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The relationship between servant leadership style and Michigan public school superintendents as measured by MEAP reading and math proficiency

Antoinette Pearson

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The Relationship Between Servant Leadership Style and Michigan Public School Superintendents as Measured by MEAP Reading and Math Proficiency

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The Relationship between Servant Leadership Style and Michigan Public School
Superintendents as Measured by MEAP Reading and Math Proficiency

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Doctoral Candidate

Proposal

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership
Eastern Michigan University

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The public's demand for schools that provide excellent education for students has been the driving force for educational reform for many decades. The overall focus has been to strengthen policy, to provide reform models, and to equip school leaders with tools and solutions to correct the educational processes of schooling and to effectively manage resources. Until recently, educational outcomes were considered to be secondary objectives (Adams & Kirst, 1999)

Now, the focus of educational reform has shifted and intensified, centering on educational accountability and specifically targeting student performance outcomes as the means to promote excellence, to close the achievement gap between minorities and White children, and to mitigate the impact of poverty in America's schools (Elmore, Abelman, & Fuhrman, 1996; Reeves, 2004). Responsibility is being placed not only on district management but also on the schools where accountability in both teaching and learning is grounded in high stakes state-mandated testing and teacher evaluations. (Elmore, 2002).

Although academic success of minority students has been documented in individual schools across the country, reform efforts have failed to demonstrate large-scale transformation in entire school districts where the population is predominately minority (Elmore, 1995; Elmore, 1996; Springfield & Datnow, 1998). School districts in every state need to become places where children of color and children of poverty experience the same school successes that most White children from middle- and upper-income families have always enjoyed. (Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2000).

The social and moral responsibility to provide educational equity to all students was ignited by A Nation at Risk, a report produced in 1983 by the National Commission

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on Excellence in Education. Focusing on a growing educational crisis of poor academic performance, high dropout rate, and declining quality and morale of the teaching force, as well as weak and uncoordinated curricula, the commission made recommendations to public school systems regarding five major categories: Content, Standards, Time, Teaching, and Leadership and Fiscal Support. These recommendations were based on findings that showed “poor performance at nearly every level” and intended to stop the trend of the education system “being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity” (USA Today, August 2008). Improved methods and strategies were immediately called upon to ensure educational excellence and to hold educators responsible for school success. A catalyst for decades of education reform, this report caused states to multiply their efforts to improve school performance (Fullan, 2001).

This report has not been without controversy. The impact of A Nation at Risk has essentially led to reforms that are politically inspired and coerced by state governments, stress on higher student achievement based on prepared standards from professional associations, the shift of education control from local to state and national levels, fragmented reform agendas that are broad in scale and encompassing most of the country, reform initiatives grounded not in empirically sound studies but in political enthusiasms and intentions and an overwhelming implication that there will be a dramatic increase in student achievement with more standards and high stakes testing and assessment programs. (Orlich, pg 468 -472.)

The politically inspired federal reforms, as a result of this report, were then heightened with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. President George W. Bush’s reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act centered on the

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use of rigorous content standards and accountability supports to assure continuous improvement of student performance for all children and to eliminate achievement gaps among student population groups (Rebora, 2004).

The public today continues to demand accountability from public school districts to produce a more educated, more flexible, and more prepared work force matriculating from the school system. Although accountability frameworks for academic improvement and success have been developed, conversations around leadership, building district capacity, and cohesive structuring of external and internal accountability systems have surfaced (Adams & Kirst, 1999; Elmore, 2002).

Success of an educational institution is directly correlated to leadership of an effective leader with a vision. (Leithwood, 2005). Success of any organizational reform, including educational institutes, follows only when effective leaders are in place. (Leithwood, 2005). It is the ultimate responsibility of these leaders to begin developing the conditions, culture, and environment for wide-scale reform; their role is to establish vision, purpose, and shared meaning as a precondition for change (Fullen, 2001). Because the landscape of educational leadership has changed dramatically over the past decade as accountability has become paramount, there is an emphasis on collaboration, effective professional development on research-based learning strategies, development of leadership capacity, and creative use of resources.

Although the complex dynamics surrounding school districts and student performance are not completely understood, the constant is the continuous demand for schools to improve and change in order to prepare students for success in a rapidly evolving, technologically complex, diverse global society (Elmore, 1995; Murname &

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Levy, 1996; Schlechty, 2001). Educational institutions must be responsive to change if they are to survive and thrive.

The challenge of leading in an era of change and reform requires an innovative, nontraditional form of leadership, one that helps organizations learn and adapt to an environment of accelerating change (Senge, 2006). The realm of leadership must transcend beyond the traditional hierarchical flow of power to members of the organization. Leaders must have the skills to shape followers' goals and values toward a collective purpose in the active pursuit of higher educational objectives (Burns, 1978). Nothing is more important to an organization than that people are nurtured and moved into positions where they can make meaningful contributions (Gardner, 2000).

One such leadership style is transformational leadership, an imperative strategy for organizational reformation because "leadership only manifests itself in the context of change, and the nature of that change is a crucial determiner of the forms of leadership that will prove to be beneficial" (Leithwood, 1994, p. 499). Transformational leaders are able to transform the vision and the goals of an organization into an action plan that mobilizes individuals to act and to reshape the entire organization (Piccolo, R.& Colquitt, J.(2006).

Furthermore, the success of an organization requires a leader possessing a level head, a willingness to collaborate, and an understanding of the importance of relationships. Transformational leaders in education must have completely different focuses today:

Leadership in the future will be about the creation and maintenance of relationships: the relationships of children to learning, children to children, children to adults, adults to adults, and school to community. The increasing complexity of our society, the deterioration of families, and the loss of social

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capital available to support children and families mean that superintendents must be adept at creating a web of support around children and their families. (Houston, 2000, p. 431)

Organizations that improve do so only because leaders create and agree on what is worth achieving and set in motion internal structures and processes by which people learn how to do what is needed “to achieve what is worthwhile” (Elmore, 2000, p. 25). Further complicating how to achieve effective change is the idea that what works for one system or organization may be inadequate for another because change is contextual and must be readjusted and redesigned in every setting. “Improvement is a function of learning to do the right thing in the setting where you work” (Elmore, 2000, p. 26).

As leaders, superintendents in public schools systems can no longer simply focus on perfecting learning organizations to produce students who are academically successful on standardized tests. Leaders can no longer operate in isolation, divested from those societal issues that have shaped the community. Superintendents must be willing to create opportunities for communication, collaboration, community building, children’s advocacy, and curricular choices within their districts. The paradigm shift in the leaders in these organizations must bring them to become those who focus on “the organic and holistic qualities of learning and who structure learning that speaks to the hearts and minds of the learners” (Houston, (2000)p. 432).

The leadership style of superintendents is largely determined by their interpretation of the three spheres of influence that merge at the office: the external environment (government, business, community, and parents), the internal processes of the superintendents themselves, and the context of the local school district (culture and

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climate) (Johnson, 1996; Leithwood, 1995). This paradigm shift in this concept of power must be embedded in the vision of district superintendents and in how they lead.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Robert Greenleaf, a retired AT&T executive, talked about the need for managers and effective leaders to serve their people and to not be served. This way of thinking about leadership and their followers was a new idea for organizations. In many ways, Robert Greenleaf has been considered the father of servant leadership. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between the servant leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents and their district's student achievement.

Some case studies have documented and revealed evidence of wide-scale academic success in districts with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged minority children in states such as Texas, North Carolina, Connecticut, and New York. These studies concluded that wide-scale academic success can be linked to implementation and sustainability as a result of district-level leadership, not to policies (Elmore & Burney, 1999; Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2004).

Although district effectiveness has been studied in research literature, little research exists specifically about superintendents, their leadership style, and how it impacts the creation and implementation of a vision for reform, especially in the context of high-performing, high-poverty school districts (Coleman & LaRoque, 1990; Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2004). Viewing the school as the exclusive unit of change is inconceivable without considering the sources of change and support from the district. There is a fundamental relationship between district leadership and school leadership,

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particularly with the leadership of the superintendent, if school improvement is to occur (Fullan, 2001; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Lambert, 2003). According to Fullan (1991), the district superintendent is “the single most important individual for setting the expectations and tone of the pattern of change within the local district” (p. 191).

This study will examine the relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan superintendents of public school districts and their district’s academic success as measured by overall student proficiency on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 through 8. This study will contribute to the sparse body of literature available that discusses solutions for reducing the blatant achievement gap that exists between children of color in urban districts and other ethnicities within the same districts.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there a relationship between servant leadership traits of Michigan public school superintendents and their district’s academic achievement as defined by the percentage of students proficient on the MEAP Reading and Math test for Grades 3 – 8?

HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis, H₁:

There will be a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their district’s academic success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

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Null Hypothesis, H₀:

There will be no statistical significance between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their district's academic success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study will evaluate quantitative empirical data regarding the servant leadership style of Michigan public school district superintendents. The primary focus of quantitative research is “collecting facts of human behavior, which when accumulated will provide verification and elaboration on a theory that will allow scientists to state causes and predict human behavior” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 38). The target population is superintendents of public school districts in the state of Michigan. The researcher will send via Google Forms the Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR) developed from the research of Page and Wong (2003) and 7 demographic questions created by the researcher. District 3rd – 8th grade Reading and Math MEAP scores of superintendents who participated in the survey will be analyzed to establish relationship between servant leadership style and student achievement as measured by the MEAP.

