events is best understood by connecting present with past experience” (p. 203). If reflective practices once in the principalship are important, then engaging in reflective activities during training seems logical.

“Regular reflection *in situ*, in weekly seminars and individually, provides opportunities for interns to make sense out of there experience, comprehend and refine their practice and learn to know themselves in an administrative role” (Williams, Matthes, Baugh, 2004, p. 60). In an article on the need for self-analysis and reflection, Petire, Lindauer, and Tountasakis (2000), synthesize their teaching experiences with instruments designed to further self-awareness in preparing school leaders. Although they base the information on the literature as well, most of the citations are from the instrumentation used in their courses. The reflections, however, include that “effective leaders need to understand themselves to be able to better make decisions and understand why people behave as they do” (p. 363). An earlier, more substantiated, examination of reflection indicates its importance for preparing school leaders (Short, 1997).

Reflection, however, should not simply be free journal writing. The most significant strategies for meaningful reflection are, “group reflection, reflective journals, reflective writings with in the classroom context, educational platforms, case studies, and reflection on personal and professional codes of ethics...the most useful approach to journal writing

is the critical incident approach” (Short, 1997, p. 90). In her conclusion, Short also mentions the need for more systematic empirical research on reflection in principal preparation.

### Conclusion

Although many reports on principal preparation have been negative, few have been empirical. In a recent research synthesis of published research articles concerning the preparation of school leaders over the past ten years, only nine articles were considered empirical research with a quasi-experimental or qualitative design (Cooner, Dickmann, & Dugan, 2008). The remaining articles and reports in the database, 421 total, were merely descriptions of programs or philosophical essays.

For this reason, the research included in this dissertation is critical. Isolating the components standards, internship, and reflection is still complex, but combining the three in one analysis has the potential to significantly inform the preparation of principals.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Research Approach and Rationale

The purpose of this study was to investigate perceived acquisition of skills to meet licensure standards from the principal internship experience through structured reflective journaling and scaled scores. The researcher has a pragmatic worldview, which influenced the decision to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Green and Caracelli (1997) highlight the position of Patton (1988) and his belief that “pragmatism...grounds its rationale for mixing methods in situational responsiveness and a commitment to an empirical perspective” (p.9). Datta (1997) defines pragmatic as “the essential criteria for making design decisions are practical, contextually responsive and consequential” (p.34). The current need for empirical studies during the time of the research contributes to the contextual decision to use a mixed methods design. It was not believed one method would be sufficient to answer the research questions, purpose statement or the problem statement. From a pragmatic stand point the research questions are the primary concern, not which method to use (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The ability to collect both quantitative and qualitative data using the Journey Mapping program also makes feasible the meaningful collection of both kinds of data.

The design was a concurrent triangulation, mixed methods design (QUANT + QUAL); a type of design where an equally substantial amount of quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Although labeling designs as triangulation has been mentioned as problematic due to the use of triangulation in qualitative studies (Bryman, 2007), Cresswell and Plano-Clark

(2007) make clear the establishment of triangulation designs. They write that it is the “most common and well-known approach to mixing methods” (p.63).

The quantitative analysis for this inquiry was done using a non-experimental comparative approach. The identified attribute independent variables are gender and years of teaching experience. Years of experience was coded into four levels: 1) 0-5 years, 2) 6-10 years, 3) 11-15 years, and 4) more than 15 years. Time when scores were analyzed: initially, mid-year, and finally, is the third independent variable. The dependent variable is standards acquisition scores from a six-point scale. The six-point scale (Appendix C) was labeled a through f. Each point was defined from the teaching and learning context where minimal exposure to being able to teach to others and considering oneself an expert are considered different degrees of learning. In a university classroom study on peer teaching, a significant advantage for the tutor was found. He/she who taught demonstrated greater understanding than those who did not (Annis, 1983). Annis also writes, “a common saying is that the best way to learn something is to teach it” (p.39). This supports the wording assigned for letter values for the six-point scale. A 2 x 4 x 3 Mixed ANOVA (with repeated measures on the last factor) was utilized for this analysis; represented pictorially in figure one.



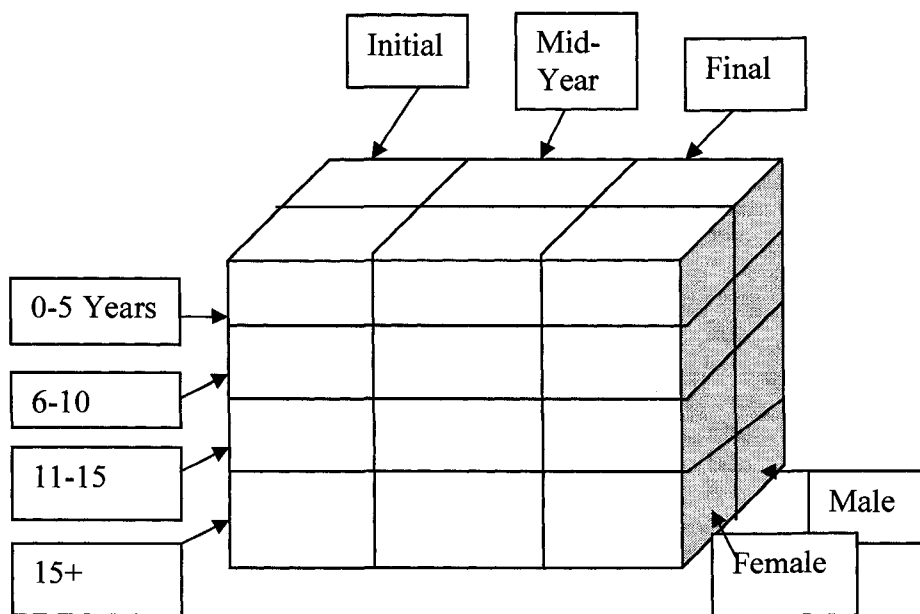


Figure 1, 2 x 4 x 3 Mixed ANOVA

Template analysis, a deductive coding strategy (University of Huddersfield, n.d.), was the approach used for analyzing the journal entries. The established codes prior to analysis were the principal standards. Themes emerged inductively as well and were identified throughout the coding process. The NVivo 7 computer assisted qualitative data analysis software was used to perform coding and manage the large amount of narrative data. Cross-case analysis was conducted with the multiple cases (three cohorts and two academic years) as well as gender and years of experience.

Finally matrices were created using NVivo 7 to quantify the qualitative data for mixed analysis with the scaled scores. The use of NVivo 7 for mixed analysis was guided by the workshop presented at the annual Mixed Methods Conference (Pare', 2007).

## Participants

Candidates from the principal preparation program at Colorado State University during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 academic years were included in the study. These principal licensure candidates were involved in their required yearlong 300-hour principal internship during the data gathering process. The majority of the principal interns were completing the internship in their home schools with their supervising principals serving as mentors. It was the responsibility of the principal intern and the mentor principal to ensure exposure to a variety of experiences that would lead to mastery of principal licensure standards.

The entire available sample was used, which was comprised of three cohorts with a total of sixty students; 30 males and 30 females; 10 with 0-5 years of experience; 22 with 6-10 years of experience; 13 with 11-15 years of experience; and 15 with more than 15 years of experience. The equal number of males and females occurred by chance. N=30 for both the male and female groups, which is considered the appropriate approximate sample size for a study of this kind (Creswell, 2002). Grounded theory studies also often have 50-60 participants (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Because this approach is deductive rather than inductive, it is not a grounded theory study. The nature of the analysis however, and the large amount of narratives align with the grounded theory qualitative tradition. Although the entire available sample was used, it is not considered the population because similar programs exist and the study could be replicated at other locations.

## Data Collection

Participants were trained on the Journey Mapping program during the summer session prior to their internship year. They were taught how to log on to the Internet site to complete a journal entry which contained open ended journal prompts and survey questions. Each participant was given an account and password to access his/her journal page. Demographic information (years of experience and gender) was entered for each designated participant as well. The first four guiding questions in the journal were open-ended and designed for qualitative analysis (Appendix B). The final questions were scaled and designed for quantitative analysis. The second section of the scaled questions asked participants to rate themselves on a 6-point Likert-type scale of their perceived knowledge of the eleven principal standards designated for Colorado:

1. Foundations of Leadership
2. Contextual Understanding
3. Planning and Organization
4. Content Knowledge Instruction
5. Individualization of Instruction
6. Management and Evaluation of Instruction
7. Supervision of Personnel
8. Supervision of Student Conduct
9. Resources
10. School Site Safety and Maintenance
11. Parent and Community Involvement

Participants entered scores bi-monthly during the first semester and monthly during the second semester (Appendix C).

All information was given and stored electronically. Access was granted to the researcher for each individual journal. Journals were monitored for completion only. Once both academic years were completed analysis of data began.

## Measures

### Reliability

Measurement reliability for the Likert-type questions is supported by using repeated measures with consistent scaled questions. Cronbach's alpha for the correlation of each individual participant's initial standards acquisition scores indicated good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .92$ ,  $M = 2.62$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ). The scores of each individual mid-year ( $\alpha = .91$ ,  $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) and final ( $\alpha = .96$ ,  $M = 4.80$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) standards acquisition scores were similarly highly correlated, allowing for the creation of summated scales: Initial, Mid-year, and Final.

### Qualitative Validation

The qualitative analysis will be validated through procedures outlined by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) for mixed methods studies (p.135). Several individuals ( $n=60$ ) is a validity approach recognized. Evidence for codes and themes from the several individuals will be presented. Any disconfirming information will also be included, which will confirm the accuracy of the data analysis, "because in real life, we expect the evidence for themes to diverge and include more than just positive information" (Creswell, Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 135).

## Data Analysis

### Quantitative

The quantitative analysis was done utilizing the SPSS statistical analysis program often used in social sciences (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2004). Descriptive and frequency statistics including skewness were initially examined in order to inform the appropriate statistical tests to be used. Data were determined to be normally distributed

therefore; the following statistics were used in order to answer research questions one, two, and three:

1. A one-way, repeated measures ANOVA was used to examine the differences in initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores.
2. An independent samples *t* test was used to examine the differences between male and female students in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores.
3. A mixed ANOVA was conducted to assess whether there were teaching experience and gender differences or an interaction between gender and initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores.

#### Qualitative

The qualitative analysis for research questions four, five, and six was done utilizing the analytical deductive coding strategy Template Analysis. Deductive approaches use codes that have been “established prior to the analysis, then the text is searched for the presence of the codes” (Banning, unpublished). The NVivo 7 computer assisted qualitative data analysis software was used to perform the analysis. All journal narratives were initially coded for each of the eleven principal standard under three categories; success, challenges, and concerns. Once initial codes were established the researcher isolated the narratives to check for accuracy in coding placement. If the narrative was not appropriate for the code it was deleted, and if necessary placed under a different code. Frequency tables were created to analyze the content. Miles and Huberman (1994) state “three good reasons to resort to numbers: to see rapidly what you have in a large batch of data; to verify a hunch or hypothesis; and to keep yourself

analytically honest protecting against bias” (p. 253). With this large data set the numerical information allowed the researcher to examine specific components from the narratives. It also allowed for mixing the data in a meaningful way; verifying the findings from the quantitative analysis.

Guided by the information from the deductive codes, matrices were created for gender and years of experience and the journal entries (research question seven). Again numerical tables were examined to determine the volume of each standard written about under the different categories. This guided further analysis under specific standards. The narratives under the specified standards were inductively coded to determine emerging themes.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This mixed methods study investigated perceived acquisition of skills to meet licensure standards through the principal internship experience. Longitudinal data from two academic years of principal internship experiences will be presented in this chapter. The study participants were enrolled in Colorado State University's principal licensure program, and were completing their required 300-hour internship. They regularly logged on to the Journey Mapping program to answer open-ended questions regarding their internship progress and rated themselves on a six-point scale on their knowledge of the Colorado principal standards. The scaled scores were examined using a non-experimental comparative approach. The journal narratives were examined using the standards as *a priori* codes with the structure of template analysis. Support from the narrative findings for the scaled scores was also considered.