This study is exploratory and research based. It is exploratory because true servant leadership is just emerging from infancy in the world of education (Spears, 1996). The theory still requires definition, refinement, and empirical validation. This study is also quantitative. The goal of the research is to collect data regarding the leadership values and characteristics of public school superintendents of Michigan with the mission

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of categorizing them as servant leaders or non-servant leaders, and evaluating their impact on their respective districts, as self-reported.

This researcher's desire to study the concept of servant leadership for the educational realm has been sparked by the need for effective leadership to transform current public school districts to meet the demands of society by closing achievement disparities between minority and White students in hopes of preparing all students to thrive, compete, and succeed in the global workforce.

As today's youth and their instruction have evolved, so has the desire for competent public school leaders to lead this educational revolution. They must create a climate and culture that emanates collaboration, distributed leadership, and employee empowerment. Employees' and stakeholders' needs in the organization and the subsequent response to those needs as a means of creating a responsive organization appear to have spawned a new theory that has extensive merit: servant leadership (Autry, 2004). Through impactful and thoughtful use of a survey, the research will reveal deeper insight into servant leadership practice of public school superintendents and its overall impact on the district's academic success.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

There is a clear deficit in research literature that will support the significance of this study. Although there is evidence on how to develop high-performing schools, little is present about developing high-achieving school districts (Cawelti & Protheroe, 2001). There is even less research on the influence of district leadership in creating high-achieving school districts. The concentration in research has predominately been on the

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principal's leadership (Cuban, 1984; Johnson, 1996; Leithwood, 1995). However, the superintendent is in a pivotal role to interpret, leverage, and implement reform that can produce academic success for the district.

While identifying the leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents in this research may not be generalizable to other states, this study can provide information that can broaden the scope of research and lead to support of theories regarding superintendent leadership in this society of educational accountability and reform. Furthermore, this study will serve to describe the leadership style displayed by superintendents that influence student achievement within their school districts. Page and Wong's model of servant leadership indicates how character affects everything a leader does. From this character flows the vision and compassion, as well the strategies needed to carry out the work of servant leadership. This study will offer district leaders clues about the role of superintendents and how impactful they can be in improving student performance. Finally, the insights gained in this study may prove helpful to both current superintendents and educational administrators who desire to become superintendents.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations are those conditions imposed by the research methodology of study. "Acknowledging limitations in research allows a researcher to add context for the reader and allows the reader to determine the usefulness of a particular study" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The limitations of the research study are as follows:

1. The participants may not provide honest answers. The survey is a tool where participants self-evaluate their leadership style.

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2. The answers yielded by the participants may not accurately portray the greater population, thus limiting the validity of the generalizations to be derived from the survey.
3. Limitations imposed on the study may be a result of the research tool. This survey was designed by Page and Wong for use in studying servant leadership.
4. The limited number of participants, their experiences as superintendents, and their district's demographics will provide a limited source of information for the research.
5. Very little research exists on superintendents successfully engaging their districts in systemic reform; thus, current research on the role of the superintendent, their leadership style, and its impact on district academic success is minimal and is found most prevalently in the years leading up to and including 2009.

DELIMITATIONS

Delimitations of the research are a result of restrictions imposed on the study by the researcher. "There are times in research where limits are placed on a particular study in order to help the researcher identify the boundaries of the study as well as to clarify the boundaries for the reader" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The following are delimitations for this research study:

1. The questions for the survey are a result of Page and Wong's studies and thoughts on the servant leadership style and the role of the superintendent.

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2. The number and type of questions developed for the survey limits the extent to how responses of participants can adequately reflect opinions and thoughts on the servant leadership style.
3. The research study is limited to the reflections of public school superintendents in the state of Michigan.
4. Superintendents chosen to participate were selected from a superintendent's roster provided by Michigan's Association of School Administrators organization.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership model. Greenleaf (2002) defined servant leadership as an innovative vision for leaders to perform their duties in accordance with a belief system of service to others as the primary focus. Modern leaders' goals and objectives are to promote a service-first mentality and go far beyond any traditional form of hierarchal, authoritative management style (Greenleaf, 1977, 1991).

Servant leadership is an educational trend that encourages school leaders to reflect on their own ability to promote change within the organization, as well as to support and encourage interest in maximizing the potential of others (Spears, 1995). Traditional leadership of top-down authority organizations has shifted to a paradigm that seeks to cultivate a culturally rich and professional environment for students and teachers.

The vision of the servant leader must be created, communicated, and owned by all within the organization for goals to be achieved and potential to be maximized (Greenleaf, 1996; Spears, 2003). Greenleaf (1977) defined servant leadership in the following manner:

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The servant-leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. He or she is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possession. For such, it will be a later choice to serve—after leadership has been established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are the shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. . . . The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. (p. 7)

Spears (1996) distilled Greenleaf's (1977) principled beliefs into 10 characteristics: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. These servant leadership traits are the manifestation of an intrinsic motivation that unleashes the potential of the organization and the participants to its fullest (Farnsworth & Blender, 1993; Spears, 2003).

Servant leadership is the perspective on leadership that identifies key moral behaviors that leaders must continuously demonstrate in order to make progress on Greenleaf's principled values of leadership. Greenleaf's research along with Spear's (1996, 2004) expounding on Greenleaf's descriptions of the 10 characteristics create an solid scaffold for a review of the literature. The literature review will support the relevance of servant leadership as a potential conceptual framework for achieving incredible results through people (Spears, 1994) as practiced by Michigan public school superintendents to create school districts that minimize academic disparities. (Fig. 1)

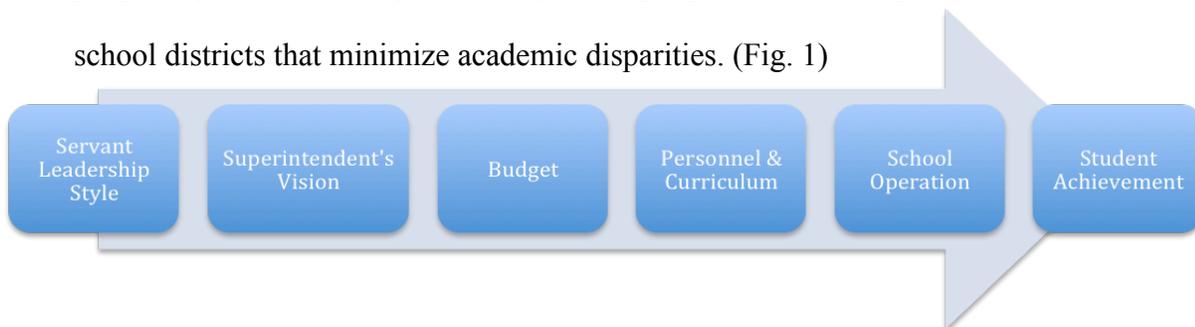


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Student Achievement Through Servant Leadership

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms defined below are used throughout this study and hold specific meaning in the research literature.

accountability: a restructuring strategy that emphasizes measures of student performance as criteria for school responsibility and accountability.

AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress): a cornerstone of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. In Michigan, it measures annual student achievement on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) for elementary and middle schools or the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) for high schools. Other indicators, such as the number of students tested and high school graduation rates, are also considered in the calculation.

culture : the basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members of a group or organization. The assumptions and beliefs involve the group's view of the world and their place in it, the nature of time and space, human nature, and human relationships (Schien, 1992).

district-level leadership: those vertical positions above the principal up to and including the superintendent (Fullan 1991, 2001).

educational reform: the planned efforts to improve classrooms, schools and school districts in order to correct perceived social and educational problems and to improve the future for students (Fullan, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

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MEAP : “The MEAP tests were developed to measure what Michigan educators believe all students should know and be able to achieve in five content areas: mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing. The test results paint a picture of how well Michigan students and Michigan schools are doing when compared to standards established by the State Board of Education. The MEAP test is the only common measure given statewide to all students. It serves as a measure of accountability for Michigan schools. iSchools for school improvement purposes can use results of the MEAP tests. The results indicate overall strengths and weaknesses of a school district's curriculum, and can be used to modify instructional practice. Results have been used for the Michigan Accreditation Program, and will continue to be used as one piece of this program as it evolves into an accountability model” (www.mde.gov).

servant leadership style: “ Servant leadership is the natural feeling that one has of desiring to serve others. It seeks to develop individuals who ensure that others’ needs are met and advocates a group-oriented approach to decision-making as a means of strengthening institutions and society” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13).

transformational leadership: the set of abilities that allow leaders to identify the need for change, to create a vision to guide that change, and to execute that change effectively (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995).

vision: a leadership strategy that involves maintaining focus in organizations through the creation of an image or a mental picture of beliefs about what the organization can become.

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SUMMARY

In Chapter 1, the research was introduced, and the backstory for the study of superintendents, their leadership styles, and their impact on district academic success was provided. This chapter included the introduction to the study, a description of the study, the research question to be addressed, and the hypotheses that will drive the research. Also highlighted were the design, the significance, the limitations, and the delimitations of the study. The theoretical framework of servant leadership theory that defines the rules under which those constructs interact was discussed. Finally, terms that hold specific meaning in the research literature were listed.

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Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature for this study is a combination of related research findings divided into three main areas: (a) the superintendent (b) transformational and servant leadership styles and (c) school culture. This study examines how the superintendent and their leadership style influences the culture and ultimately student achievement.

The first section includes a review of the history of the role of the school superintendent, its evolution from its traditional role and image. The literature on leadership styles provides an in-depth understanding on transformational leadership and its similarity to servant leadership. The literature on servant leadership specifically outlines its origination, how it has impacted the business sector and the characteristics of a servant leader. The third section includes research on school culture, including Schein's (2010) levels of culture, and the role of the individual and the function of leadership.

The Superintendency

Leadership practices such as creating a vision and building consensus around a goal have the greatest influences on cultural changes in schools. The role of the superintendent is essential to the success of today's public school system. This position was not created and introduced until the latter 1800s, but by the 1890s most major cities had superintendents (Kowalski, 2006, p. 12). Their primary duty was to follow the directive of their school boards, doing routine tasks given to them. Generally, the superintendent made sure that the board was meeting the requirements of the state's board of education. The superintendent has been described as the "professional general manager of the entire school system" (Kowalski, 2006, p. 5).

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As the superintendent became widely established and accepted, legal language on the role of the superintendent was created in individual state school codes. Sharpe and Walter (2004) reference the Illinois School Code as an example of the typical wording of an official document defining the superintendent position with legal functions.

“The board of education may employ a superintendent who shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the board of education. In addition to the administrative duties, the superintendent shall make recommendations to the board concerning the budget, building plans, the location of sites, the selection, retention and dismissal of teachers and all other employees, the selection of textbooks, instructional material and courses of study” (2004, p.5)

The role of the superintendent has evolved immensely over the past 50 years. Primarily, the superintendent job is to move the district forward in a collaborative effort with the board to achieve academic success. “The development of the role of the superintendent was important in the evolution of the hierarchical educational organization. The primary reason for creating the position was to have a person work full-time at supervising classroom instruction and assuring uniformity in the curriculum” (Kowalski, 2006, p. 12).

Information collected in a national report approved by representatives of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) have identified and reported specific responsibilities for superintendents:

- To serve as the school board’s chief executive officer and preeminent educational adviser in all efforts of the board to fulfill its school system governance role.
- To serve as the primary educational leader for the school system and chief administrative officer of the entire school district’s professional and support staff, including staff members assigned to provide support service to the board.

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- To serve as a catalyst for the school system's administrative leadership team in proposing and implementing policy changes.
- To propose and institute a process for long-range and strategic planning that will engage the board and the community in positioning the school district for success in ensuing years.
- To keep all board members informed about school operations and programs.
- To interpret the needs of the school system to the board.
- To present policy options along with specific recommendations to the board when circumstances require the board to adopt new policies or review existing policies.
- To develop and inform the board of administrative procedures needed to implement board policy.
- To develop a sound program of school-community relations in concert with the board.
- To oversee management of the district's day-to-day operations.
- To develop a description for the board of what constitutes effective leadership and management of public schools, taking into account that effective leadership and management are the result of effective governance and effective administration combined.
- To develop and carry out a plan for keeping the total professional and support staff informed about the mission, goals, and strategies of the school system and about the important roles all staff members play in realizing them.
- To ensure that professional development opportunities are available to all school system employees.
- To collaborate with other administrators through national and state professional associations to inform state legislators, members of congress, and all other appropriate state and federal officials of local concerns and issues.
- To ensure that the school system provides equal opportunity for all students.
- To evaluate personnel performance in harmony with district policy and to keep the board informed about such evaluations.

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- To provide all board members with complete background information and a recommendation for school board action on each agenda item well in advance of each board meeting.
- To develop and implement a continuing plan for working with the news media (AASA, 1994, pp. 11- 12).

Traditionally, a superintendent was chosen or appointed based on the perceived effectiveness as a teacher, political connections, image as a leader with political merit, or simply because they were male (Kowalski, 2006, p. 13). These criteria did little to promote a leader that would be capable of fulfilling the managerial and instructional roles of a superintendent.

In 1993, the AASA developed general professional standards for the superintendent. These standards concern leadership and district culture, policy and governance, communications and community relations, organizational management, curriculum planning and development, instructional management, human resources management, and leadership values and ethics (Kowalski, 2006, p. 21). These standards, along with the national standards for school leadership licensure, helped to create more fulfilling and relevant superintendent preparation programs in college and university programs. Table 1 highlights standards for interstate school leadership licensure.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Content</i>
1	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

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4	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Table 1: Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium Standards for All School Administrators

Note. From *The School Superintendent: Theory, Practice, and Cases* by Theodore J. Kowlaski, 2006, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Copyright 2006 by Sage Publications, Inc.

School superintendents were on the management side of the equation for many decades until A Nation at Risk (as cited in Glass, 1992). The effectiveness of public education is now at the core of a national debate. In the 1990s, the infusion of school choice established the growth of competition within an area that had been mostly a monopoly, forcing educational leaders to become more focused on the needs of the stakeholders (Kozol, 1991). The public has demanded accountability from public school districts to produce a more educated, more flexible, and more prepared work force that matriculates from the school system. This public outcry has increased the pressure on the superintendent to be effective in leading the districts to positive results despite the many social, political, and economic barriers continually impeding the school districts.

Many districts have been seeking intensive results and exploring various options for school reform, even looking outside the realm of educators to secure a superintendent. The individuals chosen have had business, government, and legal backgrounds. Shaw (1999) concludes that this push for superintendents with non-education backgrounds is a result of school boards seeking creative and innovative leadership styles that will provide pathways to academic success. However, not much success with closing achieving gaps

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and improving academic success has been documented from individuals with non-education backgrounds.

Female Superintendents

Historically, the typical American superintendent has been described as “. . . male, white, Protestant, from a rural, small town area, about fifty-two years old, and in a district of fewer than 3,000 students . . . He taught for about six years prior to assuming his first administrative position . . . held a central office position just prior to becoming a superintendent for the first time” (Sharp & Walter, 2004, p. 17).

In education, the traditional role of women has been to teach. As positions in education ascend up the hierarchical chart, few women attain these higher-level positions. Furthermore, only a very few reach the position of the superintendent. Aspiration is not the issue; it is lack of opportunity for females who desire the positions.

Data on educational administration portray a White, male-dominated profile for the position of superintendent since its existence. The societal role for women in the 19th century was one of homemaker, teacher or nurse. (eHistory@TheOhioStateUniversity). Roles for men were as leaders in society, such as politicians, ministers, and business owners. This included holding positions in school administration. 8.9% of women were superintendents in 1910. By 1930, 10.9% of women were superintendents. (Alston, 2005, p. 676). Women who wanted to become superintendents found that their goal could be perceived as masculine, inappropriate, and ambitious (Friedan & West, 1971; Shakeshaft, 1989). Men could get away with being directive and authoritarian; women could not without being considered “not feminine” (Eagley & Johnson, 1990; Reihl &

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Lee, 1996). According to Montenegro (1993), most national studies report that only 6% to 7% of all superintendencies are occupied by women. In December 2010, the American School Superintendent released a 10 year study documenting the dramatic changes that have occurred in public school leadership. For the study, 24.1% of public superintendents were female, tripled the number from 1993. Specific counts by both gender and race are largely nonexistent; that is, in most reports available on the public school superintendency, data are reported by gender only, or race only (Bell, 1992, p. 24; Tallerico & Blount, 2004, p. 31).

As political events began to change the landscape of society, the impact was reflected in the face of education. With females winning the right to vote, feminist leaders speaking on the need for equality, and women moving into nontraditional areas of society, such as business, the 1930s saw women superintendents at a high of 11%. But after World War II, during the 1940s and 1950s, men began to enter the education field in droves as a result of the educational degree program sponsored by the government. This influx of male educators was the source of the pool of male educators who accessed administrative leadership positions in the 1950s and 1960s. Shakeshaft (1989) noted that “men were encouraged to be leaders and administrators; women were encouraged to remain at home” (p.45). Title IX of the Civil Rights Act and the Glass Ceiling Act of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 helped to shed light on the lack of women in educational leadership positions. This new exposure positioned women to begin making upward strides in educational positions.

By the early 1990s, women accounted for 6.6% of all superintendents, and by the year 2000, that number had increased to 13.2% (Brunner, 1999; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner,

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2000). In 2005, there are nearly 15,000 superintendents nationally, yet only 2000 are women (Alston, 2005, p. 676). Specific counts by both gender and race are largely nonexistent; that is, in most reports available on the public school superintendency, data are reported by gender only, or race only (Bell, 1992, p. 24; Tallerico & Blount, 2004, p. 31). In December 2010, the American School Superintendent released a 10-year study documenting the dramatic changes that have occurred in public school leadership. For the study, 24.1% of public superintendents were female, tripled the number from 1993.