### Restatement of Problem

Critiques of principal preparation programs disclose principals are not being prepared to lead in today's educational system. Reported shortages of principals reveal a lack of qualified candidates not a lack of certified candidates (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, & Hill, 2003). Programs have been identified as having failed to keep pace with the changing demands of society (Hess & Kelly, 2006; Fullan, 1998). Although efforts to improve principal preparation began in 1987-1993 through the Department of Educational Administration Development Program (LEAD) (Hale & Moorman, 2003), criticism remains prevalent. In Arthur Levine's report, which is widely discussed and quoted, he expresses his view of current principal preparation programs,

...many university-based programs designed to prepare the next generation of educational leaders are engaged in a counterproductive 'race to the bottom,' in which they compete for students by lowering admission standards, watering down coursework, and offering faster less demanding degrees (2005, p.10).

Levine goes on to criticize the intentions of many of those entering the program.

Districts often offer higher pay to teachers who complete university credits and obtain advanced degrees. This results in many students who have no intention of pursuing the principalship, yet they are enrolled in principal licensure programs. Jianping, Cooley, and Wegenke, however, discovered the rationale for seeking principal positions to be much more complex (2004).

Although criticism is pervasive, many programs have made efforts to improve. Holloman, Rouse, Ringler, and Bradshaw (2007) found in their study on the quality vs. quantity of principal candidates and preparation programs that, "although there has been criticism of programs, many have used input from leaders in local school districts to make improvements...principal programs across the nation have redesigned their programs to provide theory, knowledge, and practices to develop effective school principals" (p.4). Because preparing principals, particularly in the current context, is very complex, several components of improvement efforts could be examined (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002). Narrowing the scope to a few aspects for analysis is germane. Researchers can better isolate variables and develop suggestions for principal preparation when the inquiry is focused. Standards, internships and reflective practices, are prevalent in preparation programs (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2001; Williamson & Hudson, 2001) therefore the combination of the three will be the focus of this inquiry.



## Research Questions

With the focus of inquiry being on standards acquisition during principal internships, the research questions were:

1. What are the differences between initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
2. What are the differences between male and female students in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
3. Is there an interaction between teaching experience and gender in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores for the principal interns?
4. What standards are recognized as part of what worked well and was successful during the internship?
5. What standards are recognized as part of challenging situations during the internship?
6. What standards are recognized as part of concerns during the internship?
7. How does gender and years of teaching experience influence the placement of standards mentioned; success, challenge or concern?
8. To what extent do the open-ended themes support the scaled scores results?

## Organization and Order of Presentation

This chapter is organized by quantitative, qualitative and mixed results. Findings from research questions 1-4 were answered using quantitative analysis; non-experimental approach. Questions 5-7 were answered using qualitative analysis; template analysis, and question 8 mixed the two data sets.

## Results

### Quantitative Analysis

#### Research Question One

*What are the differences between initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?*

The standards acquisition scores were examined using a one-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with three levels (initial, mid-year, and final). Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ( $\chi^2 = .66, p = < .05$ ) therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ( $\epsilon = .75$ ). The results show a significant main effect of scores ( $F(1.499, 86.944) = 195.628, p < .001$ ). To assess pairwise differences among the three levels for the main effect of scores, simple contrasts using a Bonferroni correction was performed. The results indicate that the mean initial standards acquisition scores differed significantly from mid-year ( $F(1,58) = 63.96, p = < .001, \eta^2 = .52$ ) and final scores ( $F(1,58) = 224.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .80$ ). In addition to statistical significance, practical significance is suggested by the larger than typical effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). There was about the same difference in growth mean scores from the initial to mid-year (11.283), and mid-year to final (12.136).

#### Research Question Two

*What are the differences between male and female students in regard to initial, mid-year, and final acquisition scores?*

Table 2 shows that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female participants on their initial, mid-year, and final overall scores ( $p > .05$ ).

Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average overall scores for male and female participants were within two points of each other.

Table 2

*Independent Samples t-test of gender and the perceived initial, mid-point and final overall standards acquisition scores*

Variable	M	SD	t	df	p
Initial Overall Scores			-.897	58	.374
Males	28.17	11.931			
Females	30.63	9.205			
Mid-Point Overall Scores			-.728	58	.470
Males	39.97	7.753			
Females	41.40	7.504			
Final Overall Scores			.178	57	.860
Males	52.62	8.121			
Females	53.00	8.280			

*Note.* The maximum score is 66.

### Research Question Three

*Is there an interaction between teaching experience and gender in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?*

A 2 (gender: male, female) x 4 (years of experience: 1-4 years, 5-10 years, 10-15, >15) x 3 (time of standard acquisition score: initial, mid-point, final) mixed ANOVA, with Greenhouse-Geisser correction, was conducted to assess whether there were differences between gender, years of teaching experience, and time when scores were analyzed and overall scores. Results indicated a significant main effect of time (initial, mid-year, and final) when scores were analyzed,  $F(1.43, 72.89) = 132.67, p < .000, \eta^2 = .722$ ), but not of gender and time,  $F(1, 51) = .314, p = .577$ , or years of experience and time,  $F(3, 51) = 1.479, p = .231$ . In addition, there is no significant interaction of gender and years of experience on time.

### Qualitative Analysis

Overall, there was 1,152 electronic Journey Mapping codes for the Colorado principal standards. From those responses 590 were from successes, 456 were from challenging situations and 106 were from concerns. The eleven principal standards were used as *a priori* codes and were examined for all three questions. The frequency of each standard mentioned under the three categories (success, challenge, and concern) is listed below. Frequency indicates how many interns out of 60 wrote about a particular standard under the different categories. It does not refer to the number of times standards were written about overall. For example, one intern may have written about a particular

standard several times, which is not reflected in table 3. The order of standards by frequency is then presented followed by direct quotations from journal entries. It should be noted that the Journey Mapping program does not have a spell check function therefore there are several misspellings in the entries.

Table 3

*Frequency of Standards Written in Journal Entries*

Success		Challenge		Concern	
Standard	Frequency	Standard	Frequency	Standard	Frequency
1	42	1	32	1	4
2	32	2	34	2	9
3	37	3	36	3	26
4	25	4	10	4	1
5	19	5	8	5	0
6	31	6	21	6	6
7	12	7	21	7	6
8	40	8	40	8	6
9	24	9	18	9	19
10	14	10	13	10	2
11	28	11	28	11	2

*Note.* Frequency is out of 60 possible.

#### Research Question Four

*What Standards are recognized as part of what worked well and was successful during the internship?*

Participants responded to the question: *What has worked well in your internship over the past two weeks? What successes have you experienced?*

The following table shows the highest to lowest frequency of the standards mentioned under successes.

Table 4

*Standards by Frequency Identified as Successes*

Success	
Frequency	Standard
42	1
40	8
37	3
32	2
31	6
28	11
25	4
24	9
19	5
14	10
12	7



Standard one, *Foundations of Leadership*, was the most frequent standard under successes in the journal entries (42). Many of the entries highlighted successes with communication, climate and culture and when interns were “principal for the day”.

“The thing that has worked well the last few weeks is the ability to communicate. We are putting together (admin) and academic challenge class. This is coming from the Middle School review process. The big change in our district. I have sat in endless meetings with our principal, AP, and our literacy coordinator and have disagreed professionally. We all have respect for each other but the kids come first. So I guess it has been a learning experience but I still say if you don't make the right choices for students or advocate for the students, then admin is not for you.”

“PLC class affirmed that we need to value the process as we work through these really tough issues. We need to keep focused on long range goals and ideas while fighting for little victories every day. We processed where we are now and realized that everyone is on board to some degree. We are changing our culture a little at a time and that is important and needs to be celebrated.”

“This has been an amazing adventure. I have learned so much about what it takes to be a principal. More than just how to manage a building and balance a budget. I have learned how challenging it will be to work with so many different personalities and learning styles. I feel that this will be a continuous learning process and one that I hope will continue to be perfected.”

“I was able to be “principal” for two days while Mike went to Nebraska. One of the days was Halloween. That was WILD. He truly would not have been able to leave if I had not been there, because the health clerk was gone on vacation and the registration clerk had a family emergency. So it was nice to be truly needed and be able to step up to the plate.”

Standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, was the second most frequent standard (40) for successes. The majority of the experiences were about discipline referrals, supervision of after school activities, playground and lunchroom supervision, and following discipline policy. Some entries were about positive behavior reinforcement, such as a school wide program called Positive Behavior Support (PBS).

“I think the biggest success is discipline as in referrals are down this year. I am hoping it is from me getting out there with the kids and letting them know what I won't tolerate.”

“My sense of humor has worked well in my internship over the past two weeks. You really need to laugh some things off when dealing with discipline. Yesterday I had 17 referrals to deal with on top of 3 bullying cases I had to investigate.”

“I am a member of our Positive Behavior Support (PBS) training group, a new program we have implemented this year. As a result of the school wide training for both staff and students, the overall climate of our school has changed dramatically. After one month, our office referrals are down over 65%, compared to the first month of school last year. We attribute this directly to the PBS training.”

The third most frequent standard for success was standard 3, *Planning and Organizing* (37). The demands of the internship clearly required a great amount of planning and organization. Interns felt successful when they were able to effectively manage their schedules and time.

“One thing that is going well is I am basically being forced to work on my organization skills. I have always been able to keep track of things with limited effort. That is not the case now. I went through a period at the beginning of the year where I felt like I had list to keep track of my lists.”

“I have been able to experience the art time management and learning to set priorities which I know is an important administrative trait. I feel confident that I can seek the help of others in crisis and manage to accomplish the required tasks.”

“I have experienced more confidence in my abilities. I really have been working on my attitude and organizing my time. This past week I was able to work on a schedule and get it under control.”

Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, was the next most frequent standard mentioned for successes (32). Interns wrote about accreditation, legislation (e.g. No Child Left Behind), understanding the inner workings of a school, and other outside influences.

“The past two weeks I have been busy getting ready for the CDE visit for accreditation. I have been doing a lot of reading about system reform and how to increase student achievement.”

“Knowing the system, every school has a system on how it does business. I am more effective as help and more at ease with my effectiveness.”

“Additionally, the FCHS principal has asked me to write a Soapbox for the Coloradoan in support of Early Release. The Soapbox will be from the FCHS staff. I am please that the principal trust my professionalism, skills and abilities in this visible arena.”

The next was standard 6, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction* (31). Interns had opportunities to conduct teacher evaluations and walk throughs. They often worried about having the opportunity to do evaluations, and were grateful to gain the experience when they did get to observe.

“My principal and I set up that several of us in the building would start conducting walk throughs to help give me experience in observing teachers. I didn't know how I was going to get this experience and so I am relieved and excited to begin walk throughs.”

“Since my last journal, I had the opportunity to observe and conference with an experienced teacher (not as part of Supervision and Evaluation). During the post-conference, our discussion was very professional and went very well. I'm developing more confidence in my ability to work with teachers to determine how to improve instruction.”

“I've had the opportunity to work with two teachers in a classroom coaching/observation setting. In one case, the principal called me in to observe because of concerns. The other teacher is one who is new to Connected Math, and I went in to observe and give pointers. I'm beginning to gain confidence in my ability to identify effective instruction.”

Then standard 11, *Parent and Community Involvement* (28) was next in frequency. Interns mostly wrote about interactions with parents. Many facilitated parent meetings or attended parent organizational meetings (e.g. PTO). Others conducted workshops for parents. One intern expressed excitement from the community for a grant he/she had written.