Non White and African American Superintendents

African Americans as superintendents were very sparse from the 1930s through the 1950s. Superintendents of color were practically nonexistent before the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. "In 1981 and 1982, about 2.2% of superintendents were persons of color, and by 1998, approximately 5% of all superintendents were persons of color . . . In no small measure, the current superintendency remains a position filled primarily by white men" (Brunner & Grogan, 2007, p. 12).

Even though African Americans occupy a greater number of leadership positions than they did a decade before, leading schools at the secondary or district level in America is still unusual. "In a society in which power and privilege are distributed at ease partially on the basis of one's education, Black school superintendents may very well represent the last hope for thousands of Black students that equal educational opportunity will become a reality" (Scott, 1990, p. 172).

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African American superintendents (AASs) have held positions predominately in the South because of the larger population of African Americans served. (Kowalski, 2006, p. 321). According to Scott (1990), in 1988, AAS-headed school systems had a combined population of three million students with over half being African American. The majority of AAS work in urban districts with student populations of 50,000 or more students.

The number of AAS has increased, but the numbers are marginal in comparison to other minorities. The most recent national study disaggregated data on racial and ethnic groups, reporting that slightly over 5% of superintendents were people of color: 2.2% being African American; 1.4%, Hispanic, 0.8%, Native American, 0.2%, Asian American; and 0.5%, other (Kowalski, 2006, p. 321). These low incidences compared to White superintendents may be because the road to superintendency for most AAS is different than that of White superintendents. Most AAS become superintendents from central office positions, whereas White superintendents come from assistant principal or principal positions (Glass et al., 2000). Scott (1990) candidly discusses the scenarios, ripe with a plethora of barriers and challenges, in which AAS assume their roles:

Black school superintendents often tend to be located in the more demanding of the superintendencies. They are most often appointed to systems with both inadequate financial resources and well-developed reputations as reservoirs of unmet needs (Scott, 1980). Their systems also tend to have large concentrations of Black students and students from disadvantaged socioeconomic environmental settings who suffer from declining achievement test scores and their communities frequently display large-scale unrest about the schools (Moody, 1980). Black superintendents often inherit little that is worth preserving and much that needs changing. (p. 165)

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Moreover, there is extreme pressure on superintendents of color to demonstrate exaggerated levels of professionalism and knowledge, and to outperform the normal expectations of the position. African American superintendents providing leadership for predominately Black school populations find themselves in an extremely peculiar position. Tensions normally exist between boards of education and superintendents, but causing more apprehension are the conflicting expectations for them that may result from varying sociological perspectives about education, particularly when there are differences in ethnic backgrounds. In all actuality, rarely is the African American school administrator permitted by Whites or African Americans to function as an educational leader. This occurs even though the race of the African American school administrator is incidental to his expertise and performance (Kowalski, 1995). Campbell-Jones and Avelar-LaSalle (2000) conducted a study with five superintendents, three Hispanic and two African American, in California, to understand the barriers and successes of minority superintendents. One participant articulated the expectations of minorities in this position:

A minority is expected to know more than the norm. We are expected to know how to mobilize ethnic communities and have excellent resource skills to move an agenda. But we have to do it in a non-threatening way, to be both sides. It is an unwritten expectation (p.13)

Even more unusual than African Americans leading schools or districts is African American women leading schools and districts. Restine (1993) claims that 20.6% of assistant superintendent positions nationwide are held by women, and 27% of principalships are held by women. Research from Bell and Chase (1993) provided numerical data profiles of women superintendents based on race and gender, during the

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period of 1991 to 1992. Of the 39 states reporting data, 460 superintendents were women: 424 White, 19 Black, 9 Hispanic, 4 Asian, and 3 American Indian (Tallerico, p. 31).

Young and McLeod (2001) concluded that women superintendents had higher levels of professional preparation than their male counterparts (Spencer & Kochan, 2000), were paid less (Pounder, 1988) and were dissatisfied with more, likely to leave their positions because of reasons such as disagreement with institutional decisions, lack of mentoring, and feelings of isolation (Blackmore & Kenway, 1997; Reisser & Zurluh, 1987).

Four themes emerged from a 1998 study conducted by Hudson et al. on African American Women Superintendents and their professional characteristics. Those themes were strength, perseverance, high aspirations for educational leadership, and advocacy for all children. “As J. Hudson et al. (1998) noted they [AAWS] spoke of their passionate desire and willingness to address issues of equitable educational opportunities for all children; they were sensitive to racial, cultural and socioeconomic differences; they challenged the status quo, raising the consciousness of right and wrong; and they confronted incompetence” (Tillman & Cochran, 2000, p. 46). In accord, Grogan (1999) notes that AAWS have a deep commitment to all children, but particularly to children of color; a strong sense of community; and an activist stance to fight against processes and systems that fail people of color. AAWS are more cognizant of the low expectations and barriers that poor and minority students encounter because they are similar to the obstacles that AAWS have had to overcome.

Overcoming low behavioral and academic expectations of society has provided a catalyst and credibility for AAWSs to achieve success with influencing and inspiring

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their staff and students. This success allows for AAWSs to serve as role models and influence change in the respective districts. (Tillman & Cochran, 2000).

Gender and Leadership

The question may arise as to why male superintendents display different leadership themes than do female superintendents. There is the argument that gender determines the leadership style as a result of socialization. Role Theory is rooted on the idea that a role defines how individuals are expected to behave, how individuals occupying roles perceive what they are supposed to do and the actual behavior of individuals (Toren, 1973). Role Theory provides the foundation for understanding the socialization of societal roles and for explaining how people behaved in occupational roles such as a principal or a superintendent. (Banks, 2007)

Helgesin (1990) argues that “women’s central involvement in managing households, raising children and juggling careers gives them a capacity for prioritization in leadership roles that men typically do not possess.” Furthermore, the socialization process has helped to develop values and characteristics that are reflected in women leadership behaviors which are “different from the traditional competitive, controlling aggressive leadership behaviors of men” (Helgesin, 1990; Schwartz, 1989; Rosener, 1990).

People behave according to expectations about their gender role based on socialization and societal perceptions. Generally, the expectation is that women will be more caring and relationship-oriented than men. As a result, this largely accounts for different approaches to leadership based on gender. Women are more likely to practice and demonstrate the characteristics of servant leadership (Bank, 2007).

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Male and female have distinct qualities that characterize their leadership style. “Male gender qualities characterized as aggressive, independent, objective, logical, rational, independent, analytical, decisive, confident, assertive, ambitious, opportunistic and impersonal are distinguished from female gender qualities described as emotional, sensitive, expressive, cooperative, intuitive, warm, tactful, receptive to ideas, talkative, gentle, tactful, empathetic and submissive (Park, 1996; Osland et al., 1998) (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, p. 124). The societal generalizations that resonate with traditional male and female characteristics transcend into the stereotypical perimeter associated with women and their ability to be effective leaders.

Current thinking argues for the re-vision of a leader as one who is facilitator, a catalyst or a member of a group that together works for social change. For if research into women’s lives and women’s ways has revealed nothing else, it has shown that women’s work has been valued for its emphasis on preserving relationships and striving to provide a decent survival for all. . . . Particularly in the light of the enormous diversity of ethnicity, culture, and values educators must deal with on a daily basis, it is necessary to approach administration from a relational, interpersonal standpoint. (Grogan, 1996, p.176)

Women are taught to exhibit those psychological qualities that are critical to leadership based on relationships, encouragement, and support, whereas men are not. These societal expectations are both beneficial and detrimental. “From a female perspective, the downside of this process is that the view of women as nurturing may lead to justification of women holding supportive roles, leaving men typically to play leadership roles” (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, p. 125).

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Leadership Styles: Transformational or Servant Leadership

Regardless of gender, in times of organizational turbulence, institutions need leaders that will successfully navigate them through the change. Traditional settings and organizational hierarchy have evolved tremendously, changing from top-down and authoritarian to team oriented and collaborative. As society has become more collaborative, globally competitive, and technologically connected, organizations are struggling to remake themselves. “Uncertainty has become a constant as organizations are continuously reshaping themselves during merging and delayering processes” (Schrujjer & Vansina, 1999, p. 1). “A growing body of academic and action research on leadership and organizational change exists studying how leaders create conditions under which organizations can change how they manage the change, and motivate people by envisioning, empowering and energizing” (Schrujjer & Vansina, 1999, p. 2).

Many leadership theories address organizations where professionals see themselves as colleagues rather than in superior-subordinate relationships and where team projects are the norm (Bass, 2008; Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). Organizational changes have resulted in the need for leaders to become more transformational and less transactional. The same is true in education: “Effective school superintendents see themselves as superintendents of learning; they see their roles as transformative, democratic leaders who bring out the best in those around them” (Houston, 2000, p. 6). In contrast, transactional leaders practice conditional reinforcement with followers.