“I have helped develop a PTSO organization that has not had much success in the past. It was nice to see all the energy from the nine parents that attended.”

“I also offered two separate workshops for parents of incoming 7th grade students. The feedback from both groups was amazing and I believe that this type of program will be an ongoing one for me wherever I end up.”

“I have been able to network with the community, collaborate with others, and dream about the possibilities that this program can bring to the school and the district. As a result of us writing this grant we are getting noticed by lots of people including the superintendent. The networking has been great and this grant is all the rage right now.”

Standard 4, *Content Knowledge Instruction*, was the next standard mentioned in the frequency order. Interns often wrote about supporting instruction through facilitating staff development opportunities. They also wrote about the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) test as a data resource for student achievement and a guide for future instruction.

“I’ve also worked with small groups of teachers looking at their student data. The data we worked with this week includes the CSAP data broken out by standards as well as reading data based on IRI’s and writing samples rated with a 6-trait rubric.”

“Working with a variety of teachers and principals in delivering staff development and curriculum support in mathematics. I have engaged in many discussions with principals and district administrators regarding math CSAP scores.”

“We meet on Monday’s after school for 2 hours and do some extensive talking about what they LA classes and literacy labs should look like for next year. It’s very interesting working with teachers from other grade levels. It’s been really nice trying to align the LA classes, focusing on what students should know at the end of each year.”

The eighth standard mentioned was standard 9, *Resources* (24). Full-time Teacher Equivalents (FTE) for staffing was often identified as experience with resources. School budget exposure and grant writing were important experiences from the interns’ perspectives as well.

“This last week I attended a staff meeting as FTE reductions were being introduced, and it was another great opportunity to see Rhonda in action, simply presenting the facts, posing a couple of potential scenarios, and asking the staff for their brilliance in terms of other possible solutions.”

“I worked on the budget for next year. It is not as involved as I thought it was going to be. Paper work is one of my least favorite parts of a job so I was not looking forward to it, but it was really not bad.”

“The biggest success I have had so far has been writing a grant for our school. Not only was I able to log a lot of hours in the process, but I was also able to gain valuable experience in an area I have never worked in before”

Standard 5, *Individualization of Instruction*, was the ninth frequent standard.

Working to close achievement gaps and supporting best instructional practices were how interns addressed this standard. They also wrote about focusing on the Colorado Model Content Standards to measure and guide student learning.

“I have been working with teachers as they write and plan the instruction for students on ILP's. I really enjoy this work because it uses my background in literacy instruction and I hope that it will make a difference.”

“I also had a chance to work with some other teachers on plans to help some struggling students. These meetings went well. I had the meeting between the teacher the student and myself. I got a good sense of what the expectations were and if the student understood these expectations. In some cases the student did not know the expectation as clearly before the meeting as after. All four of the meeting felt positive to me. Results will tell us more.”

“My success, is, I feel that I am very competent when planning professional development. I am also, beginning to think like a principal specifically around the topics of best instructional practices and quality instruction. I am very passionate about how kids learn best and our job as teachers.”

“We have been working hard here with creating power standards and making sure that reading, writing and math all have a power standard that we feel the students are not meeting. The neat thing is that each teacher does these standards in their classes every day, so students are constantly exposed to them over and over, every day. I have been working on the reading and writing power standard especially in my classes which is finding the main idea of a paragraph and then finding specific details that relate to it.”

Standard 10, *School Site Safety and Maintenance*, was the tenth standard to be recognized in the journal entries (14). Safety procedures were often mentioned, as well as building maintenance. Keeping a focus on student safety was conveyed as very important.

“I was walking down the hall during passing periods and smelled natural gas coming from a room. When I investigated it, it was a science room where the teacher turned on the bunson burners. He didn't think it was that bad because he was sick and couldn't smell. He said it would be alright but I didn't take that as an answer and evacuated the kids into another room, called our janitor to notify district and notified the front office. When you make decisions they need to be based on student safety.”

“The fire drills have been going well. This is something that I'm Responsible for in our building. They have been very successful.”

“I am interacting more with our new custodian. This is giving me more experience with the building side of administration. We had both a health inspection and a fire inspection over the past two weeks. I discussed, with the custodian, what she did to prepare for the inspections. I also asked her what she did on a daily basis to keep the school ready for these. This gave me very good insite.”

The final standard was 7, *Supervision of Personnel* (12). Interviewing procedures and hiring processes were identified experiences meeting standard 7.

“Yesterday, I conducted interviews for a Kindergarten aide position. My principal allowed me to select the candidates for interviewing, write the interview questions, conduct the interviews with her, select the candidate with her, and then call the candidates regarding the selection.”

“EXCITING! The past week I have had the opportunity to head up the hiring of our new department member. I was assigned to come up with interview questions, schedule and conduct interviews, and hire the position.”

“Also, I was part of some major changes in our district policy regarding new hires and transfers.”

## Research Question Five

*What standards are recognized as part of challenging situations during the internship?*

Participants responded to the question: *Describe a challenging situation or incident that you encountered during the past two weeks of your internship. How did you initially approach the situation? What habit of mind did you naturally rely on?*

(Habit of mind component was not considered for this analysis). The preceding table shows the frequency from highest to lowest for standards addressed in the journal entries.

Table 5

### Standards by Frequency Identified as Challenges

Challenge	
Frequency	Standard
40	8
36	3
34	2
32	1
28	11
21	6
21	7
18	9
13	10
10	4
8	5

Standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, was the most frequent standard written in the journal entries for challenges. Several discipline situations were very difficult for the interns to address. Many interns were not initially comfortable disciplining students. They also had to learn procedures and policies at an administrative level, which differed from their teaching experiences.

“Discipline. Discipline Discipline, we have had so many kids acting out inappropriately. We have had kids vandalizing the restrooms; we have had two fights that ended with bloody noses. We have had kids cussing at a teacher. This type of work is time consuming and emotionally draining”

“The second struggle that I had with this was that I had to collaborate with the special education department, and the school psychologist on this case only to find that the rules for how special education students are disciplined are totally different than the other students.”

“Disciplining students is always a challenge to me. I had to discipline a student that has a sad family situation. As a teacher I usually let this student get away with more than he should of because of his situation. However, it is time to make him accountable for his behavior. I did hold him accountable for his recent behavior and disciplined him according to the school's discipline matrix.”

Standard 3, *Planning and Organization*, was the second most frequent standard written about under challenges. Time management and prioritizing tasks were mentioned often as challenges. The interns felt the demands of several different things at one time, much like principals experience.

“Time management has been a definite challenge for me.”

“The challenge to this situation was my ability to find/have time for other things that needed to be done, when the meetings took up alot of time during the day. Organization very important and your ability to multi task is critical to be successful.”

“We these three tasks on my plate I needed to organize priority to manage my time. I needed to thinking about my thinking and develop a schedule of when each of these tasks needed to be completed.”

“Thank God for plans B, C and D, when A is not going to work at all.”



The third most frequent challenge was standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*

(34). Interns wrote about the influence of the district; for example, textbook or curriculum adoption and policy changes. Interns were also challenged by bringing teachers together to make common decisions. Several were faced with deaths at their schools as well.

“Most challenging situation is being a part of this middle school review process. Our district is changing the middle schools and being a part of the administration, is tough. There are some changes that are coming and people are not going to be happy.”

“One challenge during the textbook adoption process was getting a group of 15 people (teachers who taught 6th and 7th grades) to agree on anything. I had forgotten how many opinions are shared during such a process. It was incredibly frustrating. Of course all opinions were valued but it seemed to me to be a case of “too many cooks in the kitchen.”

“We recently had a student pass away and that was, obviously, a very trying time. He passed after a long bout with cancer but the end was traumatic for all involved. I initially approached the situation with shock and denial.”

The fourth most frequent challenge was standard 1, *Foundations of Leadership*

(32). Interns expressed ethical dilemmas and challenges with effective communication.

When in a leadership role, several found they had to shift how they approached situations from when they were teachers.

“I had a situation where some procedures in our district were set up in a way that is inefficient, but over which I have no control. When informed of the procedures, I feel I overreacted, verbally expressing my displeasure to my coworkers. I also sent an e-mail that was a bit severe to my supervisor (although my severity was not directed at her).”

“I knew that my asst. principal did not make the finalists for Leshar, but I was forced to talk to him as if I had no idea. Knowing more about a subject than the person involved is sometimes difficult to handle. I managed the situation fine, but I feel weird because he still hasn't mentioned it to me in our discussions”

“I know some leaders may say this is not my place...but I think this is what makes me different from the majority and what let's administrators, teachers, students,

parents, etc...trust me. I feel I am politically correct, respectful and understanding in messy times like this. I feel it is my duty to persevere and help make our school a better place.”

Standard 11, *Parent and Community Involvement* was the fifth most frequent challenge (28). Parent conferences, concerns and involvement were often mentioned as challenges. Resolving conflicts with parents was particularly challenging for many of the interns.

“Both of the parent interactions challenge my habit of mind. I had to work extremely hard to stay focused on what was best for the student and not give the parents what they wanted. That may have been my approach in the past. In the past I was non confrontational.”

“As a principal, there seems to always be a challenge around the corner. This is just one example. A parent came in this morning in a huff. She was ready to engage me about a complaint that she had with her daughter's teacher.”

“It won't sound very challenging but I prepared a big presentation for a parent volunteer meeting?Building Accountability Committee and only two parents were there. I was disappointed.”

The next challenge was standard 6, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction* (21). Conducting teacher evaluations was a challenge for many of the interns. They struggled with the task initially. Post conferencing with teachers whom performed poorly was particularly challenging for the interns.

“During this observation it was hard for me to figure out what I wanted to script and when. I was a little bit disorganized at the beginning of the period and confused about how to start and what to type and what not to. I did feel like my observation was good but it still needs to be improved with practice”

“The challenging situation was post conferencing with the student teacher. I found it difficult to breakdown everything I observed and focus on one area.”

“I had to share a very poor evaluation with a probationary teacher, and let her know that she would not be renewed. It was very difficult, and she was very upset.”

Standard 7, *Supervision of Personnel*, was the next challenge (21). Classified personnel were often mentioned as a challenge. Complying with district policy as an administrator as well as enforcing district policy for employees was also identified as a challenge.

“Apparantly there was grumbling amongst our support staff. So we set up a meeting with administration and support staff to discuss the problem and find solutions. It was tough to be in that meeting hearing how they feel mistreated and had problems with our consistency from the 3 administrators. After 1.5 hours we addressed the problems and really opened the line of communication. It was a great experience for when I become a principal.”

“A challenging situation has been an ongoing personnel issue of teachers at one of my sites not working well as a team.”

“Recently I was the one who delivered news to a group of classified staff members that their current jobs would be changing in the fall of '07 and that the district was going to be required them to gain certification.”

“I have had a very difficult situation in dealing with enforcing district policy and having a staff member who continues to try to figure out how to "get around" complying with the policy.”

Standard 9, *Resources*, was the eighth challenge identified by the interns (18). Full Time Teacher Equivalent (FTE) for staffing was often mentioned, particularly when schools were facing cuts. Writing grants that were not funded was also identified as a challenge.

“I have had lots of challenges around FTE during the past two weeks. Principals got their numbers and almost all schools have major cuts to make”

“Since FTE was released this week, it has been very stressful in the building. Our building is getting off pretty well, we only have to cut 1.43 FTE. However, many other high schools and middle schools have to cut a number of positions.”

“We resubmitted the Read to Achieve grant and we still didn't get it. this was very frustrating. Schools in our area that have less free and reduce lunch students then us, did receive it. it was very disheartening. It will be hard to work up any enthusiasm to write another grant. It will defiantly take persistsens.”