Transactional leaderships refer to the exchange relationship between leader and follower to meet their own self-interests. It may take the form of contingent reward in which the leader clarifies for the follower through direction or

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participation what the follower needs to do to be rewarded for the effort. (Bass, 1999, p. 11)

Transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration. It elevates the follower's level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society. (Bass, 1999, p.11)

Transformational leadership discussions emerged in the 1990s. Senge and Schlecty (1990) describe transformational leaders as values driven committed to the learning community development. Leithwood (1992) identifies three elements that make up this leadership style; "1. A collaborative, shared decision-making approach; 2). An emphasis on teacher professionalism and empowerment; and 3). An understanding of change, including how to encourage change in others (p.10)

Transformation leadership theory suggests that this leadership leads to independence, growth, and empowerment of followers (Bass,1985). "An empowered person is self-motivated and believes in his or her ability to cope and perform successfully" (Kark, Boas, & Gilad, 2003, p. 246). Bass and Avolio (2003) have denoted that three themes emerge from the characteristics of transformational leadership: questioning assumptions, promoting non-traditional thinking, and focusing on follower development (Tucker & Russell, 2004, p. 104).

One of the most recent theories, which mirrors transformational leadership but also further addresses changing society, is Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership model. Greenleaf published his seminal works on servant leadership in the 1970s. (Greenleaf, 1970). His thoughts on the concepts of service, leadership, and stewardship of the resources of an organization were followed by a series of publications.

Greenleaf's model rejects the "top-down," authoritarian, hierarchical approach. He

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suggests that the greatest leaders are those who are centered on others rather than on themselves. The servant leader is most successful when subordinates are led to accept and "own" the leader's vision and mission as their own. It is in this way the visions of servant leaders are extended beyond their personal abilities, or even beyond their life span.

Greenleaf (1977) is widely recognized as the one who coined the term servant leadership and initially defined it:

Servant leadership is the natural feeling that one has of desiring to serve others. It seeks to develop individuals who ensure that other's needs are met, and advocates a group-oriented approach to decision-making as a means of strengthening institutions and society. (p.13)

The servant leadership model has been effective in the business world as highlighted by *Fortune* magazine's 2001 issue on servant-led organizations. Its effectiveness has led to servant leadership becoming an increasingly popular approach in the corporate world with companies including Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines, Federal Express, Marriot International, Pella, Herman Miller, Medtronic, ServiceMaster, the Container Store, and Synovus Financial (Hunter, 2004). Southwest Airlines ranked fourth in percentage of return to shareholders., Synovus (eighth), and TDI (sixth). These companies outperformed others by yielding an approximate 50% higher return to shareholders than competitors. These profitable companies were lead by leaders who practiced servant leadership.

Although the servant leadership model has been widely used in businesses and has been effective, this model is only recently gaining momentum in the educational setting. Because the superintendent is visible and instrumental in achieving academic

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success, many studies on the image, the roles, the relationships with boards, and the preparation of superintendents have been conducted. Still, there is no specific research on the leadership styles of superintendents, their effect on the district's culture, and how that might impact student achievement.

However, research on the link between student achievement and the creation of constructive climates and the building of positive relationships, roles where superintendents may play a critical part, has been conducted. When leaders foster leadership in others, encourage people to solve problems, and build a trusting environment, student performance will increase. According to Barth (2005), leaders must be willing to create a climate in which there is collegiality, open communication, collaboration, and conversation. "In other words, the administrator's control rests not so much in personally making numerous decisions as it does in controlling the means by which decisions in the organization are made. . . There is a link between individual decision making as employed by the superintendent and the influence of this administrator on the organization as a whole through his or her leadership" (Sharp & Walter, 2004, p. 64).

The Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Changing leadership roles are redefining leaders as individuals who are facilitators, catalysts, or members of groups that desire to create social change. These leaders must know and understand their population to serve and be willing to meet the needs, at all costs. The term "servant leadership" was birthed in a 1970 essay by Robert K. Greenleaf entitled The Servant as Leader.

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Greenleaf said that the servant-leader is one who is a servant first. . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people’s highest-priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as person; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Spears, 1996, p. 4)

According to Greenleaf, there are 10 characteristics of the servant leader: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Spears, 1996, pp. 4-8). A servant leader manifests these characteristics.

Larry Spears, Executive Director of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership in Indianapolis, Indiana, expounds on these 10 characteristics (as cited in Livovich, 1999): “These ten characteristics are by no means exhaustive...I believe that the ones listed serve to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those that are open to its invitation and challenge” (p. 6).

The first of the 10 qualities of servant leadership is **Listening** . Traditionally, leaders have been valued for their ability to communicate and make decisions. Taylor (2002) stated that Greenleaf placed importance on the leader’s ability and willingness to learn. Servant leadership, at its heart, is an openness, an ability to listen, and an ability to speak in a way that engages people directly affected by the choices to be made (p. 17).

Taylor-Gilliam (1998) recognized the importance of listening: “I see this as a key leadership quality of the servant-leader. It is virtually impossible to be empathetic, aware, persuasive, or conceptually adept without being a practiced listener” (p. 76). Greenleaf (1977) stated, “The best test of whether leaders are communicating at the depth the servant-leader style advocates, is for leaders to ask themselves if they are really

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listening to their subordinates” (p. 21).

The second characteristic is **Empathy**. Taylor (2002) shared, “A servant leader must be willing to stop, listen intently, and truly care about people” (p. 21). Maxwell (1996), stated, “Leadership begins with the heart, not the head, and it flourishes when meaningful relationships are developed” (p. 36). Maxwell (1996) also suggested that “...when leaders genuinely love their followers, they will be respected by them and they will be willing to follow them” (p. 89). Taylor (2002) expanded on Maxwell’s thought by stating, “A sincere love for others will promote open, honest communication and will foster a sincere effort to understand each other’s point of view” (p. 29).

Greenleaf (1977) believed “that an important component of empathy was acceptance. The servant as leader always empathized, always accepted the person but sometimes refused to accept the person’s efforts or performance as good enough” (p. 32). Greenleaf (1984) felt that “great leaders displayed demanding and uncompromising exteriors, but they must have empathy and an unqualified acceptance of the persons under their leadership” (p. 47).

Abel (2002) stated that one of the great strengths of servant leadership is the capacity for healing oneself and other - the third characteristic of servant leadership. **Healing** starts with the individual and as wholeness is found within oneself, so the individual is able to influence others. Servant leaders must truly care about people and sincerely want them to grow and develop, not only to satisfy the needs of the organization, but to help them grow as individuals (p. 27).

Spears, (1998) stated, “New leadership is needed for the times, but it will not come from finding new and wily ways to manipulate the external world. It will come as

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we who lead find the courage to take an inner journey toward both our shadows and our light, a journey that, faithfully pursued, will take us beyond ourselves to become healers of a wounded world” (p. 208).

In order for leaders to be listeners, empathizers, and healers, they must be aware of opportunities to serve their followers in these capacities. **Awareness** keeps leaders on alert, and as Spears (1995) quoted Greenleaf (19XX), “is not a giver to solace. . .It is just the opposite”Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner security (p. 4). Abel (2002) emphasized that “awareness requires an act of faith on the part of the leader. It is the belief that the leader has the strength and ability to face the problem and find the solution” (p. 11).

Another fundamental characteristic of servant leadership is **Persuasion**. A leader who has the quality of **Persuasion** is able to convince his followers, not force them into conforming. Abel (2002) emphasized: “Servant leaders seek to convince others, rather than coerce them into compliance. The servant leader relies on persuasion and is effective at building consensus within groups” (p. 29). Using this tool effectively to build consensus within groups is what offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant leadership. Taylor-Gilliam (1998).

Spears (1995), following a review of Greenleaf’s essays, defined **Conceptualization**, the sixth characteristic of servant leadership, as servant leaders seeking to nurture their abilities to “dream great dreams.” The ability to look at a problem from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many managers this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice.

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Servant leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day focused approach (p. 5).

Building Community is the seventh characteristic. Taylor-Gilliam (1998) referred to the significance of building community as the culmination of all the other nine characteristics. In order for there to be a successful outcome in creating an educational community, each of the other nine must be functional in order to support the structure of the final characteristic (p. 31).

Greenleaf advised that “One step at a time be taken so that all may benefit from the whole. An organization founded on these principles has the potential to generate the greatest reward for the organization as a whole” (Abel, 2002, p.2).

As educational leaders, honoring stakeholders is essential creating an environment of success. Peter Block (1996), in his book *Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest* defines stewardship as follows: Stewardship asks us to serve our organizations and be accountable to them...and in letting caretaking and control go, we hold on to the spiritual meaning of stewardship: to honor what has been given to us, to use power with a sense of grace, and to pursue purposes that transcend short-term self-interest (p. 9). Consequently, **Stewardship** is one of the characteristics of servant leadership.

Abel (2002) noted that “Servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others” (p. 31). Taylor (2002) concluded by saying, “Achieving this level of service can only be obtained through a true commitment to people by genuine concern and love” (p. 41).

Commitment to the Growth of People is the ninth characteristic of servant leadership. Kouzes and Posner (1987) noted that, “The most admired leaders are also

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leaders who make their followers feel valued, who raise their sense of self-worth and self-esteem” (p. 13). Spears’ (1995) review of Greenleaf’s essays spoke to the importance of a commitment to the growth of people. Servant leaders are deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her institution. The servant leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything within his or her power to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees (p. 6). Servant leaders are readers and experimenters. Utilizing their servant-leader characteristics, they are generally good predictors, listeners, and designers. Together with others they want to build a future, not just accept whatever may come.

Foresight, the last characteristic of servant leaders, and conceptualization are similar. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand lessons from the past, realities of the present, and likely consequences for the future. It is deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. As such, one can conjecture that foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic with which one may be born. All other characteristics can be consciously developed. Foresight allows for difficult experiences to be lessons learned (Abel, 2002). George Nelson describes foresight as such: “A child making a sand castle has some kind of picture in his head telling him what to do next” (p. 115). Spears (as cited in Livovich, 1999) considered this characteristic critical to being a servant leader. He stated that closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easy to identify. The major difference between foresight and conceptualization is that conceptualization is more idealistic and rooted in the ideal. Foresight accounts for experiences and realities when making decisions.

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Choosing to be a servant leader doesn't denote any form of low self-concept or self-image. On the contrary, it requires the leader to have an "accurate understanding of his or her self-image, moral conviction, and emotional stability to make such a choice" (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002, p. 61).

Leadership styles of women and men have been noted to be different. Eagley et al. (1992) stated that female principals tend to be more democratic, more likely to allow others to participate in decision making, and less likely to be dominating to their subordinates compared to male principals, similar to that of servant leadership.

. . . it appears that the ways these women approach the job of school leadership (i.e. their leadership orientations) are related to the reasons they entered the field of education (i.e. the career commitments) and to the goals they hope to achieve through their positions as school leaders (i.e. their positional goals). That is, individuals who enter administration to serve teachers and students and who see their role as supportive or facilitative are more likely to adopt a cooperative, participatory style of leadership. (Young & McCloud, 2001, p. 475)

Page and Wong (2000) expanded upon Greenleaf's work by creating a multidimensional model that recognizes 12 servant leadership attributes. These attributes are both a result of literature review and their personal experiences in leadership.

Table 2

A Conceptual Framework for Measuring Servant Leadership

I. Character-Orientation (Being: What kind of person is the leader?)

Concerned with cultivating a servant's attitude, focusing on the leader's values, credibility and motive.

- Integrity
- Humility
- Servanthood

II. People-Orientation (Relating: How does the leader relate to others?)

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Concerned with developing human resources, focusing on the leader's relationship with people and his/her commitment to develop others.

- Caring for others
- Empowering others
- Developing others

III. Task -Orientation (Doing: What does the leader do?)

Concerned with achieving productivity and success, focusing on the leader's tasks and skills necessary for success.

- Visioning
- Goal setting
- Leading

IV. Process-Orientation (Organizing: How does the leader impact organizational processes?)

Concerned with increasing the efficiency of the organization, focusing the leader's ability to model and develop a flexible, efficient and open system.

- Modeling
- Team building
- Shared decision-making

Note. From *Servant Leadership: An Opponent Process Model* by Paul T.P. Wong and Don Page, October 2003, Servant Leadership Roundtable.

From this original conceptual framework from Wong and Page, a Servant Leadership Profile was constructed that yielded a factor analysis consisting of 8 factors: Leading, Servanthood, Visioning, Developing Others, Team-Building, Empowering Others, Shared Decision Making, and Integrity. Under servant leadership, workers are driven by

. . . inner motivation towards achieving a common purpose The leader does this by engaging the entire team organization in a process that creates a shared vision that inspires each to stretch and reach deeper within themselves and to use their unique talents in whatever way is necessary to independently and interdependently achieve that shared vision. . . What

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about the need to develop and use talent, the mind? What about the need for meaning, for purpose, for contribution, for service, for adding value, for making a difference? (Page and Wong, p.5)

Culture

The amount of research conducted on characteristics of effective schools is plentiful. This research has documented that a “positive school culture is associated with higher student motivation and achievement, increased teacher collaboration, and improved attitudes amongst teachers toward their jobs” (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 21). Glatthorn (1992) candidly comments, “The most important foundational element is the culture of the school” when discussing the effectiveness of schools. Abundant literature exists on the topic of culture as it relates to organizations in general, and to schools specifically. Researchers Deal and Peterson (1990) define culture as “deep patterns of values, beliefs, and traditions that have been formed over the course of the [school’s] history.” Maxwell and Thomas (1991) explain culture as being “concerned with those aspects of life that give it meaning.”

Stolp and Smith (1995) have defined school culture as “historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, traditions and myths understood, maybe in varying degrees by members of the school community” (p. 13). Examples of culture in organizations are shared values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories, and cultural networks (Sashkin & Walberg, 1993, p. 6). Culture is the feelings people have about their organization, their assumptions, values, and beliefs that create an identity for the organization and define its standards of behavior. (Schein, 2004). This definition of culture will be used for this research.

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When cultural improvements are to be made in schools, leadership practices such as creating a vision and building consensus around a goal show the greatest influence. Although principals can have immediate and direct impact on culture in schools, the principals can operate only within the parameters created by the school board and the superintendent. Because policies, budgets, and personnel decisions originate from the superintendent, the superintendent has tremendous pull on how principals create the culture for their schools and, ultimately, impacting student achievement. “What schools and the people in them do and believe makes a difference in student outcomes” (Stolp & Smith, 2000, p. 24).

Culture is important in the restructuring of schools and in improving student achievement. In a positive, supportive culture, people are dedicated and use their energy to work for what they believe in. They are excited and enthusiastic. They are inspired to work hard and to be successful. It is the obligation of the leader to create a “consensus around values that constitute an effective culture, such as high expectations, commitment, mutual respect, confidence, continuous improvement, experimentation and risk taking, and an insistence that students will learn” (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 15). Furthermore, the beliefs of the teachers in the principal’s vision and the school’s overall commitment to change increases dramatically when leaders have a strong vision and willingness to work toward change. Expressly, school-level change comes about as a result of the superintendent’s vision and commitment to district change.

Leaders who are fully aware of the organization’s culture know that focusing on behavior, beliefs, and values will drive effective change in the district and school as opposed to changing the organizational structure of the system. Stolp and Smith (1995)

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support findings from researchers Karen Seashore Louis, Helen Marks, and Sharon Kruse (1994) regarding the need to focus on culture and not structure.

. . . structural elements of restructuring have received excessive emphasis in many reform proposals, while the need to improve the culture, climate and interpersonal relationships in schools have received too little attention. While it may be easier to imagine how to restructure schools rather than to change their culture, the latter is the key to successful reform.(p. 14)

Changing cultural patterns to increase student achievement has been reported.

Fryans and Maehr (1990) suggested that school culture had a direct impact on student motivation, concluding that there is preliminary evidence that culture increases motivation, ultimately impacting student achievement. Thacker and McInerney (1992) and Krug (1992) also support the idea of culture impacting achievement. Thacker and McInerney's research concluded that student achievement on state-standardized tests in Indiana improved as a result of its leadership conveying a mission and vision that promoted achievement and success. Krug's research "found a significant correlation between the instructional climate and student achievement scores. He also reported a positive correlation between instructional leadership and the instructional climate" (Stolp & Smith, 2000, p. 30).

Regardless of the leadership style, the role that leaders play is crucial in school culture. Schein (1992) stated, "Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin" (p. 15). Schein also stated: Neither culture nor leadership, when one examines each closely, can really be understood by itself. In fact, one could argue that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture (p. 5).

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School leaders have a powerful influence on the culture of the school by a variety of means. For established schools or organizations, the leader's assumptions become shared as a given and no longer something to be discussed. New members often view this as "how we do things around here." While some school leaders influence culture through charisma, there are a number of other mechanisms that help embed culture. Strong organizational leaders create strong culture. "Employees attend vigilantly to leaders' behaviors even to the rather mundane aspects such as what they spend time on, put on their calendar . . . follow up on, and celebrate . . . They convey much more to employees about priority than do printed vision statements and formal policies. Once leaders embark on the path to using culture . . . it is critical that they regularly review their own behaviors to understand the signals they are sending to members" (Chatman & Cha, 2003, p. 28).

Despite research that indicates positive culture and relationships impact academic achievement in urban districts, districts with predominantly African American or Hispanic populations have not shown substantial gains with superintendents who focus on climate and relationships. What factors contribute to this phenomenon? What is needed to move predominately minority urban districts forward?

The development of a culture in any organization or group is inevitable.

The question is whether the culture that forms is one that helps or hinders the organization's ability to execute its strategic objectives. Organizational culture is too important to leave to chance; organizations must use their culture to fully execute their strategy and inspire innovation. It is a leader's primary role to develop and maintain an effective culture" (Chatman & Cha, 2003, p.32).