Standard 10, *School Site Safety and Maintenance*, was the ninth challenge identified (13). Recognizing responsibility for the students' safety as a principal was a challenge for interns who were in emergency or potential emergency situations. Other challenges included building maintenance and malfunction as well as staff compliance for safety procedures.

"I filled in as principal. Well the experience started out with a bang. Our early childhood center was making cotton candy and it began to burn which set off the alarms. I was phoned by the security system that it was not a pull but a true alarm, so I had to evacuate the entire building. The fire department arrived did an inspection, I filled out the reports and the students reentered the building 45 minutes later. Before I knew the source of the alarm, I had a streak of fear pass through me. (I'M RESPONSIBLE)."

"I was given the assignment to update and make changes to our emergency procedure handbook. To ensure every detail was correct we ran drills and looked at kinks. As our last drill we practiced our lock down – red level alert (which indicates a very dangerous situation) and I watched students move from their classrooms to their designated areas and a very serious wave of emotion came over me. What if I was the principal? What if I did have someone in my school – say with a gun. Are the students moving fast enough? Are they safe? How is my staff?"

"One situation that was interesting was a tornado drill in which I was the admin designee. I was responsible for securing the east side of the building and radioing the other admin team that we were safe. It was challenging"

Standard 4, *Content Knowledge Instruction* was the tenth standard for challenges (10). Student achievement and CSAP data were the two most common challenges identified for standard 4.

"I have been meeting with grade level teams over the past few weeks to discuss how they are mapping student achievement. The district has been working with administrators to begin the process of data analysis with classroom teachers to bring the student achievement into focus."

"CSAP testing has been a challenge. I was able to take on a new role in testing this year and I assisted the special education teacher with oral presentations and scripting which I had never done before."

The last challenge mentioned was standard 5, *Individualization of Instruction* (8).

Closing the achievement gap for special populations were the challenges interns mentioned for this standard.

“While at the elementary school the principal allowed me to review last year's CSAP data. She wanted me to tell her why I felt the school's CSAP scores had declined in a few areas for a couple of special populations. I was a little nervous about this task because the reports were hard to read at first. Once I understood what the data meant I was able to give her my feedback.”

“The challenge that I encountered during the past two weeks was frustration with the Student-Teacher Assistance Team (STAT). Referrals to STAT seem to disappear into a black hole. My experience is that it takes months for students to receive desperately needed support. I suspect the root of the problem is two fold: over worked teachers and a social service system that has less to offer older students become”

#### Research Question Six

*What Standards are recognized as part of concerns during the internship?*

Participants responded to the question: *What concerns do you currently have regarding your internship? How might these best be addressed?* The preceding table shows the frequency from highest to lowest for standards addressed in the journal entries. Concerns overall (81) were not identified as frequently as successes (304) and challenges (261). Interns wrote “no concerns” 144 times. Starting on the fourth most frequent standard mentioned for concerns there were two equaling the same frequency, and the eighth and ninth position had two equaling the same frequency. The majority of the concerns were about not having the opportunity to gain the necessary experience for each of the standards.

Table 6

*Standards by Frequency Identified as Concerns*

Concern	
Frequency	Standard
26	3
19	9
9	2
6	6
6	7
6	8
4	1
2	10
2	11
1	4
0	5

Standard 3, *Planning and Organization*, was the most frequent standard identified for concerns (26). Time management and scheduling were most often considered concerns for standard 3.

“time management is definitely a problem.”

“One goal I have is to learn more about how some of the principals organize themselves.”

“My main concerns have to do with maintaining a flexible schedule to that I can take on as many principal duties as possible”

“Watching my mentor principal these last few weeks, wow, there is so much to do and so many deadlines. Plans, plans, plans all due with Site Based input. Yikes how to motivate teachers or help them see the importance of participating in the planning in a timely manner.”

The second most frequent concern was standard 9, *Resources* (19). Having the opportunity to work with budgets and FTE was mostly a concern for the interns.

“I'm lacking experience dealing with resource issues, so I need to be persistent and figure out who best to talk to to make some time to do this”

“One of the areas I have limited hours in is resources (Standard Nine). My mentoring principal has a small budget that we looked over very quickly.”

“I am worried about the financial planning aspect. I have not had any opportunities yet to look at school budgeting other than to talk to the secretary about showing me how she does things when she has a chance.”

“Still wanting to be a part of the FTE discussions and establish a site based decision making process that enables all stakeholders voice to be heard and honored.”

Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, was the third most frequent concern identified (9). Special Education legal issues and educational politics were the predominant concerns for interns.

“I was part of a task force asked to set up the professional development for all elementary teachers during our last district Wednesday. We had put about 8 hours into planning the 1.5 hour workshop, when we were informed that the perspective of our workshop was expanding based on feedback from some of the elementary principals who do not agree with the direction the district is going along the lines of critical thinking and mathematics. Welcome to the politics of education.”

“There are some issues happening with one of the students that are in my autism program relating to the legal system!! This student's parents are filing for due process because of the way and amount of services are provided in my district.”

“I think I still need a better understanding of Special Education issues and law, and to become better at analyzing the wealth of data available to us.”

Six interns identified standards 6, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction* and standard 7, *Supervision of Personnel* as concerns. Having the opportunity to complete the evaluations and doing them well were the concerns interns had for standard 6. Getting experience in standard 7 was the main concern.

Standard 6:

“I am having some trouble getting involved in the evaluation of teachers. Since I am not an employee the leadership team is having a hard time allowing me to conduct evaluations”

“Right now, it seems that my biggest concern is the written evaluation. Practice makes perfect (or at least better).”

Standard 7:

“My biggest concern is to make sure that I address areas of my administrative experience that have not yet been addressed, specifically around personell (hiring process)...”

“I’m still wanting experience in a few areas--mainly scheduling and personnel issues...”

Standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, was the next most frequent concern identified (5). Gaining experience in student discipline was the focus of the concerns for this standard.

“I have only one concern and that is that I have more opportunities to learn about how to deal with discipline issues.”

“My biggest concern is how to discipline in a fair way. Being new to junior high, I don’t yet have a grasp on what’s fair and appropriate. I think that by continuing to work with my principal, (and gaining experience), I will improve.”

Standard 1, *Foundations of Leadership*, was identified as the next concern (4).

Although there were not many entries for this standard, gaining opportunities and more authentic experiences were noted as concerns.



“My main concern is I still feel I need more genuine experience. I don't see how this can happen while I am a teacher and not sitting in the principal's chair.”

“Well... I would really like to be principal for a few hours while our principal is gone to meetings, etc. I dropped a hint (not a very good one)! I talked to Donna and she said just come out and directly ask her. Duh! I'm learning to be more direct with my needs and deal with whatever may come as a result of that.”

Standards 10, *School Site Safety and Maintenance*, 11, *Parent and Community*

*Involvement* only had two interns identify them as concerns.

Standard 10:

“Over the last couple of weeks one of the biggest headaches that I have had would be that a member of my department has failed another safety and health inspection.”

Standard 11:

“I am not being asked to participate in student and parent meetings that involve disciplinary issues or parental concerns. I'm not certain if Mike is feeling that this could be a confidentiality issue or what his thoughts are at this time.”

One intern expressed a concern for Standard 4, *Content Knowledge Instruction*.

Standard 5, *Individualization of Instruction*, was not identified as a concern for any of the interns. The entry for standard 4 was about gaining more experiences in core content areas.

“The two main areas to focus on are budgets for the school and experiences in other core content areas”

## Research Question Seven

*How does gender and years of teaching experience influence the placement of standards mentioned; success, challenge or concern?*

### *Gender*

The participants were divided equally between genders, 30 males and 30 females. To compare the two attributes practical significance was determined as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Because  $n=30$  for each set, a difference of 4 people or greater was considered the most significant. Although numbers less than four may be considered significant for other qualitative studies, the large number of participants justified four or greater.

The number of interns writing about the eleven standards under each category: success, challenge, and concern for males and females were configured into a matrix. There were 25 out of 33 categories with a difference of less than four. There was not a practically significant difference between males and females writing about the majority of the standards. For successes, however, standards seven, *Supervision of Personnel*; eight, *Supervision of Student Conduct*; and eleven, *Parent and Community Involvement*, had a difference of four or greater between males and females. For challenges, standards three, *Planning and Organization* and 5, *Individualization of Instruction*, had a difference of four or greater between males and females. Finally for concerns, standards 7, *Supervision of Personnel*; 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*; and 9, *Resources* had a difference of four or greater between males and females. The majority of the entries for both males (158) and females (140) were under successes. Challenges also had several entries: males (127) and females (124). There were not, however, as many entries under

concerns: males (32) and females (45). This could be contributed to the large number of entries (144) where interns wrote “no concerns.”

Using the numbers to further guide the qualitative analysis, the researcher chose one or two standards to inductively code the narratives for each category. Successes had the two standards with the greatest difference (7) between males and females: standards eight and eleven. Both standards eight and eleven had quite a few entries from the interns (41 and 27), therefore, it was determined they would both be examined for emerging themes to compare genders. Standard 7 had a difference of four but only twelve entries total, so narratives were not examined for emergent themes. Although two standards, three and five, had the greatest difference for challenges (5) between males and females, standard five only had seven total entries. Standard three had 35 entries, so it was determined as the standard to further explore for challenges. Three standards, seven, eight, and nine, had the greatest difference (4) for concerns. There were, however, few entries for seven (6 total) and eight (4 total) so standard nine (21 total) was determined as the standard for concerns to further examine. The number of entries for males and females under the different standards is also presented in the following tables.

Table 7

*Standards Identified as Successes for Males and Females*

Standards Success	Male	Female
1 Foundations of Leadership	19	22
2 Contextual Understanding	16	15
3 Planning and Organization	19	19
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	12	12
5 Individualization of Instruction	8	10
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	15	15
7 Supervision of Personnel	8	4
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	24	17
9 Resources	12	11
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	8	5
11 Parent and Community Involvement	17	10
Total:	158	140

Table 8

*Standards Identified as Challenges for Males and Females*

Standards Challenges	Male	Female
1 Foundations of Leadership	15	16
2 Contextual Understanding	18	15
3 Planning and Organization	20	15
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	5	4
5 Individualization of Instruction	1	6
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	9	11
7 Supervision of Personnel	9	12
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	21	18
9 Resources	8	9
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	6	6
11 Parent and Community Involvement	15	12
Total:	127	124

Table 9

*Standards Identified as Concerns for Males and Females*

Standards Concerns	Male	Female
1 Foundations of Leadership	2	2
2 Contextual Understanding	3	6
3 Planning and Organization	13	12
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	1	0
5 Individualization of Instruction	0	0
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	4	2
7 Supervision of Personnel	1	5
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	0	4
9 Resources	7	11
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	1	1
11 Parent and Community Involvement	0	2
Total:	32	45

*Success: Standard 8, Supervision of Student Conduct.*

Because there was a difference of seven entries between male and females, it was considered important to examine the narratives for potential themes that would support the differences for successes under standard eight. Findings, however, indicate differences in how many entries but strong themes did not emerge that differentiated the answers between males and females. They were both grateful to gain experience in discipline and supervision. Many expressed increased confidence with increased opportunity to practice. There were also a couple of entries for both males and females

where positive discipline or school programs were mentioned. The males did have more entries about supervision at sporting events for the secondary level, but the nature of those experiences did not differ from the females' experiences.

#### *Male Responses*

"I have started sitting in with the vice-principal three days a week during my planning period. He has been talking me through each day's events and letting me help him with this everyday disciplinary duties."

"The confidence helps in dealing with students who are not in good situation."

"I am a member of our Positive Behavior Support (PBS) training group, a new program we have implemented this year. As a result of the school wide training for both staff and students, the overall climate of our school has changed dramatically. After one month, our office referrals are down over 65%, compared to the first month of school last year. We attribute this directly to the PBS training."

"Contacted Rocky TV the school Video production class in charge of video announcements that are aired twice a week. Was able to film a segment about Student behavior expectations at basketball games and wrestling matches. Was a very positive production with students and the positive behavioral expectations that we have for them."

#### *Female Responses*

"I have been meeting with one of our APs on a more regular basis. She is starting to give me more and more duties. I am now taking care of her attendance calls and some disciplinary issues with students. I am feeling more comfortable dealing with discipline actions than before"

"I have started to be more confident in my decisions regarding student discipline. This is just starting to improve as I get more experience at this level."

"I am enjoying my contact with students at school sporting events and activities. I have become more aware of the small group of students who are natural leaders. We had some issues with student behavior at several sporting events. Later we pulled the natural leaders together and talked about what they could do to help us enforce positive behavior at events. We gave them special tee shirts and they have become awesome allies at events."

*Success: Standard 11, Parent and Community Involvement.*

Both male and female participants wrote about similar successes for standard eleven. Both mentioned parent involvement and training. A difference between the two was females identified building relationships with parents and the community several times. There were two entries where males mentioned community outreach, but used networking and being a “politician” to describe the experiences. There was, however, in the second entry mention of building relationships as a result of “playing politician”. Male participants wrote more about dealing with difficult parents and resolving parent complaints than females.

*Male Responses*

“I have helped develop a PTSO organization that has not had much success in the past. It was nice to see all the energy from the nine parents that attended.”

“ I have had to deal with parents who were unhappy with a situation occurring with their child. The meeting went well and we are all focussing on the progress of the student.”

“I also offered two seperate workshops for parents of incoming 7th grade students. The feedback from both groups was amazing and I believe that this type of program will be an ongoing one for me wherever I end up.”

“I have been able to network with the community, collaborate with others, and dream about the possibilities that this program can bring to the school and the district. As a result of us writing this grant we are getting noticed by lots of people including the superintendent. The networking has been great and this grant is all the rage right now.”

“During the past few weeks one of the things that has been really great is me playing the role of the politician. I have had to go around the community to build relationships with different partners to help us with the Geometry in Construction Grant”

*Female Responses*

“The most signifcant experience of the past two weeks would be the PTO meeting. I had never attended at this school and had some preconceived ideas of



what it would be like, which were not accurate. A number of parents showed up, several of mine which was heart warming. I now have a clear idea of what they do, and why.”

“The principal, my colleagues and myself presented a session to the parents on multiage education. We presented a power point slide show on the philosophy and implementation of multiage instruction. The presentation was well received by the parents.”

“During the initial staff meeting I talked about the value in building relationships with the students and the parents. The staff not only bought into it, but challenged each other to make personal contact with every parent in the first two weeks of school. Over half of the teachers have met their goal and the fourth grade team was successful in reaching 100% before any other grade leave”

“I have begun to network and build partnerships within the community.”

#### *Challenge: Standard 3, Planning and Organization.*

Again there were not practical significant differences between the male and female entries for challenges with standard 3. The strongest theme, which emerged for both, was scheduling. Then planning, organizing, and time management were identified as challenges. Interns struggled with balancing the responsibilities of leadership with their teaching positions and other responsibilities.

#### *Male Responses*

“The challenge to this situation was my ability to find/have time for other things that needed to be done, when the meetings took up alot of time during the day. Organization very important and your ability to multi task is critical to be successful.”

“During the last two weeks I have been extremely busy with all the assistance that I have giving in the building. I have had to think flexibly to adjust my schedule to assist different teachers at different times. Usually this isn't a problem at all, but since I have become even more useful in the building my time is filling up and I have to think about when I am free and start scheduling people for not only later in the week but the next week as well.”

“Time. Finding time to meet my obligations.”

“During this scheduling many different conflicts arose due to the nature of the week as well as assemblies.”

“Getting organized while being tired and overwhelmed.”

#### *Female Responses*

“The most challenging situation has been time management. I have felt completely overwhelmed the last month. My supervisors want to provide me with a lot of experiences. Unfortunately, it is too much all at once”

“Scheduling has been difficult. I approached the situation by gathering data and then meeting with my mentor to assess the data and generate a plan”

“Thank God for plans B, C and D, when A is not going to work at all.”

“Most everyone in the room had already committed time to other things for that hour she wanted. I felt that the work would take more than an hour, and it should because it was very important work. This was so FRUSTRATING! Our PD department book study is DuFours book. I'm wondering why we did not plan all of this better.”

#### *Concern: Standard 9, Resources*

Overwhelming the concerns for both males and females for standard 9 were not getting enough experience with budgets and staffing (FTE). They expressed concern with inadequacy in these areas. There were not practical significant differences between males and females and their responses to concerns for standard 3.

#### *Male Responses*

“My internship is moving along well. I would really like more time with budgeting so I can have some experiences there.”

“Still worried about budgeting. I would like some opportunities with an elementary and secondary budget.”

#### *Female Responses*

“One of the areas I have limited hours in is resources (Standard Nine). My mentoring principal has a small budget that we looked over very quickly.”

“I am worried about the financial planning aspect. I have not had any opportunities yet to look at school budgeting other than to talk to the secretary about showing me how she does things when she has a chance.”

### *Years of Experience*

Participants were divided into four categories for years of experience; 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and more than 15 years. They were not equally distributed by years of experience. This made comparing the groups and standards identified under the different categories problematic. The number of participants for each category was divided by 100 then each number for the individual standards was multiplied by the appropriate number. This provided the researcher with percentages for each category that could be compared. To compare the different groups, the highest and lowest percentages for each group of years of experience were examined.

The standards identified as successes did not differ for the different years of experiences. The majority of interns found the most success in standards 8 and 1 despite how many years of experience he/she had. Supervision of personnel had a lowest number in each (some categories had several standards that had the same number for the category). Because there was not a difference, narratives were not further examined for themes. Table 10 shows the number of standards identified as successes under each category for years of experience; greatest numbers for each category is in bold print.

Table 10

*Standards Identified as Successes for Years of Experience*

Standards Success	0-5 Years of Experience	6-10 Years of Experience	11-15 Years of Experience	15+ Years of Experience
1 Foundations of Leadership	60	<b>73</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>60</b>
2 Contextual Understanding	40	64	46	47
3 Planning and Organization	<b>80</b>	64	62	53
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	60	32	46	33
5 Individualization of Instruction	40	36	15	27
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	50	41	62	53
7 Supervision of Personnel	40	23	15	7
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	<b>80</b>	<b>73</b>	62	<b>60</b>
9 Resources	40	41	38	33
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	40	18	15	20
11 Parent and Community Involvement	60	50	38	33

*Note.* Greatest number of successes in bold print.

The greatest concern for all four levels of experience was standard 3, *Planning and Organization*. Standard 9, *Resources*, was also the second highest concern for all levels of experience. The other standards had low percentages and sometimes had zero entries. Narratives were not examined for further themes because of the similarities between the different levels of experience. Percentages are displayed in the following table, and greatest numbers for each category are in bold print.

Table 11

*Standards Identified as Concerns for Years of Experience*

Standards Concerns	0-5 Years of Experience	6-10 Years of Experience	11-15 Years of Experience	15+ Years of Experience
1 Foundations of Leadership	10	0	15	7
2 Contextual Understanding	10	14	15	20
3 Planning and Organization	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>33</b>
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	10	0	0	0
5 Individualization of Instruction	0	0	0	0
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	20	0	23	7
7 Supervision of Personnel	0	18	8	7
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	0	5	15	7
9 Resources	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>33</b>
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	10	5	0	0
11 Parent and Community Involvement	0	5	0	7

*Note.* Greatest number of concerns in bold print.

Greatest challenges, however, varied for the different levels of experience.

Participants with the least amount of experience (0-5 years) and those with 11-15 years of experience were mostly challenged by standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*.

Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, was the greatest challenge for participants with 6-10 years of experience. Finally, standard 3, *Planning and Organizing*, was the greatest challenge for those with more than 15 years of experience. Standard 5, *Content Knowledge Instruction*, was the least of the challenges for all but those with 6-10 years of experience. Standard 10, *School Site Safety and Maintenance*, was the least of the

challenges for those with 6-10 years of experience. Standard 5 was, however, one of the least recognized challenges for those with 6-10 years of experience. The following table shows the differences in challenges for the different categories. Greatest and fewest numbers per category are in bold print.

Table 12

*Standards Identified as Challenges for Years of Experience*

Standards Challenges	0-5 Years of Experience	6-10 Years of Experience	11-15 Years of Experience	15+ Years of Experience
1 Foundations of Leadership	50	50	54	53
2 Contextual Understanding	60	<b>64</b>	54	40
3 Planning and Organization	70	59	46	<b>60</b>
4 Content Knowledge Instruction	20	14	23	<b>7</b>
5 Individualization of Instruction	<b>10</b>	14	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>
6 Management and Evaluation of Instruction	50	23	62	13
7 Supervision of Personnel	30	36	38	33
8 Supervision of Student Conduct	<b>90</b>	55	<b>85</b>	47
9 Resources	20	36	23	27
10 School Site Safety and Maintenance	30	<b>5</b>	38	20
11 Parent and Community Involvement	50	45	38	47

*Note.* Greatest and fewest numbers per category are in bold print.

The greatest challenge identified for interns with 0-5 years of experience was standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*. Disciplining students for many different reasons (e.g. fighting, stealing, gang activity, and sexual assault) was difficult for the interns. Mostly following through on their own seemed to be the challenge. Support from administrators and School Resource Officers was appreciated. One particular intern struggled with the different expectations for the special education students, and was not aware of the rules initially. This could be contributed to the intern's limited teaching experience.

“One challenging situation was a third grader who was caught stealing from the school store. I had to discipline the child, deal with the parents, and communicate with the teacher.”

“I was called upon to mediate a situation involving two students who were under the impression that their 8th grade brothers were going to engage in gang fighting.”

“The second struggle that I had with this was that I had to collaborate with the special education department, and the school psychologist on this case only to find that the rules for how special education students are disciplined are totally different than the other students.”

Interns with 11-15 years of experience also identified standard 8 as the greatest challenge. They had similar entries as those with 0-5 years of experience. Most of the challenges were disciplining students for several reasons (e.g. bullying, fighting, and drug use). Support from administrators and School Resource Officers was also appreciated. Having support allowed them to process the situation and gain advice on how to resolve the issues. Some of the entries, did however, show reflection on the interns' prior experiences to guide them through the situations. Even with prior experiences, one intern struggled to resolve the situation.

Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, was the greatest challenge for interns with 6-10 years of experience. Dealing with decisions made from the district level, such as curricular changes, was a prevalent concern for this group. Not feeling supported after those decisions and changes was also mentioned. Some state level testing and federal policy (Adequate Yearly Progress from No Child Left Behind) was also a challenge. Other outside influences, like a new charter school opening in the area, created contextual problems for interns.

“Most challenging situation is being a part of this middle school review process. Our district is changing the middle schools and being a part of the administration, is tough. There are some changes that are coming and people are not going to be happy.”

“One challenge during the textbook adoption process was getting a group of 15 people (teachers who taught 6th and 7th grades) to agree on anything. I had forgotten how many opinions are shared during such a process. It was incredibly frustrating. Of course all opinions were valued but it seemed to me to be a case of “too many cooks in the kitchen.”

“my frustration has come out in meetings or in discussions. I feel as though I'm going to a negative place too frequently. It's not easy being in a large system when you are anxious to do good work but unsure if the structure is there to support the work.”