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Summary

The superintendent's role today is so complex, deals with so many competing issues and is measured by such high standards tied to accountability. With such a seemingly impossible job to tame, can superintendents truly affect student achievement? The review of the literature on superintendents, transformational and servant leadership styles and school culture sets the foundation for this study. The study of the superintendent's leadership style, its influence and the relationship between district's academic achievement as measured by the 3rd – 8th grade MEAP Proficient Scores in Reading and Math will be the focus of this research.

Chapter 3:

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and procedures that will be used to answer the research questions in this study. This chapter includes five components: purpose of the study, research questions, participant selection, study design, and data collection.

The turbulent environments of public school districts across the nation have resulted in superintendents being mandated to increase student performance and to be accountable for implementing district-wide systems to produce academic success (Firestone, Fuhrman, & Kirst, 1989). Consequently, leadership must create the environment for success.

There are studies in recent literature that focus on the principal as the unit of change and leadership for school improvement and academic success (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999). There is, however, only limited research on superintendents' leadership styles or on the effects of district leadership on student achievement (Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2000.)

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership (SL) style and their district's academic success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

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The leadership of the superintendent is highly contextual. The superintendent's leadership style along with the context of the district shapes the environment that will potentially yield academic success. The practice of servant leadership by superintendents is key to understanding how districts develop their culture and how academic success emerges from that culture.

From this study, educational researchers, scholars, and practitioners can understand how superintendents practicing servant leadership are able to create successful environments. This study will expand the research on superintendents leadership style, to provide evidence of components implemented for equitable academic success for all students.

Derived from the purpose of the study, the research question asks, "Is there is a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents, the servant leadership style and his/her district's academic success as measured by the number of proficient students taking the Grades 3 through 8 MEAP Reading and Math tests?"

For this study, public school superintendents are defined as district leaders who are selected by a school board to manage a traditional public school district. Public school districts are defined by the following criteria: (a) serving a student population of over 3,000; (b) funded through public funds such as property taxes, state aid based on pupil population, and federal and state grants; and, (c) categorized as a K-12 district, K-8 district, or K-5 district.

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Research Design

The methodology chosen to collect and analyze data is dependent on the type of problem under study and the disposition of the researcher (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). The way the researcher asks the research question and frames the research problem is extremely important because it determines, mainly, the type of research method that is used (p. 36).

Quantitative research is an inquiry into an identified problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed using statistical techniques; the goal is to determine whether the predictive generalizations of a theory hold true (Mason, 1996). There are three general types of quantitative methods; experiments, quasi-experiments and surveys. For this study, a survey will be the research instrument. A survey provides for a wide range of individuals to respond to the researcher. A survey “include cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or interviews for data collection with the intent of estimating the characteristics of a large population of interest based on a smaller sample from that population.”(Mason, 1996). Understanding the relationship between servant leadership style and a district’s academic success, requires collecting information from a population of superintendents. Through the analysis of survey responses and district MEAP data collection, generalizations can be made which will provide foundational research on the superintendent’s impact on district’s academic achievement.

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Selection of Subjects

The individuals selected for the survey will be a result of convenience sampling (Cresswell, 2013). Individuals for the study will be selected based on the Michigan School Districts Superintendent Directory and from Michigan Department of Education. The researcher will request the directory from the Michigan Association of School Administrators organization via email or U.S. mail. The individuals selected will be from the 550 public school districts located in Michigan. The individuals selected for the study must be currently serving as superintendents of a public school district for a minimum of two years.

Email addresses of superintendents will be secured from the list in the Michigan School Districts Superintendent Directory. Emails with an introduction letter and a survey link will be sent to prospective participants, requesting their participation in the research. Participants will be provided with an online 62-question SL survey based on that of Page and Wong (2003) and a seven question demographic survey that will inquire about years of experience, district size, district code, gender, and ethnicity. Participants will be given a window of 10 business days to respond and submit survey responses to the researcher.

Research Instrument

The Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR), developed from the research of Page and Wong (2003), will be used for this study. Wong's (2003) opponent-process model is the origin of the SLPR survey and "is predicated on the interactions between two underlying opposing motivational forces: serving others vs. self-seeking" (p.

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6). In the Opponent Process Model, the need to create two new subscales became evident. The presence of an authoritarian hierarchy and egotistic pride results meant the absence of SL. The major difference between the SLP and the SLPR is that all the items in the SLPR are randomized so that resulting factors would not be biased, as in the case of the original SLP. (Page and Wong, 2003). The SLPR will measure the degree of servant leadership among Michigan public school superintendents. The original SLPR instrument was developed and used by Page and Wong to explore the various dimensions of servant leadership in their subjects of study.

The SLPR is a 62-item survey that uses a 7-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1, representing *strongly disagree*, to 7, representing *strongly agree*. The SLPR instrument measures an overall dimension of SL by summing the responses to each of the items on the SLPR. The SLPR comprises a total of 10 subscales. Eight of the subscales are used to represent the presence of SL characteristics; the remaining two subscales are intended to measure characteristics antithetic to servant leadership.

This instrument considers the barriers to servant leadership performance and includes both positive and negative leadership attributes, particularly those that encourage (e.g., empathy and integrity) and hinder (e.g., pride and egotism) a servant's heart. According to Wong (2003), this instrument "explains and predicts the absence and presence of SL" (p. 13).

Quantitative data obtained from Page and Wong's SLPR will be entered into an SPSS 18.0 computer information system for statistical analysis by the researcher. The statistical test to be used for the data analysis is the One Sample T – Test. The T Test

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shows whether the collected data is useful in making a prediction about the population. From the results of the T Test, data summaries will be documented by the researcher.

Researchers Page and Wong have been contacted by researcher via email for permission to use their instrument in this study. Permission to use their instrument tool has been granted (Appendix A).

The researcher has developed seven demographic questions that will provide additional information on gender, district code, type of school district, geographic area of school district, size of school district, total number of years as a superintendent and number of years in current district for superintendents answering the surveys. Participants will remain nameless, but district codes will be requested in order to gather MEAP data for districts where completed surveys are submitted. Once responses from survey have been gathered from sample participants and the committee approves the proposal, the final proposal to conduct research will be submitted to Eastern Michigan Human Subjects Review Process for review and approval.

Reliability and Validity

In quantitative research, the research will demonstrate validity and reliability to establish authenticity. Klenke (2008), in his discussion about qualitative research, states that credibility is similar to validity in quantitative research, or the extent to which the results are credible or believable from standpoint of participant. Dependability in qualitative research is similar to reliability in quantitative research, or the extent to which the same results can be obtained by independent investigation (p. 38).

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For the SPLR, the validity was illustrated by using an exploratory factor analysis. The factor analysis was conducted in order to ensure that the items included on the survey instrument measured the intended subscales on the SLPR. Those items that were developed for particular subscales would, therefore, be expected to be correlated with one another and form a cluster, while items used to measure different subscales would not be expected to highly correlate with the other items. Results showed that the items on the SLPR did measure the intended variables, providing evidence that the SLPR is a valid instrument for measuring the degree of SL.

The reliability of the SLPR was illustrated by using Cronbach's alpha coefficients for internal consistency. In a study conducted by Dennis and Lincoln (2003), it was found that the SLPR had high internal consistency scores. The Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency measurements for the subscales had a range of values from a minimum of .89 to a maximum of .97. This range of values indicated that the SLPR provides a good measurement for the degree of SL. According to Salkind (2006), any Cronbach alpha score greater than the cut value of .80 indicates a good-fitting variable.

Data Collection and Analysis

MEAP Proficiency scores for Grades 3 through 8 in Reading and Math will be collected from the Michigan Department of Education website and the individual school districts' websites for school years 2011-12 and 2012-13. This data will be assessed for correlation with superintendent surveys reflecting servant leadership traits. District codes from demographic surveys will be used to gather specific district MEAP data.

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Oakland, Wayne, and Macomb Counties in southeast Michigan, are heavily populated with school districts. A sample of the survey has been given to three individuals within Wayne County: one African American male assistant superintendent in an urban district, one White male superintendent in a small urban district, and one African American female superintendent in a small urban district via Google Forms. All three participants responded and were asked two additional questions: 1) How long did it take to complete the survey?, and 2) Was it a difficult survey to complete? Each participant responded that the survey took no more than 7 to 8 minutes. None of the participants found the survey difficult to complete. One stated, “The survey was not difficult, but the tool did promote thinking.” Although each participant was to be provided a gift card for completion of the survey, only one participant requested the card. The other two participants declined the card and stated that they just wanted to help. The information provided from these individuals was used to generate a timeline for completion of the survey, which will be included in the introduction letter to the research participants.

Quantitative data obtained from Page and Wong’s SLPR will be entered into an SPSS 18.0 computer information system for statistical analysis by the researcher. The statistical test to be used for the data analysis is the One Sample T – Test. The T Test shows whether the collected data is useful in making a prediction about the population. From the results of the T Test, data summaries will be documented by the researcher.

It is the goal of the researcher to examine a correlation between the degree of the servant leadership style practiced by the public school superintendent and the academic success of their district’s students. Through research replication, a theory will be offered.

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One goal of the researcher is to demonstrate that this study will be reliable and operational for future researchers. Furthermore, the development of a new theory on the effectiveness of public superintendents will provide much-needed knowledge for individuals who desire to obtain future superintendencies and make substantial impact in fostering a culture of success in public school districts.

Summary

In a time where more accountability from schools and their administrators is the focus of public outcries and legislative programs, information that will help create educational environments more conducive for effective teaching and learning is warranted and welcomed. This quantitative study research design is developed to provide insight data into the specific demographics of the superintendent that practices the servant leadership style. Information from this research will spur further research on the leadership styles of public school superintendents and how they can influence a district culture that promotes academic success for all students. Data gleaned from these studies can be used to assist school districts when searching for leadership that will move districts forward academically and close achievement gaps for minority students.

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Appendix A

Permission Granted to Use Servant Leadership Profile Survey

Subject: Re: DrPaulWong.com: Use of Servant Leadership Profile Survey
From: Paul TP Wong (dr.paul.wong@gmail.com)
To: pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com;
Date: Monday, November 5, 2012 3:00 PM

Hi Antoinette,

You have my permission to use the Revised Servant Leadership Profile for your research. I have attached a copy to this e-mail. I would be interested in a copy of your findings once your study is complete.

Kind regards,

Paul Wong
www.drpaulwong.com

On Sun, Nov 4, 2012 at 10:31 PM, Antoinette Pearson <pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com> wrote:
This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.drpaulwong.com/> from:
Antoinette Pearson <pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com>

Dr. Wong,

I am a doctoral candidate student at Eastern Michigan University. I am in the process of writing my proposal on the topic of Urban Public School Superintendents in Michigan and Servant Leadership.

I want to use The Servant Leadership Profile Survey designed by you and Dr. Page for my research. It is my belief that more often than not Servant Leadership is a leadership style used. I am looking to see what type of superintendent is more likely to use the servant leadership style as a means to address the academic achievement gap.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me.

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Appendix B

Superintendent Demographic Survey and Servant Leadership Profile Survey (Page and Wong)

PART A: SUPERINTENDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY AND THE SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROFILE REVISED SURVEY

Dr. D. Page and Dr. P. Wong, Authors

Instructions: This survey is for research purposes only. All information is confidential and once the study is completed and defended, the surveys will be destroyed. There are a total of 69 questions.

1. Gender

Female _____ Male _____

2. District Code (Used for MEAP testing): _____

3. Type of school district served:

1 – K – 5 district

2 – K – 8 district

3 – K – 12 district

4 – Other, please specify _____

4. The geographic area your district includes is considered to be

1 – Urban

2 – Suburban

3 – Rural

5. The size of your school district is

1 – Small (under 5000)

2 – Mid –Size (5001 – 10,000)

3 – Large (10,001 – 15,000)

4 – Very Large (15,001 +)

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6. The total number of years as a superintendent. This is my

1 – First year as a superintendent

2 – Second year as a superintendent

3 – Third year as a superintendent

4 – Fourth or more year as a superintendent

7. The number of years served in your current district as the superintendent.

1 – First year in the district

2 – Second year in the district

3 – Third year in the district

4 – Fourth or more in the district

PART B

Servant Leadership Profile - Revised

© Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D. & Don Page, Ph.D.

Leadership matters a great deal in the success or failure of any organization. This instrument was designed to measure both positive and negative leadership characteristics.

Please use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in describing your own attitudes and practices as a leader. If you have not held any leadership position in an organization, then answer the questions as if you were in a position of authority and responsibility. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply rate each question in terms of what you really believe or normally do in leadership situations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Strongly Disagree			Undecided		Strongly Agree		
	(SD)					(SA)		

For example, if you strongly agree, you may circle 7. If you mildly disagree, you may circle 3. If you are undecided, circle 4, but use this category sparingly.

1. To inspire team spirit, I communicate enthusiasm and confidence. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I listen actively and receptively to what others have to say, even when they disagree with me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I practice plain talking – I mean what I say, and say what I mean. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I always keep my promises and commitments to others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I grant all my workers a fair amount of responsibility and latitude in carrying out their tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I am genuine and honest with people, even when such transparency is politically unwise. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I am willing to accept other people's ideas whenever they are better than mine. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS

8. I promote tolerance, kindness, and honesty in the work place. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. To be a leader, I should be front and center in every function in which I am involved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I create a climate of trust and openness to facilitate participation in decision making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. My leadership effectiveness is improved through empowering others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I want to build trust through honesty and empathy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. I am able to bring out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. I want to make sure that everyone follows orders without questioning my authority. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. As a leader, my name must be associated with every initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I consistently delegate responsibility to others and empower them to do their job. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. I seek to serve rather than be served. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. To be a strong leader, I need to have the power to do whatever I want without being questioned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. I am able to inspire others with my enthusiasm and confidence in what can be accomplished. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I am able to transform an ordinary group of individuals into a winning team. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. I try to remove all organizational barriers so that others can freely participate in decision making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. I devote a lot of energy to promoting trust, mutual understanding, and team spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I derive a great deal of satisfaction in helping others succeed. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. I have the moral courage to do the right thing, even when it hurts me politically. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS

25. I am able to rally people around me and inspire them to achieve a common goal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. I am able to present a vision that is readily and enthusiastically embraced by others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. I invest considerable time and energy in helping others overcome their weaknesses and develop their potential. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. I want to have the final say on everything, even areas where I don't have the competence. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. I don't want to share power with others because they may use it against me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. I practice what I preach. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. I am willing to risk mistakes by empowering others to "carry the ball." 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. I have the courage to assume full responsibility for my mistakes and acknowledge my own limitations. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. I have the courage and determination to do what is right in spite of difficulty or opposition. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. Whenever possible, I give credits to others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35. I am willing to share my power and authority with others in the decision-making process. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
36. I genuinely care about the welfare of people working with me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
37. I invest considerable time and energy equipping others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
38. I make it a high priority to cultivate good relationships among group members. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
39. I am always looking for hidden talents in my workers. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
40. My leadership is based on a strong sense of mission. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
41. I am able to articulate a clear sense of purpose and direction for my organization's future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS

42. My leadership contributes to my employees'/colleagues' personal growth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
43. I have a good understanding of what is happening inside the organization. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
44. I set an example of placing group interests above self interests. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
45. I work for the best interests of others rather than self. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46. I consistently appreciate, recognize, and encourage the work of others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47. I always place team success above personal success. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
48. I willingly share my power with others, but I do not abdicate my authority and responsibility. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
49. I consistently appreciate and validate others for their contributions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
50. When I serve others, I do not expect any return. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
51. I am willing to make personal sacrifices in serving others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
52. I regularly celebrate special occasions and events to foster a group spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
53. I consistently encourage others to take initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
54. I am usually dissatisfied with the status quo and know how things can be improved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
55. I take proactive actions rather than waiting for events to happen to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
56. To be a strong leader, I need to keep all my subordinates under control. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
57. I find enjoyment in serving others in whatever role or capacity. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
58. I have a heart to serve others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
59. I have great satisfaction in bringing out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS

60. It is important that I am seen as superior to my subordinates in everything. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

61. I often identify talented people and give them opportunities to grow and shine. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

62. My ambition focuses on finding better ways of serving others and making them successful. Coding Key 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Factor 1: 16, 21, 23, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 46, 48, 49, 53, 59, 61, 62 Factor 2: 9, 14, 15, 18, 28, 29, 56, 60 Factor 3: 6, 17, 30, 44, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58 Factor 4: 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 34, 35, 36 Factor 5: 1, 13, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26 Factor 6: 40, 41, 43, 54, 55 Factor 7: 3, 4, 24, 32, 33

Factor 1: Empowering and developing others Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse) Factor 3: Serving others Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership Factor 5: Inspiring leadership Factor 6: Visionary leadership Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity)

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS

Appendix C

Introduction Letter for Survey Participation

November ____, 2013

Dear District Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Program in the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University. I am conducting a research study on Michigan superintendents as servant leaders and how their leadership style impacts district achievement as reported by proficiency on the MEAP. I will be using a self-assessment instrument that explores servant leadership.

I am requesting your participation, which requires no more than 10 minutes of your time, to complete the survey. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at anytime, there will be no penalty to me. The results of the research will be published, but no names or districts will be used. Although there may be no direct benefit to you for your participation, one possible gain is obtaining a greater understanding of your own leadership and how it impacts student achievement.

A link to the survey will be provided via email. If you would like to receive a pdf version to complete, email me at pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com. The paper survey can be faxed to me at (734) 404-5930, or scanned and emailed back to me. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at (734) 945-2483. You may also email any questions to me at the address listed above.

This research protocol and informed consent document has been reviewed and approved by the Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee (UHSRC) for use from ____ to ____ (date). If you have questions about the approval process, please contact the UHSRC at human.subjects@emich.edu or call (734) 487.0042.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping me to complete this research.

Sincerely,

Antoinette Pearson