“One of the biggest is that our district is being impacted by a charter school that will open next year. Therefore, we are all losing FTE to staff that building. Our building will lose one FTE. With that loss we will not be able to staff our building unless we multi-age or grow one grade level.”

Interns with more than 15 years of experience were challenged by standard 3, *Planning and Organization*. The majority of the entries identified challenges with scheduling. Having enough time to accomplish the workload and planning were also mentioned.

“I was put in charge of scheduling duties for student teachers. I had some differences of opinion when it came time to schedule the duty responsibilities. It was with the teachers, it was at times with administrators. How do we balance focus on education with managing the day to day operations of the building. I trusted the administrators



somewhat and we were able to come to a realistic compromise on what duty responsibilities should be.”

“In making the CSAP schedule, it is always a battle to match High School up with elementary. The Elementary ends up getting the short end of the stick.”

“The challenge during this month is the lack of time.”

## Mixed Results

### Research Question Eight

*To what extent do the open-ended themes support the scaled scores results?*

The scaled scores only indicated a statistically significant difference in the scores over time. The attributes, gender and years of experience, did not show a statistically significant difference or interaction (over time). Several of the narratives supported the similarities between genders and between different levels of experience. There were, however, some practically significant differences. There were three standards, 7, 8, and 11, that had a difference of four or greater between genders for successes. When narratives were analyzed further, however, strong themes that differentiated the two did not emerge. For standard 8 males had more entries referencing the secondary level, but the nature of the entries weren't greatly different from the female entries. Females mentioned building relationships for standard eleven, but again there were not other strong themes that emerged. For challenges, standard 3 had the greatest difference between males and females and standard 9 was the greatest difference for concerns. Very similar challenges and concerns emerged for both males and females when the narratives were analyzed.

As for years of experience, only challenges varied greatly for the different levels. Successes and concerns were not analyzed for emerging themes because of the similarity in the number of answers for each level of experience. Those with 0-5 years and 11-15

years of experience were mostly challenged by standard 8, *Supervision and Student Conduct*. Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, was the greatest challenge for those with 6-10 years of experience. Finally, standard 5, *Content Knowledge Instruction* was the greatest challenge for those with more than 15 years of experience.

Although there are many similarities within the different attribute groups, some differences did emerge with the qualitative analysis. Overall the statistical analysis is supported, but adding the narratives allows for a more thorough understanding of the research. According to the narratives, there were differences between the varying levels of experience and identified challenges. This does not support the finding of no statistically significant difference for the different levels of experience. Increased scores over time had a statistically significant difference. The temporal component could not be analyzed qualitatively in an effective way because of the nature of the questioning. Had the journal questions specifically elicited answers for the specific standards, this may have been possible.

### Conclusion

Examination of both scaled scores and narratives was conducted to provide further understanding of principal intern perceptions of their grasp of the identified state principal standards for Colorado. Scaled scores were examined for changes over time (initial, mid-year, and final), as well as differences between gender and between years of experience. Answers to open-ended journal questions were used to explore the factors for principal intern perceptions' of standards acquisition at Colorado State University. Information from this study combines standards, internships and reflective practices to further inform the preparation of principals.

A statistically significant difference for initial to mid-year and mid-year to final scores was found. As for the difference between male and female participants and their overall scores, there was not a statistically significant difference. The mixed ANOVA indicated the statistical significance of the increase of scores over time, however, the other factors, years of experience and gender, were not found to have a significant interaction with the overall scores. All standards were addressed throughout the journal entries. Not all interns, however, referenced all the standards in their entries under the specific categories: successes, challenges, and concerns. Few differences were discovered through the narratives for gender. Challenges varied for the different levels of experience but not for successes and concerns. Important considerations drawn from the data will be presented in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study, overview of the problem statement, major findings, findings related to the literature, and a conclusion including implications and recommendations for further research. Important considerations drawn from the data presented in Chapter 4 will be presented throughout this chapter.

### Overview of the Problem

Principal preparation programs have faced much criticism (Hess & Kelly, 2006; Levine, 2005; Fullan, 1998). They have been called to reform as the principal position has increased in complexity. While attempts have been made to improve (Holloman, Rouse, & Bradshaw, 2007; Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002), the complexity of the current context calls for several components of the improvement efforts to be examined. The reports on principal preparation thus far have overwhelmingly been negative, but few have been empirical (Cooner, Dickmann, & Dugan, 2008). Isolating prevalent components such as standards, internships and reflective practices (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2001; Williamson & Hudson, 2001) in an empirical study has the potential to significantly inform the preparation of principals.

### Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The intent of this study is to further the knowledge base of principal preparation by isolating the internship, standards, and reflective practice components often seen in principal preparation programs. Principal interns' perceptions on their grasp of the identified principal standards for Colorado through guided reflective practice were examined.

With the focus of inquiry being on principal internships, standards and reflective practice the research questions were:

1. What are the differences between initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
2. What are the differences between male and female students in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores?
3. Is there an interaction between teaching experience and gender in regard to initial, mid-year, and final standards acquisition scores for the principal interns?
4. What standards are recognized as part of what worked well and was successful during the internship?
5. What standards are recognized as part of challenging situations during the internship?
6. What standards are recognized as part of concerns during the internship?
7. How does gender and years of teaching experience influence the placement of standards mentioned; success, challenge or concern?
8. To what extent do the open-ended themes support the scaled scores results?

#### Review of Methodology

A concurrent triangulation, mixed methods design (QUANT + QUAL) was utilized for this study. This type of design includes an equally substantial amount of quantitative and qualitative data collected at the same time (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Principal interns regularly logged on to an online journaling program to answer open ended prompts and rate themselves on a six point Likert-type scale of their

“I had two students who locked a smaller student into a locker. I lost my cool and told them to immediately remove the student.”

“I was asked to join the SRO in search of 4 truant students who we believed were either involved in drugs and/or gang related activities”

“Upon my return to work, I dealt with two students who were not only struggling academically, but personally as well. I was called upon by my colleagues to intervene for the students, but every intervention that I attempted had already been tried. Although I was applying my past knowledge and listening with empathy, I found these situations to be more complex and I more time consuming than I imagined they would be.”

perceived knowledge of the Colorado principal standards. A non-experimental comparative approach was used to analyze the scaled scores. Initial, mid-year, and final scores were analyzed. The time when scores were analyzed, gender, and years of experience were attributes considered for this analysis. The narratives were analyzed using the deductive coding strategy, template analysis (University of Huddersfield, n.d.). Principal standards were established as *a priori* codes. Matrices created using NVivo 7, a computer assisted qualitative analysis software, aided in the mixed analysis.

### Major findings

Scaled scores indicated increased perceived acquisition of knowledge of the Colorado principal standards. The reflective process through Journey Mapping demonstrated the integration of standards during the internship experience. The participants referenced all standards in their journal entries. The statistical analysis did not indicate a significant difference between gender and between different levels of experience. There were, however, subtle differences when the narratives were analyzed.

### Quantitative

Although not surprising that a statistically significant difference for initial to mid-year and mid-year to final scores was found, it does indicate that continued growth of participants' acquisition of standards increased throughout the program. The equivalence of increase in mean scores for initial to mid-year, and mid-year to final scores, is especially of interest. It indicates that an equal amount of learning is occurring for each semester. This supports the length of the internship year. If scores leveled off at semester, considerations could be made towards the need for a full academic year for the internship experience.

As for the difference between male and female participants and their overall scores, it is clear that there was not a statistically significant difference. This indicates an equivalence of perception for both males and females in regard to their level of acquisition of skills relating to the Colorado State Principal Standards.

The mixed ANOVA also indicated the significance of the increase of scores over time, which was the only statistically significant result in this particular analysis. The other factors, years of experience and gender, were not found to have a significant interaction with the overall scores or main effects on gender and years of experience.

#### Qualitative

Overall entries for participants included mention of all eleven principal standards. They were, however, mentioned at different levels of frequency for the different categories: success, challenge, and concern. Presentation of the findings will demonstrate whether this indicates deficiencies of certain standards met through the internship. The scaled scores indicated increased perceived knowledge on the standards throughout the experience. The particular standards interns wrote about in their journals, however, were the authentic experiences that were salient enough for interns to reflect on. Although the amounts of entries for each standard were not equal, they were all mentioned. The temporal component was statistically significant for the quantitative analysis. It may then seem germane to examine the placement of the standards in different time intervals for the journal entries. The open-ended nature of the questions, however, did not guide the interns to reflect specifically on standards' acquisition (e.g. what standard did you find success with this week in your internship?). The time in which a mentor would provide experience for certain standards was not controlled. It was also not controlled when



mentor principals would normally work with a particular standard. For example, a principal may only work with the budget, standard 9, during the spring months. The principal may also only conduct formal evaluations, standard 6, at particular times during each semester. Therefore, an intern would only have experiences to reflect on with the standards during the times when the mentor principals worked with them. Not having experiences at different times would not be an indication the intern was not proficient in a standard. For these reasons, time of standards mentioned in the journals was not analyzed.

Overall every standard was included in journal entries; and they were present under the different categories: success, challenges and concerns. Successes were clearly seen as positive experiences with the different standards. Although challenges may be defined as a negative, they were often referred to as excellent opportunities to gain experience. These were moments that stretched the interns to apply their knowledge and work out of their comfort zones. Therefore challenges were not considered negative; rather they were authentic opportunities to gain more knowledge in the particular standards. When standards were referred to under concerns it was often because the intern did not feel he/she had been afforded the opportunity needed to be proficient in a particular standard. This would indicate deficiencies for the standards most frequently mentioned under concerns. There were, however, only 109 entries coded for concerns about the standards and 144 entries coded for “no concerns”. “No concerns” was established as an emergent theme during the analysis. Even though there were concerns and deficiencies that can be examined, there were more entries indicating no concern.

Discussion of the major findings for the individual standards for the categories, success, challenges and concerns, is presented below.

Standard 1, *Foundations of Leadership*.

Standard one was the most frequently identified success and was the fourth most frequent challenge. Interns had many opportunities to practice this standard. They found success and were challenged by communicating effectively. When interns were “principal for the day” they expressed successes with standard one. The role change from administrator to teacher also created challenges with standard one. Four interns did mention concerns with standard one. Those concerns were about not having opportunities with foundations of leadership, such as being “principal for the day”. The successes and challenges mentioned and the large amount of interns identifying experience with this standard indicates proficiency and knowledge of standard one.

Standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*.

Standard 2 was in the top four most frequently mentioned for all three categories. Outside influences such as accreditation and legislation (e.g. No Child Left Behind and special education law) were the foci for the successes and the concerns. Challenges were district focused, such as textbook adoptions and district policy. Interns gained awareness for the complexities of managing change brought forth from contextual understanding. They also were cognizant of the politics of education, particularly from the stand-point of a principal.

### Standard 3, *Planning and Organizing*.

Standard 3 was in the top three most frequently mentioned standards for all three categories. The rigor and demands of the internship was apparent when interns wrote about standard 3. Managing and prioritizing time, as well as maintaining organization, were themes for all three categories. When interns were able to accomplish these things they felt successful. Otherwise they were concerned and often seemed overwhelmed. Just as Tucker and Coddling (2002) described, the demands on principals are extensive. Without proficiency in standard three, it would be very difficult to meet those demands. The high frequency of interns identifying experiences with standard three supports experience with authentic leadership practice, especially for the current context of the principal position.

### Standard 4, *Content Knowledge and Instruction*

Standard 4 was in the bottom two for concerns and challenges and seventh for successes. Only one intern mentioned standard four as a concern. For both successes and challenges, experiences with the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) were mentioned. Meeting with teachers and principals to support disaggregating assessment data to help drive instruction was part of the successes and challenges. This standard was not reflected on as much as many of the others. It could be because content knowledge and instruction is an integral part of what teachers do. Because all interns were required to have at least three years of teaching experience prior to acceptance into the program, they all have experience with this standard. They were clearly not concerned about it. Several of the other standards are more leadership specific, and one would not gain experience with them by being in the classroom. Every teacher,

however, is expected to have proficient skills in “effective instructional and assessment methodologies and strategies” as stated in standard 4.

Standard 5, *Individualization of Instruction*.

Standard 5 is very similar to standard 4. The difference is standard 5 focuses on the Colorado Model Content standards and closing the achievement gap. There were no interns who identified a concern for this standard. As for successes and challenges it was in the bottom three. Successes were found in supporting the needs for all students and working with standards for the students. Challenges were about situations where all student populations were not recognized or supported. Again this is a standard that is also part of the requirements for classroom teachers. All teachers in Colorado are charged with the responsibility to teach the Colorado Model Content standards and work to close the achievement gap. This could have contributed to the minimal reflection shown by the interns on this standard.

Standard 6, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction*

Standard 6 was in the top half of the frequency of standards mentioned for all three categories. Interns worried about having the opportunity to do evaluations and were grateful to gain the experience when they did get to observe. Sharing the evaluations in a meaningful way with the teachers they observed was challenging. It was also challenging when a poor performance was observed and needed to be discussed with a teacher. It was clear the experience of conducting the evaluations allowed for authentic practice and quality reflection. Interns reflected on their abilities to identify effective instruction, how to organize for the evaluation, and how to conference with teachers about what was observed.

### Standard 7, *Supervision of Personnel*

Standard 7 was in different places for the different categories. It was the least frequent standard mentioned for successes, the seventh for challenges and fifth for concerns. Different aspects of the standard were also mentioned for the different categories. Successes were mostly about experiences with hiring. Challenges were about classified personnel and enforcing district policy for employees. Concerns were about the lack of opportunity to gain experience with this standard. Interns could have benefited from more experience with this standard. The nature of personnel policy, however, and experience interns are allowed to access may be part of the problem. Often personnel issues are confidential. The reflections, however, show that interns may not be getting what they need to be proficient in supervision of personnel.

### Standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*.

Standard 8 was the second most frequent standard for successes and the most frequent standard for challenges. It was sixth for concerns. The interns demonstrated growth in this standard with their reflections. They were often uncomfortable with discipline in the beginning, but became more confident with time. Although teachers discipline students, principals have a different role in discipline. The level of infractions and consequence is far greater when the principal is involved. Overall, interns gained quality experience with this standard. The concerns they expressed were about disciplining fairly and gaining more experience.

### Standard 9, *Resources*.

Standard 9 was much more frequent for concerns than for successes and challenges. It was seventh and eighth for successes and challenges and second for

concerns. The concerns were related to lack of opportunity to gain the necessary experience. School budget exposure, staffing (Full Time Teacher Equivalents), and grant writing were mentioned as successes and challenges. When cuts were needed and grants were not funded they were recognized as challenges. Lack of opportunity could be related to the timing principals usually work with resources. They typically handle decisions around resources in the spring. It may have been difficult to provide interns with experience prior to that time. Principals' willingness to share or ability to share budgetary information may have also contributed to the issue. Either way, interns felt they needed more when it came to this standard.

#### Standard 10, *School Site Safety and Maintenance*

Standard 10 was not a frequent standard identified for any of the three categories; 10<sup>th</sup> for successes, 9<sup>th</sup> for challenges, and 8<sup>th</sup> for concerns. School safety procedures were often the focus for this standard. Teachers are familiar with these procedures and practice them with their students. What challenged the interns was the realization of the responsibility the principal has over the situation for student safety versus their roles as teachers. Interns reflected on what it meant to "be in charge". Maintenance issues only came up a few times. It was brought to the interns' attention because the building would malfunction (e.g. a heater stopping in the middle of winter). Considering this is how experiences were gained with maintenance, it would be difficult to plan or provide opportunity for them. School site safety is very important, and interns should have experience with this standard. The reflections, however, indicated that even though the experiences were not very frequent, they were meaningful and they did occur.

### Standard 11, *Parent and Community Involvement*

Standard 11 was close to the middle for successes and challenges. It was the ninth standard for concerns. The majority of the entries were about parent interactions. One intern wrote about the excitement from the community about a grant. Parent involvement was both a success and a challenge. Conducting workshops for parents was a success. Resolving conflicts with parents was the greatest challenge. There were only two interns who identified standard 11 as a concern. Their entries were about the lack of opportunity to join the mentor principal during parent meetings. Both successful and challenging experiences with parents were from the perspective of a principal. Teachers need to be proficient with parent and community involvement, but at a different degree than the principal. These experiences allowed for the interns to experience this standard from an administrative role.

Overall the reflections showed interns had experiences with the eleven standards. Standards 1, *Foundations of Leadership*; 2, *Contextual Understanding*; 3, *Planning and Organizing*; 6, *Management and Evaluation of Instruction*; and 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, were particularly strong. It appears, however, that more opportunity was needed for interns to feel proficient in standards 7, *Supervision of Personnel* and 9, *Resources*.

### *Gender and Years of Experience*

After the overall analysis of the journal entries, gender and years of experience was examined. Entries were divided into the appropriate categories and the number of successes, challenges, and concerns were configured into a matrix. There were two standards for successes, one for challenges, and one for concerns that were coded for

emerging themes for males and females. As for years of experience, only the most frequently mentioned challenges varied greatly for the different levels. Successes and concerns were not examined for emerging themes.

*Gender.*

Standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, and 11, *Parent and Community Involvement*, under successes was analyzed for emerging themes for males and females. There was very little difference between males and females for standard 8. Males did have more entries about supervision at sporting events for the secondary level. Interns primarily focused their internships at one level (200 hours) and completed the remaining hours (100 hours) at a different level. Perhaps more male interns focused their internship at the secondary level? The level interns were focusing on was not considered for this analysis. Males and females wrote about similar successes for standard 11, such as parent involvement and training. There were, however, a few differences for standard 11. Females identified building relationships with parents and the community several times. One male intern discussed building relationships, but it was under a political context. Males also wrote more about dealing with difficult parents and resolving parent complaints than females. It is difficult to determine if males found those issues more salient to reflect on than females did, or if they had more opportunities to deal with difficult parents and resolve parent complaints. Either way, when the entries did differ, the emphasis was different for males and females.

For challenges, standard 3, *Planning and Organization*, was examined for emerging themes. There were not practical significant differences between male and female entries for standard 3. The strongest theme to emerge was scheduling. Then



planning, organizing, and time management were identified as challenges. Both males and females struggled with balancing the responsibilities of leadership with their teaching positions and other responsibilities.

Standard 9, *Resources*, was the standard examined for emerging themes under concerns. Again, differences did not emerge. Both males and females were concerned with not getting enough experience with budgets and staffing (FTE). Both expressed inadequacies in these areas. This is in line with the overall analysis, which indicated a need for the increase of opportunities to work with this standard.

With the exception of standard 11, practical significant differences were not found between males and females. The emphasis on relationships for females, and resolving conflict for males, however, may be worth examining in the future.

#### *Years of Experience.*

For the greatest and fewest successes and concerns, there was not a practically significant difference between the different levels of experience. There was also not a practically significant difference for the fewest challenges. The greatest challenges, however, did indicate some differences. Both groups 0-5 years of experience and 11-15 years of experience identified standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, as the greatest challenge. Their entries overall were similar. Those with 11-15 years of experience did have some interns who reflected on their experiences to guide them through situations. Even though they had similar challenges as those with 0-5 years of experience, they did have former experience to help them through those challenges. The other two levels of experience had different greatest challenges.

Those with 6-10 years of experience identified standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, as the greatest challenge. Standard 3, *Planning and Organization*, was the greatest challenge for those with more than 15 years of experience. The challenges for those with 6-10 years of experience were dealing with decisions made from the district level. Then they did not feel supported after the decisions and changes were made. State level testing and federal policy (Adequate Yearly Progress from No Child Left Behind) was also mentioned. It would be interesting to see if interns at this stage in their careers tend to be more involved with district level work. This could explain the emphasis on the district when expressing challenges with contextual understanding. Standard 3 challenged interns with more than 15 years of experience. The majority of the interns identified challenges with scheduling. Having enough time to accomplish the workload and planning were also mentioned. Perhaps interns with the most experience are used to working/teaching in a particular way. They may have so much experience with one way that adding the demands of an internship was particularly challenging for them. Standard 3 was, however, in the top three most frequently mentioned standards for all the interns combined. Overall, interns had strong experiences with this standard. This may be an indication that those with the greatest amount of experience are in line with what was discovered for everyone combined.

#### Mixed Analysis

The combination of quantitative and qualitative research for this study complimented each other well. The quantitative results indicated a statistically significant difference for scores over time (initial to mid-year and mid-year to final). The temporal component for the narratives was, however, difficult to examine. The narratives

did support, for the most part, the perceptions the interns indicated when they scored themselves on their knowledge of the standards. There was a statistically significant difference from initial to mid-year and mid-year to final scores. This indicated continued growth of participants' acquisition of standards throughout the program for all standards. Further analysis of the narratives, however, indicated interns needed more exposure to standards 7 and 9. As for gender and years of experience, there was no statistically significant difference found. Overwhelming practical significant differences were not found in the narratives for gender or for years of experience either. Considering all of the combinations, eleven individual standards under three categories; successes, challenges, and concerns, there were not many differences. There was a difference between males and females for standard 11. Entries from females had an emphasis on relationships and entries from males had an emphasis on resolving conflict. As for years of experiences, there were only differences for the greatest challenges. Two levels, 0-5 years and 11-15 years found the greatest challenge to be standard 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*. Those with 11-15 years of experience sometimes reflected on their experience to guide them through situations. Otherwise they had similar entries. Interns with 6-10 years of experience found standard 2, *Contextual Understanding*, to be the greatest challenge. Their entries often reflected challenges with the district level. Standard 3, *Planning and Organization*, was the greatest challenge for those with more than 15 years of experience.

The value of combining the quantitative and qualitative analysis is that a more specific explanation for the findings can be presented. The findings from the qualitative analysis overall support the quantitative findings. The narratives, however, show a need for interns to have more exposure to standards 3 and 7. The emphasis placed on the

reflections for standard 11 differed between genders. Greatest challenges for the different levels of experience also differed.

### Findings Related to the Literature

The combination of three components of principal preparation; standards, internships, and reflection, was the focus of this inquiry. Interns reflected on their experiences through guided journal entries. Short (1997) mentioned this as one of the most significant strategies for meaningful reflection. The quality of the journal entries completed for this study support Short's sentiments. Interns wrote serious entries that expressed raw feelings and deep thinking. They included the good, the bad, and the ugly. It truly opened a view into the experiences of these individuals. The transition from teacher to principal through reflective processes was also demonstrated, as Normore (2004) emphasized as important. Levine (2005) was critical of the intention of those entering programs, and found it problematic that many enter (in his opinion) only to increase their pay as educators. This was not reflected in the entries. Many of the interns grappled with the realities of the principalship as they gained experiences. They questioned whether it was something they really wanted to do. Some were unsure at first, but ended up deciding to confidently pursue a principal position. Others were confident at first, but questioned themselves as they gained more experience, and concluded they would need more time before pursuing a position. Principal positions have increased in demand and complexity (Tucker & Coddling, 2002). These entries demonstrate the authentic experiences afforded to the interns. They were clearly exposed to the complexities of the current context of the principalship.

The journal entries also revealed the alignment with standards and the internship for this program; which was suggested by Wilmore (2002). The scaled scores indicated continual growth in the standards throughout the year. The narratives revealed experiences with all eleven standards. The reflective journaling process captured the integration of standards via the internship experience. Authentic experiences were integrated with the development of knowledge (standards), which was identified as a component in exceptional programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). The interns did not, however, have full reign of the job as McKerrow (1998) suggests should eventually happen, much like a student teaching experience. Most were working full time while also completing their internship.

### Surprises

During the deductive coding process emergent themes were also identified. One of the greatest challenges and concerns for interns was gaining experience at different levels. During the 300 hour internship, 200 hours should be at one level (elementary or secondary) and 100 hours should be at the other. There were 108 entries mentioning the requirement of gaining experience in a different level. Because most interns were completing their internship at their home schools while teaching full time, this was often a logistical issue. Resources for release time was helpful, but were not available to many of the interns. Interns who were working in their home schools, however, seemed to have more success with their internships. Levine (2005) and Wilmore (2002) see teaching full time while completing an internship at one's home school as problematic. Wilmore advocates for a full-time, year-long paid internship. While the internships were not paid, some interns were not working full time and were designated a building to complete their

internships. Those interns struggled to find their place in the buildings they joined. They worked to gain credibility and trust with the principal and the staff and they struggled with feeling a sense of belonging. Their place was not already established in the way it was for those working in their home schools.

Successful internships also have master principals who are quality mentors (Williamson & Hudson, 2001). The impact of the mentor principal was apparent throughout the entries. A surprise, however, was the impact the personality and outlook of the intern had. It appeared to be just as important as who the mentor was. Some interns chose to make it a great experience, while others seemed to find fault and negativity in almost everything (perhaps this was due to insecurities). There was often a thread or theme throughout entries for a particular intern. If, for example, he/she were concerned about not having enough time, that concern would come up somewhere in most of the entries.

Finally three other components of the program; portfolios, internship logs, and case studies, were often addressed in the journal entries. They appeared to further align the internship experience with the standards. These three components will be part of what is suggested for future research.

### Conclusions

With the amount of criticism and pressure principal preparation programs are currently facing, program evaluation is necessary; especially empirical inquiry of specific program components. Many educational leadership scholars have identified aspects of principal preparation to focus on: internships, standards and reflective journals are examples of significant components often mentioned in research. Brown-Ferrigno and

Rodney Muth report, “preparing future school leaders requires that candidates be immersed in authentic learning activities that produce real products used by schools where the work is conducted” (2004, p. 476). Principal preparation programs have also integrated state and national standards into their curricula. Other than state licensure exams, assessing the acquisition of standards has been problematic. Using electronic journaling, such as Journey Mapping, to track learning over time, is a unique way to assess the acquisition of standards. The purpose of this study was to investigate the acquisition of skills to meet licensure standards during the principal internship experience via reflective journaling. The findings support the increased knowledge of standards throughout the authentic internship experience for the principal candidates. The scaled scores showed that almost an equal amount of perceived growth occurred during the fall semester as the spring semester. This evidence supports the need for a full academic-year long internship, because scores continued to increase during the second semester. Growth may, however, continue to increase if the internship time was increased beyond the year long experience. The evidence from the narratives also revealed the exposure interns were provided for the different standards. Overall the standards were identified throughout the reflective process. Interns needed more work, however, with standards 3, *Planning and Organization*, and 7, *Supervision of Personnel*.

Gender and years of experience did not factor significantly into the scores. This supports the readiness level of all participants. It also indicated that both men and women perceive themselves to be equally successful. “Women are currently underrepresented in educational leadership positions” according to Sherman (2005, p.711). Sherman also writes of the discrepancy between the percentage of women in

principal licensure programs, and the number of women who pursue principal positions. This study suggests women are equally prepared for the role as men. The difference discovered among the narratives between males and females was only for one standard; 11, *Parent and Community Involvement*. The difference was not about competency of either gender rather it was in the different approaches used by them. Females mentioned building relationships more often, while males wrote about the political context of parent and community involvement and resolving conflicts with difficult parents. These results could help rectify the current scenario, through encouraging women to pursue position and by informing districts of the readiness level of female candidates. Those with varying levels of experience could also use this to their benefit. The program appears to equally prepare future principals with all levels of experience. Beyond the candidates using this for their benefit, programs such as CSU could use the data for recruitment and marketing. Clearly the scores and narratives reflect positively on the experiences offered through the program.

### Implications

This comprehensive study has the potential to significantly contribute to the understanding of preparing future principals. Requiring guided reflective journaling throughout principal internships clearly integrates the broad knowledge outlined by the standards. All three components should be a part of principal preparation. The internship allows for authentic practice. Standards guide the practice to make sure it is well rounded. They also allow for the assessment of the variety of experiences afforded to the principal interns during their internship. Reflection integrates the two while requiring interns to think deeply about their experiences. More instruction, however,



appears to be needed in the areas of resource management and supervision of personnel.

Gender and years of experience, should not be a factor for admission into programs.

Males and females as well as those with different levels of experience are equally competent in their potential to become principals.

#### Recommendations

Further inquiry into the acquisition of standards and the effects of reflective journaling is necessary in order to generalize the results, as this study is delimited to one university. Because this study was also isolated to three components; standards, internships, and reflection, other components were not considered. Portfolios, internship logs, and case studies are also part of this program. When the narratives were analyzed they emerged as themes connecting the interns to the standards. Further analysis of these components and the potency they may have on standard integration would be beneficial. They may in fact have a more explicit impact on the integration of the standards than the scaled scores and the open-ended journal questions. Follow up on the differences found between males and females when working with parent and community involvement would also be important, perhaps through individual interviews. Further examination into the greatest challenges identified by those with different levels of experience would also be beneficial.

## Concluding Remarks

This study was done to add relevant empirical research to the principal preparation knowledge base. Unfortunately, the majority of articles completed thus far have been descriptions of programs or philosophical essays. Authors have painted a very negative picture of current practice in principal preparation. While there were a few things discovered to improve upon (e.g. more practice with standards 7, *Supervision of Personnel* and 9, *Resources*), this analysis revealed the increased knowledge gained during the principal internship. Several standards; 1, *Foundations of Leadership*; 2, *Contextual Understanding*; 3, *Planning and Organization*; 6 *Management and Evaluation of Instruction*; and 8, *Supervision of Student Conduct*, were especially strengths gained from the internship. The reflective process captured the experiences of the interns through their narratives. Interns also demonstrated their perceptions of their growth through the scaled scores. Standards allowed for the assessment of the knowledge gained, and focused the interns throughout the program. The qualitative, open-ended information, helped explain the quantitative results, close-ended information (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The scaled scores were, for the most part, were supported by the narratives.

Continuing empirical analysis of principal preparation is needed. When specific components are isolated to one study, concrete suggestions for improving principal preparations can be made. Findings may also be discovered that support what is being accomplished in the field. This study revealed the value of the combination of internships, standards, and reflection in preparing future principals. Continuing the study with future cohorts and different researchers could strengthen the validity of the results.

Replicating the study in other universities would also increase generalizability. Further analysis of the portfolio, internship log, and case study components is also pertinent.

It is critical for principal preparation programs to continually question and improve their practices. As the principal position continues to increase in complexity (Cambron-Mcabe & Cunningham, 2002; Tucker & Coddling, 2002), quality preparation is imperative. This study seems like just the beginning.

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## Appendix A

ISLLC Standards *	Colorado Principal Standards
1. facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.	<p><b><u>6.08 Standard Eight: Supervision of Student Conduct</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about the design of a positive learning environment focused on student achievement and characterized by appropriate and acceptable standards of student conduct and effective behavior management strategies.</p>
	<p><b><u>6.11 Standard Eleven: Parent and Community Involvement</u></b>  The principal shall be knowledgeable about effective communication, decision-making, and interpersonal problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies.</p>
2. advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.	<p><b><u>6.04 Standard Four: Content Knowledge Instruction</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about all requisite Colorado model content standards and knows and is able to demonstrate effective instructional and assessment methodologies and strategies.</p>
	<p><b><u>6.05 Standard Five: Individualization of Instruction</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about instruction, especially as related to the Colorado Model Content Standards and closing the achievement gap.</p>
	<p><b><u>6.06 Standard Six: Management and Evaluation of Instruction</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about the appraisal of instructors, as related to student learning.</p>
3. ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.	<p><b><u>6.03 Standard Three: Planning and Organization</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about the elements of planning; plan implementation; and organizational change, and time management.</p>

	<p><b><u>6.09 Standard Nine: Resources</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about the principals and practices for the fiscal management of schools or school districts. A principal should be an ethical business manager, responsible for the fiscal health of the school and entrepreneurial about locating non-state revenue sources to provide enhancements to the instructional process.</p> <p><b><u>6.10 Standard Ten: School Site Safety and Maintenance</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about how to assure a safe learning environment in a secure, well-maintained facility.</p>
<p>4. collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.</p>	<p><b><u>6.01 Standard One: Foundations for Leadership</u></b>  The principal shall behave ethically and be knowledgeable about how to create an environment that encourages and develops responsibility, ethics, and citizenship, in self and others, and set the direction for a school community committed to and focused on learning.</p>
<p>5. acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.</p>	<p><b><u>6.01 Standard One: Foundations for Leadership</u></b>  The principal shall behave ethically and be knowledgeable about how to create an environment that encourages and develops responsibility, ethics, and citizenship, in self and others, and set the direction for a school community committed to and focused on learning.</p> <p><b><u>6.07 Standard Seven: Supervision of Personnel</u></b>  The principal is knowledgeable about national, state, and local district personnel policies.</p>
<p>6. understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts.</p>	<p><b><u>6.02 Standard Two: Contextual Understanding</u></b>  The principal shall acknowledge, and address in planning, the internal and external factors affecting the school and the learning process.</p>

\* All standards begin with “A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by”  
(Council of Chief State School Officers, November, 1996).

## Appendix B

### Open Ended Questions on Journey Mapping

1. What has worked well in your internship over the past two weeks? What successes have you experienced?
2. Describe a challenging situation or incident that you encountered during the past two weeks of your internship. How did you initially approach the situation? What habit of mind did you naturally rely on?
3. (Not used for this analysis)
4. What concerns do you currently have regarding your internship? How might these best be addressed?

## Appendix C

### Standards Acquisition 6 point scale

- a. Minimal exposure to the information
- b. Reasonable exposure to the information
- c. Some Experience in applying this in my work
- d. Considerable experience in applying this
- e. Feel confident enough about this to teach to others
- f. I and others would view me as an expert

### Questions aligned directly with Colorado Principal Standards

- 1. My grasp of how to behave ethically and how to create an environment that encourages and develops responsibility, ethics, and citizenship, in self and others, and set the direction for a school community. committed to and focused on learning.
- 2. My grasp of how to acknowledge, and address in planning, the internal and external factors affecting the school and learning process.
- 3. My grasp of the elements of planning; plan implementation; and organizational change, and time management.
- 4. My grasp of all requisite Colorado model content standards and knows is able to demonstrate effective instructional and assessment methodologies and strategies.
- 5. My grasp of instruction, especially as related to the Colorado Model Content Standards and closing the achievement gap.
- 6. My grasp of methods for the appraisal of instructors, as related to student learning.
- 7. My grasp of national, state, and local district personnel policies.
- 8. My grasp of the design of a positive learning environment focused on student achievement and characterized by appropriate and acceptable standards of student conduct and effective behavior. management strategies.
- 9. My grasp of the principals and practices for the fiscal management of schools and school districts. A principal should be an ethical business manager, responsible for the fiscal health of the school and entrepreneurial about locating non-state revenue sources to provide enhancements to the instructional process.
- 10. My grasp of ways to assure a safe learning environment in a secure, well-maintained facility
- 11. My grasp of effective communication, decision-making, and interpersonal problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies.