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The Principal's Voice: Supports Critical to a School Principal's Effectiveness

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Abstract

Demands on school principals in the 21st century are highly complex. Ever-increasing pressures include accountability for student achievement; creating systems and structures to close the achievement gap of underrepresented students; implementing Federal, State, and District initiatives; implementing a more complex evaluation system for staff; being responsible for all stakeholders that create the school community; and being an instructional leader that makes learning happen for all students every year. In the State of Washington, a majority of districts have adopted the AWSP Leadership Framework as a standards-based model to evaluate principals and also provide targeted supports.

The purpose of this research study is to identify principals' perceptions of the adequacy of supports provided by districts. Furthermore, this study seeks information about supports that enhance their effectiveness as instructional leaders. In an effort to inform district level administrators and policy makers, this study seeks to identify supports from principals directly. This information will lead to recommendations for district administrators for improving the process of supporting principals.

This quantitative study used data about principals' perceptions and conducted a descriptive analysis to report findings. The data revealed that principals' perceived needs for the supports was more critical to their effectiveness than the access they had from the district to those supports. The data also exposed the need for differentiation in providing supports to principals by using contextual information. This study found that principals indicated a need to examine the complexity of supports in context of other school-level factors like socioeconomic levels and years of administrative experience.

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my promise to you is that I will pay it forward. You have modeled to me what it means to give

someone an education.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

School principals play a pivotal role in creating optimal learning environments and supporting systems to ensure that learning occurs for all students. Cusick (2003) noted that effective school leadership in the form of a dedicated, skilled principal is a critical element in creating and maintaining high-quality schools. School principals are responsible for creating the conditions so that teachers can effectively teach their students (Copland, 2001). This includes overseeing basic operations to ensure that the building and classrooms are clean and furnished; providing teachers access to amenities like books, materials, and technology; and creating schedules that proactively inform teachers what and when they will teach. In addition, principals must provide, if not lead, professional development that assists staff members in developing an understanding of the sequential nature of curriculum, in selecting appropriate instructional strategies for a given group of students, and in implementing appropriate and timely assessments for diagnostic and reporting purposes (Reeves, 2006).

Increased accountability has been placed on elementary school principals as student achievement has become the primary measure of a school's effectiveness ("AWSP Leadership Framework," 2013). Principals are asked to implement such complex initiatives as the adoption of the *Common Core Standards* and high-stakes *Smarter Balanced Assessments*. Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, and Meyerson (2005) asserted that principals "need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public education experts, budget analysts, facilities managers, special program administrators and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives" (p. 4).

Maxwell (2015) noted, "The principal's job is often called the loneliest in K-12 education, but it's just as fitting to call it the toughest" (p. 1). The hours are long; increased

responsibilities include ensuring all students are safe on their way to school and back home,

dealing with demanding parents and addressing highly stressful confrontations with teachers and

other stakeholders. Pressures for principals are compounded by the urgency of implementing

significant changes during the academic year (180 calendar days, and only 6 hours of

instructional time daily) and by the ever-intensifying focus on closing the achievement gap.

Davis et al. (2005) reported that principals "are expected to broker the often-conflicting

interests of parents, teachers, students, district office officials, unions, state and federal agencies,

and they need to be sensitive to the widening range of student needs" (p. 4). Yet all of these

duties are critical for the building to run effectively and to create the optimal learning

environment for both teachers and students. "Managing buses, budgets, and buildings is still

central to the job" (Maxwell, 2015); however, dramatic shifts in the educational landscape

require that principals implement "more rigorous academic standards, new assessments and

retooled teacher-evaluation systems" (Maxwell, 2015, p. 1).

According to Davis et al. (2005), "the demands of the job have changed" so much, in the

last decade so that "many scholars and practitioners argue that the job requirements far exceed

the reasonable capacities of any one person" (p. 4). Current practices and accountability

measures for building principals continue to increase with the implementation of new initiatives

and the continued demands for increasing student achievement. Test scores on high-stakes

assessments for individual schools are published in local newspapers increasing the pressures on

the principal. Copland (2001) shared "prevailing expectations associated with the principal's

roles are excessive and high" (p. 529).

Another expectation for the principalship is the emphasis on closing the achievement gap

among students from different ethnic and/or socio-economic groups. Both state and national

assessments reveal that socioeconomically disadvantaged students and some students of color do not score at the same levels as their socioeconomically advantaged, White, and/or Asian counterparts (Murphy, 2009). Achievement gap data directly impacts the role and responsibilities of the principal, as narrowing this gap is widely perceived as a moral imperative (Murphy, 2009; Schwartz, 2001). The ever-changing and -expanding political landscape of educational reform has also placed *ever increasing* responsibilities on the principal. No Child Left Behind (NCLB), enacted in January of 2002, addressed issues of educational equity for economically-disadvantaged students by providing federal funds to school districts for needed academic interventions. The aim of NCLB was for all students to receive equal access to high-quality education and thereby close the achievement gaps among student groups as defined by income, ethnicity, disability, and language spoken in the home ("No Child Left Behind," 2002). The emphasis on student achievement created by this federal mandate charged principals, who are educational leaders, with ensuring that all students meet grade-level standards as measured by yearly high-stakes standardized tests ("No Child Left Behind," 2002).

The demands on the principal continue to build with the implementation of a new teacher evaluation tool. The Teacher Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) in Washington State, enacted by the state legislature in 2010, requires equitable, transparent, and objective methods for evaluating teachers and principals. As a result of adopting and implementing this new evaluation system, principals bear responsibility for implementing a new and more complex high-accountability evaluation system for all teachers. Before principals are allowed to evaluate teachers, they must undergo extensive mandated training. Principals are further required to expend time in calibrating evaluation ratings with peers so that districts and the state can use data to draw valid conclusions about the quality of teachers. The TPEP evaluation process and

assessment tool require that principals invest increased hours in observing and conferencing with teachers, and in reporting evaluation outcomes to the school district and the state.

Even as principals prepare themselves to implement the more complex teacher evaluation system, they are simultaneously learning and implementing their own standards-based performance evaluation as a part of the TPEP initiative. In 1992, the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) "recognized that student achievement would become a primary measure of a school's effectiveness" (Kipp, Quinn, Lancaster, Malone, Lashway, Lochmiller, and Sharratt, 2014, p. 3). The AWSP leadership framework asserts that student achievement is front and center in the principal evaluation process. This new evaluation system for principals identifies eight criteria that were created to foster instructional leadership. These criteria also promote quality instruction by teachers in relation to their expertise on content and pedagogy. As a result of this evaluation tool, principals are being directed to become effective instructional leaders, to create optimal learning environments in their schools, to monitor the system by evaluating teachers and to work on their own more rigorous evaluation system. Kipp et al. (2014) observed, "Pivotal to the success of this ongoing shift is a new type of principal leadership. Today, more than ever before, principals in Washington's schools are expected to be leaders of learning" (p. 3).

Rationale for the Study

Retaining principals in the profession remains a challenge. Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin, (2009) and DeAngelis and White (2011) reported high rates of principal turnover in districts across the nation. According to these researchers, annual turnover rates in the United States ranged from 15% to 30%. There is concern at the increasing rate of principals leaving the profession early. For example, Viadero (2009) reported that "data from a handful of states

suggest that only half of beginning principals remain in the same job five years later" (p. 1). In

Washington State, Campbell, DeArmond, and Denice (2014) reported that turnover rate is 15%,

which is within the national average. Some changes that Copland (2001) noted are that "in the

state of Washington during a recent school year, roughly 30 elementary and secondary

principalships were held by retired principals" (p. 529), which indicates a lack of applicants for

this very critical job.

Principals leave their jobs and turn to other professions for a variety of reasons. Lovely

(2004) asserted "principals are being asked to do more with less time and fewer resources. The

expectations placed on principals by state and local policy makers, parents, and the public have

reached epic heights" (p. 2-3). The "lethal mixture of elements" examined in Lovely's study

were time and overload, increasing responsibilities, work-related stress, salary, and institutional

interference. Complexity and higher levels of scrutiny and accountability have become the

hallmarks of the job of the school principal in today's competitive educational arena (Branch et

al., 2009). Copland (2001) noted, "shifting educational demands, huge workloads, and lack of

job security" as major reasons for principals leaving the profession; other reasons included

"limited compensation, inadequate preparation, high stress, and lack of respect associated with

the work of the school administrator" (p. 529). In this atmosphere of high stakes accountability

where the national focus is on school leadership, principal retention and support should become a

matter of high priority.

The impact of the principalship on student learning is apparent. "Research shows that

that principals alone account for 25% of a school's total impact on student learning, and teacher

and principal quality together account for 60% of a school's impact" (Mead, 2011, p. 3).

However, given the complexities of the job, principals need support to enhance their

effectiveness as leaders. The AWSP evaluation tool suggests that districts can provide support

for principals under each of its 8 criteria. While there is increasing research on the growing job

expectations being placed on principals and their influence on student learning, less is known of

supports that are needed by principals to help develop principal capacity.

The purpose of this research study is to identify principals' perceptions of the adequacy

of supports provided by districts. Furthermore, this study seeks information about supports that

enhance their effectiveness as instructional leaders. In an effort to inform district level

administrators and policy makers, this study seeks to identify supports from principals directly.

This information will lead to recommendations for district administrators for improving the

process of supporting principals.

Theoretical Framework

The AWSP Leadership Framework (2013), was designed to evaluate principals and

provided the theoretical framework for this study. AWSP defines the role of the prinicipalship as

a key factor in ensuring student achievement, specifically stated as "a primary measure of a

school's effectiveness" (p. 2). To clarify leadership responsibilities for principals, AWSP

created a statement of accountability with shared beliefs and a vision of the role of the school

principal. The AWSP framework (2013) stated that, "The principal's leadership is essential. As

leader, the principal is accountable for the continuous growth of individual students and

increased school performance as measured over time by state standards and locally determined

indicators" (p. 2).

The AWSP Leadership Framework articulated seven leadership responsibilities for

principals that since have been incorporated into seven evaluation criteria for principals in

Washington State. In 2010, an eighth criterion—closing the gap—was added by the Washington

State Legislature. Together, the eight criteria of this framework are:

1. Creating a Culture: Creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement

    of learning and teaching for students and staff.

2. Ensuring School Safety: Providing for school safety.

3. Planning with Data: Leading the development, implementation and evaluation of a

    data driven plan for increasing student achievement, including the use of multiple

    student data elements.

4. Aligning Curriculum: Assisting instructional staff with alignment of curriculum,

    instruction and assessment with state and local learning goals.

5. Improving Instruction: Monitoring, assisting and evaluating effective instruction and

    assessment practices.

6. Managing Resources: managing both staff and fiscal resources to support student

    achievement and legal responsibilities.

7. Engaging Communities: Partnering with school community to promote student

    learning.

8. Closing the Gap: Demonstrating commitment to closing the achievement gap.

    ("AWSP Leadership Framework," 2013, p. 3).

The AWSP Framework (2013) includes four reflective components to guide the

evaluation of school principals:

1) The knowledge and skills possessed by successful principals;

2) The evidence used for measure;

3) The support principals need to excel; and

4) The authority that principals need to excel in each responsibility. (p. 3)

These reflective components are suggested to support the discussion between principals and their evaluators in understanding the complexity of the principal position. They also support the expectations for attaining status as a proficient or distinguished principal. Resources and rubrics are provided to support the implementation of the framework and to create transparency for all stakeholders. The suggested supports are for the purpose of enhancing the ability of the principal to meet the requirements of their job. The examples of systems considerations, specifically the supports identified under each of the eight criteria, will be used as the basis for examining perceptions of support provided to principals.

Figure 1.

Sample of Supports Suggested by the AWSP Leadership Framework

Criteria 1:	**Creating a Culture:**
	Time and resources designated to work with staff outside of instruction time.
	District supports enforcing codes of conduct and professional ethics.
Criteria 2:	**Ensuring School Safety:**
	Training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues/ideas that are community specific.
	Assistance with data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions etc.).
Criteria 3:	**Planning with Data:**
	Technical support for how to use data to influence instruction.
	Time outside the school day for collaboration and data analysis.
Criteria 4:	**Aligning Curriculum:**
	Time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities, the development of instructional and assessment plans and materials.

	Instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.
Criteria 5:	**Improving Instruction:**
	District support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.
	Opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently.
Criteria 6:	**Managing Resources:**
	The availability of resources (e.g. time) for recruiting staff and district procedures and timelines compatible with hiring quality staff.
	Central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.
Criteria 7:	**Engaging Communities:**
	The provision of training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibility for building community involvement.
	The handling of insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district level rather than at the building level.
Criteria 8:	**Closing the Achievement Gap:**
	The availability of district guidance and support to analyze and interpret data and develop a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap.
	The opportunity for professional development for principals on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students.

("AWSP Leadership Framework," 2013, p. 5-35).

Research Questions

This study will identify principals' perceptions of the supports they are provided and have access to currently. It also will identify perceptions of supports that are critical to the principal's effectiveness as an instructional leader.

The two questions of this research study are:

1. Which of the suggested AWSP supports do principals believe are critical to their

   effectiveness as instructional leaders?

2. Do principals have sufficient or adequate access to supports provided by the

   district?

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The positive relation between principal leadership and student learning outcomes is well established in the research literature (; Davis et al., 2005; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Elmore, 2000; Wallace Foundation, 2012; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). However, in the last decade, the responsibilities placed upon principals have changed and expanded significantly (Blazer, 2010; Cusick 2003; Hallinger, 2005; Lovely, 2004). The literature cites long hours, heavy workload, supervision of extracurricular activities, excess paperwork, increasingly complex social issues, and the changing needs of students as all impacting principals' roles and their rate of turnover. Perhaps the single greatest impact on the principal's role has been federal mandates heightening the urgency for schools to focus on the learning needs of all students. Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) found that "increasingly, state accountability systems are placing the burden of school success—and individual student achievement—squarely on the principal's shoulders" (p. 6). Principals confront increasing pressure both to close the achievement gap and to prepare students to meet 21st century workforce needs.

Because of the emphasis placed on student achievement, principals have been required to redefine their roles and shift time and attention from managing day-to-day building operations to demonstrating instructional leadership; principals are expected to be instructional leaders who create systems for assessment, teacher collaboration, and the delivery of learning interventions to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity to achieve significant academic growth each school year (Copland, 2001; Davis et al., 2005; Hertling, 2001; Mead, 2011; Waters et al., 2003;). Elmore (2000) asserted that "instructional leadership is the equivalent of the holy grail in educational administration" (p. 3). Instructional leaders create environments in their schools in which adults and students learn and experience educational success.

This focus on student learning and on instructional leadership has resulted in states and school districts (a) adopting standards-based leadership frameworks and evaluation tools for assessing principal effectiveness (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; Mead, 2011) and (b) identifying supports that can be provided to principals to offset the increasing demands of their jobs (Blazer, 2010; Peterson, 2001; Waters et al., 2003). These researchers have argued that targeted supports must be provided to principals throughout their careers to enhance their effectiveness as instructional leaders. The Wallace Foundation (2012) asserted that "the education field is finally embracing school leadership as an essential ingredient in reform, worthy of investment in its own right" (p. 3). Implied is that an investment in developing and supporting effective principal leadership is an investment in higher student achievement.

The following review of literature examined studies and research that identify:

- Characteristics of effective principals;

- Supports critical to principal effectiveness; and

- Challenges faced by principals that jeopardize their effectiveness.

Effective Principals

Waters et al. (2003), in their meta-analysis, indicated that highly effective principals contribute to increasing students' academic scores by up to 10 percentile points on standardized tests in just one academic year. The authors noted that effective principals "know when, how, and why to create learning environments that support people, connect them with one another, and provide the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to succeed" (p. 4). In their five year study that included 43 school districts, Wahlstrom, Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, and Anderson (2010) identified the impact of principal leadership and its positive influence on student achievement. In their investigation of instructional leadership, they cited the importance of three

specific practices: "Focusing the school on goals and expectations for student achievement," "keeping track of teacher's professional development needs," and, "creating structures and opportunities for teachers to collaborate" (Wahlstrom et al., 2010, p. 14). Similarly, Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) asserted that "today's principal must be prepared to focus time, attention, and effort on changing what students are taught, how they are taught, and what they are learning" (p. 7).

Conversely, Waters et al. (2003) found that when principals "concentrate on the wrong school drivers and/or classroom practices, or miscalculate the magnitude of the order of the change they are trying to implement, they can negatively impact student achievement" (p. 5). Hull (2012) found that fewer effective teachers tend to leave when working under effective principals, and more effective teachers leave when the school is led by ineffective principals, creating change and disruption to their respective learning environments.

Finally, experience on the job has been associated with effective leadership, and Clark, Martorell, and Rockoff (2009) found that as principals gain more experience, they become more effective, especially in their first three years. Wahlstrom et al. (2010) report that it takes principals about five years to fully stabilize, improve systems, and implement their visions, policies, systems, and practices to positively affect students and their learning.

Supports for School Principals

Blazer (2010), Cusick (2003), and Hertling (2001) identified high rates of principal turnover and low rates of principal retention in the districts they studied. Davis et al. (2005) stated that "a shortage of highly qualified principal candidates has been reported by school districts across the nation" (p. 5). In all these studies, the researchers cited the importance of supports provided to principals to mitigate turnover and to improve retention of principals.

Mead (2011) stated, "Ensuring that all principals have the skills to serve as effective instructional leaders will require changes in the way we recruit, select, prepare and support principals" (p. 9). The School Leadership Network Report asserted that school principals currently "lack the ongoing support and development required to maintain and foster sustained commitment" (2014, p. 1). This report proposed four specific supports that should be provided principals:

1. Continue to invest in leadership development beyond pipeline investments.

2. Engage principals in authentic peer networks, where principals can learn from other principals in the art and practice of leading schools.

3. Provide one-on-one coaching support to principals *beyond the first two years*.

4. Revise the structure and purpose of district office principal supervisor's role (School Leadership Network Report, 2014, p. 2).

The NewSchools Venture Fund (2008) recommended "a three pronged approach [for principal development] that includes individualized coaching, a cohort emphasis on group problem solving, and targeted training for the needs of individual principals" (p. 10). Supports repeatedly identified by researchers include coaching, mentoring, professional learning communities (PLCs), professional development, and central office support (Blazer, 2010; Honig, 2012; School Leadership Network Report, 2014).

Coaching. Peterson (2001) defined coaching for administrators as "ways to improve practice in organizations as administrators work with someone who can provide feedback, modeling, and new knowledge" (p. 7). An acknowledged form of support, coaching is valued in medicine, engineering, architecture, and law. Kee, Anderson, Dearing, Harris, and Shuster (2010) asserted that "coaching is the new essential for today's school leaders" (p. 4). They identified coaching as critical for the continuous strengthening of principals' "emotional

intelligence of self-awareness, self-control, motivation, social awareness, and skill enhancement"

(p. 4). Blazer (2010) and Kee et al., (2010) summarized the following benefits of coaching:

1. Coaching creates the opportunity for authentic, targeted and differentiated

    learning.

2. Coaching provides an experienced, trusted, nonjudgmental mentor who listens,

    affirms, guides and is actively involved in day-to-day experiences.

3. Coaching provides support in a non-evaluative, confidential manner, assisting

    principals with both management and instructional decisions.

4. Coaching supports principals in clarifying goals and prioritizing actions for the

    achievement of those goals.

Mentoring. Davis et al. (2005) described the role of the mentor as "a guide to the learner

in his or her search for strategies to resolve dilemmas, to boost self-confidence, and to construct

a broad repertoire of leadership skills" (p. 11). Mentoring has been advocated as a form of

support and professional development for principals by researchers and practitioners (Blazer,

2010; Daresh, 2004; Malone, 2002). Daresh (2004), Blazer (2010), and Malone (2002) all

asserted that the predicted shortage of principals can be mitigated by providing mentoring as job-

embedded professional development, and that professions in the private sector employ mentoring

to support and develop key personnel.

Daresh (2004) asserted in relation to the mentoring of principals that (a) both

practitioners and researchers must attend to the improvement of leadership development and

support; and (b) mentoring is an effective practice to enhance career development in many

settings. Daresh (2004) listed the positive outcomes experienced by principals as a result of

being mentored as "developing more capable staff, the creation of lifelong learning norms,

higher levels of employee motivation, improved self-esteem, and greater productivity" (p. 505).

Davis et al. (2005) stated that mentoring relationships accelerate the principal's learning

and developing of problem solving ability by providing guidance from an expert. Mentoring can

provide targeted support to such key personnel as principals to increase both the district's and the

principals' effectiveness. Daresh (2004) asserted that mentoring supports professional formation

at the pre-service, induction, or induction phases of the professional development of school

administrators.

Blazer (2010) described districts that provided principals with skilled mentors who were

fellow principals or other district administrators who were once principals. These districts'

principals received complex problem solving solutions from veteran professionals on addressing

complicated issues of contracts or procedures. Davis et al. (2005) shared that the "primary role

of the mentor is to guide the learner in his or her search for strategies to resolve dilemmas, to

boost self-confidence, and to construct a broad repertoire of leaderships skills" (p. 11).

In reference to their analysis of 40 studies related to mentoring, Hansford and Ehrich

(2006) stated that "the literature abounds with suggestions as to the how and why of mentoring

for principals" (p. 6). The objective of their study "was to develop a database that would provide

future principals in mentoring programs with information pertaining to mentoring outcomes

grounded in research based data" (p. 8). They concluded that mentoring programs provide

important professional development for enhancing the learning and growth of novices and

experienced principals.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Hord and Hirsh (2008) asserted that "one

of the most powerful ways for principals to extend their learning is to participate in professional

learning communities (PLCs), forums that are explicitly designed to convene educators for

learning so that students perform at higher levels" (p. 27). They describe PLCs as groups of

educators (principals and teachers) focused on professional learning for the purpose of increasing

student achievement. Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, and Many (2010) defined PLCs as an "ongoing

process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective enquiry and

action research to achieve better results for the students they serve" (p. 9).

Hord (2009) defined PLCs as a process-driven model which leads to actions of

implementation and inquiry. The principal works with teachers to create the conditions where

shared knowledge and regular conferring are used to ensure implementation of selected practices

with fidelity. High levels of collaboration, using data to inform practices, and using research-

based best practices to provide targeted instruction are the hallmarks of PLCs.   Hord and Hirsh

(2008) asserted, "The most powerful organizer for PLCs is student performance" (p. 28).

Although teacher PLCs are commonplace, principal PLCs are more uncommon. Yet,

Educational Research Service (2000) found that principals frequently requested opportunities to

network with other principals to exchange ideas, evaluate the demands of the job, and evaluate

how to implement change at their schools. Principal PLCs enable principals to collaborate to

create individualized action plans for their schools using their own data; peer professionals assist

in conceptualizing these plans and monitoring implementation (Hord & Hirsh, 2008). PLCs

provide principals with the opportunity to build trusting networks where individuals work

together to achieve the common goal of increasing student learning.

Professional development. Blazer (2010) reported that 40% of respondents in a study of

33 principals "expressed a desire for additional professional development in making data-driven

decisions; building a community of learners; evaluating classroom teachers; and evaluating

curriculum" (p. 9). Addressing the increasing number of and complexity of social changes and school initiatives was cited as essential to effective professional development (Peterson, 2001). School Leaders Network advocates that school districts move away from traditional principal meeting formats which are "most frequently used as opportunities to roll out mandates, initiatives, and expectations" (2014, p. 8), and provide targeted support in the areas of content and pedagogy to address the changing learning needs of students and school educational goals. Davis et al. (2005) identified three approaches to ongoing professional development: (1) statewide leadership academies (2) local professional development academies for teachers and principals, and (3) comprehensive professional development initiatives tied to school reform (e.g., the Wallace Foundation supported LEAD districts). The Wallace Foundation (2012) reported that everyday demands and urgencies tend to overshadow the learning needs of principals. Just as with PLCs, time must be provided for principals to participate in professional development activities. Training programs for principals should be district-led (Wallace Foundation, 2012) and where districts have designated time to provide quality principal training based on leadership standards.

Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2009) reported that "experienced principals seem to need more training on instructional and strategic leadership skills, while inexperienced principals seem to also need training on technical issues, such as financial management" (p. 122). They suggested considering the "principal's career stage" before planning targeted professional development. They further recommended that partnerships with universities and professional organizations be created to provide targeted professional development. The leadership academies of New York City, Boston, and Prince George's County work with principals who range from aspiring to novice to late career.

District support. Historically, districts have provided support to principals in the areas of budgeting, transportation, maintenance, and staffing (Blazer, 2010). Most districts support principals by providing direction on legal issues concerning staff, parents, and community. Bottoms and Fry (2009) asserted that in addition, districts must provide principals with adequate support in the form of protection from community and political pressures. Peterson (2001) recommended that support be provided continuously to principals by planning relevant and intentional professional development programs: that address curriculum coherence, instructional strategies, program culture and symbols, and linkage to state initiatives and program policies.

Wahlstrom et al. (2010) found that more than half of the principals they interviewed identified seven district supports that influenced their practices:

- District provision of human and fiscal resources
- Encouragement by districts to foster relationships with parents and community
- Allowing schools sufficient flexibility in pursuit of district goals
- Insisting on data-based decision making in schools
- Assisting schools in the interpretation and use of data
- Enabling principals to staff their schools with people they need
- Provision of achievement standards and district-wide curricula (p. 16).

Blazer (2010) described the need for School Administration Managers (SAMs). SAMs were created to provide principals more time to focus on instructional activities instead of management responsibilities. SAMs enable principals to be instructional leaders while ensuring the demands of managing the school are met. Resources like Teaching Assistant Principals TAPs, Teachers on Special Assignments (TOSAs), and instructional coaches are also cited as

district support that helps principals address their multiple and conflicting job demands and focus

on instructional leadership actions (Lovely, 2004).

Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, and Newton (2010) studied three urban school districts

engaged in central office transformation as a district-wide teaching and learning improvement

strategy. They found that principal support was transformed when, "central office personnel

focuses their work" either directly or indirectly "on strengthening principal's instructional

leadership as a key lever for teaching and learning improvement in schools" (Honig et al., 2010,

p. 3). They recommended the redirection of central office personnel to partner with principals in

an effort to increase the principal's effectiveness through "learning focused" partnerships.

Challenges for School Principals

Stress, multiple and conflicting priorities, and the ever-increasing expectations of the job

have been cited as some barriers faced by principals (Malone, Sharp, & Thompson, 2000). The

Wallace Foundation Report (2012) cited challenges related to principal preparation, principal

evaluation, and the need for ongoing support. Cusick (2003) added "[principals'] days are often

10-12 hours long starting at 5: 30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. and going into the evening with activities

and events" (p. 2). Lack of time is an ever present challenge for principals.

Managing stress. Malone et al. (2000) found that stress was one of the most serious

obstacles to overcome in the principalship. Long hours, meeting the needs of all stakeholders and

engaging in crucial conversations with parents and staff were all stress-inducing activities for a

building principal. Malone and Nelson (2004) asserted, "Because stress can cause serious health

concerns, an evaluation of how principals' leadership behavior is affected by the increasing

demands and expectations of their jobs is crucial to the survival of schools" (p. 3). Identified

common stressors are students' lack of or poor academic achievement, student discipline issues,

declining resources, and the public's misunderstanding of the principal's role (Combs,

Edmondson, & Jackson, 2009). Cusick (2003) added "increased pressure by government and

parents put principals in higher-stress and more conflict –laden roles" (p. 5). According to

Compson (2015) burnout is the result of one's physical and emotional resources being depleted.

This depletion results in being less focused on relationships, and inefficacy. Combs et al. (2009)

found that principals experience high levels of burnout, career dissatisfaction and general morale

decline.

Managing increasing, multiple, and conflicting priorities. Principals are required to

manage multiple and often conflicting priorities. These include legislated expectations, increased

parental demands, increased responsibilities for school improvement, increasing numbers of

reports, student safety, gender and equity issues, staff development and accreditation, to name

just a few (Cusick, 2003).

Malone and Nelson (2004) found that "principals must contend with unqualified

teachers, rapidly shifting student populations, increased special education requirements, and

increased pressures to improve student achievement" (p. 3). Currently a shortage of substitute

teachers is sweeping the nation. This shortage creates conflicting priorities for principals who

have to find creative ways to cover classes each day. Often, the solution is the principal teaching

classes at the cost of doing his or her primary job.

The Wallace Foundation Report (2012) noted that many principals feel that they have

multiple, increasing, and often conflicting priorities that prevent them from performing well in

their jobs. Principals serve multiple constituencies—students, teachers, parents, school board

members, and superintendents, and serve multiple communities within each of these

constituencies. Social problems encountered every day at schools, such as those involving

safety, discipline, supporting students with disabilities, partnering with parents, and serving

diverse community needs all contribute to added accountability and potential burnout.

   In conclusion, The Wallace Foundation (2008) stated, "For too long principals have been

expected to behave as superheroes or virtuoso soloists" (p. 2). A review of the literature reveals

a menu of supports to scaffold principals' practices and decision-making in their highly complex

and dynamic jobs (Blazer, 2010; Daresh, 2004; Davis et al., 2005). An investment in

differentiated support by districts, universities, and states enhances effective practices critical to

principals' success and can be directly related to positive outcomes in student achievement.

Principals are the second most influential building-level factor in fostering positive learning

outcomes for students.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study used an electronic survey to identify principals' access to supports and their

perception of needing the supports as a contributing factor to their effectiveness as instructional

leaders. This method was selected because it results in prompt returns, and lower item

nonresponses than a paper pencil survey. (Ary, Jacobs, and Sorenson, 2010). Email surveys can

be completed at a time, place, and pace that the participant chooses. Catalyst, the selected

electronic tool for the current survey, was used to compile the data.

Measures

The survey The Principal's Voice: Supports Critical to School Principal's Effectiveness

was created for the purposes of this study (see Appendix A). The survey took approximately 15

minutes to complete and had three sections. Section one included nine demographic questions

focused on person specific variables (e.g., age, gender, and years of experience) and

demographic characteristics of their present employment (e.g., socio-economic status and size of

schools). Section two included 16 items and asked principals to "please rate your level of

agreement as to whether or not each type of support would be critical to enhancing your

effectiveness in your current role as a principal". Section three included the 16 items from

section two, but slightly reworded to ask about the principals' perceptions of the adequacy of the

support as provided by their district. The directions were "for the following items please identify

your level of agreement with the availability of each type of support in your current position as

principal". Principals were asked to respond on a 5- point Likert scale ranging from: 1= *strongly*

disagree to 5=*strongly agree*.

Participants

A convenience method of sampling was used to send the electronic survey to

approximately 90 elementary school principals in four school districts in Washington State.

These four school districts in two counties were first identified, and permission for inclusion in

the study was sought from district level administration. Once district approval had been

received, the names of elementary principals serving in those districts were tabulated to create

email groups. Sixty principals completed and returned the surveys and the overall response rate

was 67%.

All of the 60 elementary school principals who replied to the survey had Washington

State administrative credentials, a requirement to get their jobs, and worked in districts that had

adopted the AWSP Leadership Framework tool for principal evaluation. Campbell et al., (2014)

in their report on Washington State administrators cited that in 2011-2012 there were 606

elementary school principals. The population responding to this survey represents approximately

10% of elementary principals in Washington State. Demographic data are reported in the

findings.

Procedures

The electronic survey was created using a reliable and confidential electronic tool named

Catalyst. To introduce the rationale, purpose, and goals of this research study, an email (see

Appendix B) was sent to all elementary principals currently working in the selected school

districts. The email was linked to the survey with directions for completion, and a date by which

they were to be returned. The survey window was opened from February 1, 2016 to February

19, 2016. A reminder email was sent to all approximately half way through the above timeline

and an additional reminder was sent at the close of the survey. The survey window was extended

for an additional week following the final email and resulted in ten more respondents. Surveys

that had been completed and turned in were de-identified and stored in a password-protected file

in Catalyst.

Informed Consent

The email (see Appendix B) included an explanation of the expectations regarding participation and timelines for responding to the survey. The introduction to the survey (see Appendix A) provided information on safeguards related to confidentiality and anonymity of the responder. Additionally, it clarified that all data gathered would be held in a confidential secure place and would not be released to anyone. Informed consent was stated as indicated by participation in the survey. Each participant received an informed consent agreement, embedded in the email outlining the purpose, rationale, benefits, and risks of the study prior to clicking the link to the electronic survey. This study presented minimal risks as the identity of each participant of the survey would be anonymous and no personally identifiable information was solicited in the survey. All surveyed participants were professional adults, contacted only via their published, business email addresses. Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained in the collection of the surveys and analysis of data. An electronic survey tool (Catalyst) that ensured confidentiality was used for the purpose of this study to safeguard the information gathered. Confidentiality was considered in sending participants an email with a link to directly reply to the online survey. Their responses were gathered anonymously in Catalyst, which is a password protected electronic tool. A proposal of this study was submitted for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and received an exempt status.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify elementary school principals' perceptions of supports as being critical to their effectiveness in their role as instructional leaders. Additionally, the intent was to ascertain principal's perceptions of the adequacy of the supports provided by their districts. The following section includes the findings of the data that were examined.

Demographic Information

Demographic data were collected to understand the context of the participants and their schools. Demographic items included age, gender, years of educational and administrative experience, support in the forms of assistant principals or deans, socio-economic status of schools, and size of schools. Of the 60 principals surveyed, 36 (60%) were women and 24 (40%) were men. The age ranges of the principals were as follows: 5 (8%) were between 25 and 30 years of age, 21 (35%) between 36 and 45 years of age, 22 (37%) between 46 and 54 and 12 (20%) were 55 and older. The majority of principals reported 9 or more years of prior teaching or counseling experience ($n = 44$, 73%) while the remainder were equally distributed between 3 and 5 years ($n = 6$, 10%) and 6 and 8 years ($n = 6$, 10%). Principals also were asked about their prior experience in the role of dean or assistant principal. Nine (15%) of the principals reported no prior experience, 17 (28.3%) reported 1-2 years, 23 (38%) reported 3-5 years, and 11 (18%) reported 6 or more years of prior administrative experience. Regarding the total years of experience in the role of principal, 21 (35%) reported 1-3 years, 20 (33%) reported 4-10 years, and 18 (30%) reported 11 or more years of experience. Finally, for the category of years in the role of principal in their current schools, 15 (25%) were in their first year as building administrator, 25 (42%) had 2-3 years of experience, 16 (27 %) had 4-10 years and 4 (7 %) had 11 or more years as principal in their current building.

The majority of principals participating in this study (77%) reported having an assistant

principal or dean working in their building while 23% indicated they did not have an assistant

principal or dean in their school. The free and reduced lunch (FRL) rates of a school are an

indicator of the poverty level of schools. Responses indicated that 16 (27%) of the principals

worked in schools with 0-40% rates of FRL, 24 principals (40%) worked in schools with 40-65%

FRL rates and 20 principals (33%) worked in schools with 66-100% FRL rates. School size was

another factor surveyed, and it was observed that 1 (2%) principal worked in a school that had up

to 300 students enrolled, 52 principals (87%) worked in schools where enrollment was between

301-700 students and 7 principals (12 %) worked in schools with enrollments of 700 or more

students.

Descriptive Statistics

For the purpose of this study, responses from 60 principals were analyzed using

frequency scores of means and percentages. Mean ratings for individual items are presented in

rank order in Table 1 and ranged from 3.74 to 4.62. As can be seen, principals identified "The

ability to have time with staff during the school day for collaboration and data analysis" as the

most critical need for their effectiveness as instructional leaders. An analysis of the crosstab data

revealed that 95% of principals indicated that they *agreed* (13.3%) or *strongly agreed* (81.7%)

with this support as critical to their effectiveness as instructional leaders. Other items that

received high rankings were "The opportunity for professional development for principals on

effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students," "Resources for staff training and in-

service,", and "Time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in

the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment

plans." Cross tab data for these items indicated that 90-93% of principals *agreed* or *strongly*

agreed with these statements of supports. For the remainder of the items, the majority received

mean ratings of above 4, indicating a response of *agree* to *strongly agree* with the critical need

for this support in their instructional leadership. The lowest item response was for "A designated

process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics" (*M*

= 3.74), with the mean falling between neither *agree* nor *disagree* and agree on the ranking of

the item. As can be seen, none of the items received mean rankings indicating disagreement or

strong disagreement with the perception of the support being critical to principals' efficiency as

leaders. Further, examination of the crosstab data revealed that items receiving mean scores

below 4.0 received relatively few responses of *strongly disagree* or *disagree*.

Table 1.

Supports identified as critical to their effectiveness as instructional leaders in rank order.

Item	Statement	*M*	*SD*
6	The ability to have time with staff outside the school day for collaboration and data analysis.	4.62	0.92
16	The opportunity for professional development for principals on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students.	4.47	0.83
1	Resources for staff training and in-service.	4.46	0.97
7	Time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans.	4.45	0.89
8	Instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.	4.43	0.84
15	The availability of district guidance and support to analyze and interpret data, and develop a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations.	4.43	0.82
9	District support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.	4.42	0.97

11	The availability of resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff, and district procedures and time lines compatible with hiring quality staff.	4.33	0.92
5	Technical support for how to use data to influence instruction is critical to my effectiveness	4.32	1.00
12	Central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.	4.32	0.96
10	Opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff.	4.28	0.95
4	Assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.).	4.08	1.06
13	The provision of training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement.	3.92	1.00
3	Training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific.	3.86	1.05
14	The handling of insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level.	3.82	1.00
2	A designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics.	3.74	1.05

The next 16 items (numbered 17-32) asked principals to identify their level of agreement with the adequacy or sufficiency of the availability of supports in their current positions. The data presented in Table 2 show the mean scores ranged from 2.60 to 3.49. As can be seen, there was not a large variety in the range of mean scores across items. However, it should be noted that the availability of these each of these supports were rated lower in comparison to the ratings for the critical nature of the supports to their effectiveness as instructional leaders. These

findings indicate that principals perceive they have less access to the supports than their

perception of the critical nature for the supports in connection to their instructional effectiveness.

As can be seen, "my district provides sufficient time with staff outside the school day for

collaborations and data analysis" received the lowest rating ($M = 2.60$) in the rank order of

access to supports. Other items identified by their low ratings were "my district provides

sufficient assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive

picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions,

etc.)" ($M = 2.78$), "my district provides sufficient training for principals in best practices for the

prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific" (M

$= 2.74$) and "my district provides training, coverage and support for the principal's

responsibilities for building community involvement" ($M = 2.66$).

While principals rated the critical importance of time with staff outside of the school day

for collaboration and data analysis as their highest support (the highest level of agreement in

terms of critical importance to their effectiveness) this item was rated the lowest in terms of

district provided access to this support. Cross tab data indicated 95% of the principals selected

strongly agreed (81.7%) or *agreed* (13.3%) to this support as critical to their effectiveness, yet

only 23% of principals selected either *agreed* (21.7%) or *strongly agreed* (1.7%) to having

access to the same support. In contrast, 53% of principals indicated they *disagreed* (45%) or

strongly disagreed (8.3%) to having adequate access to this support.

Items that received the highest ratings of access to supports were, "my district offers

sufficient support in the form of coaches and mentors" ($M = 3.49$), and "my district makes

available adequate resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff and provides district procedures and

timelines that are compatible with hiring quality staff" ($M = 3.44$). Cross tab data indicated that

57% of principals, (23.3%) *agreed* and (33.3%) *strongly agreed* to having access to the 1st item.

For the second item 52% of principals, (45%) *agreed* and (7%) *strongly agreed* to having

adequate or sufficient access.

Table 2.

Supports identified as being provided access to by the district in rank order.

Item	Statement	*M*	*SD*
25	My district offers sufficient support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.	3.49	1.37
27	My district makes available adequate resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff and provides district procedures and time lines that are compatible with hiring quality staff.	3.44	0.90
30	My district handles issues with insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level.	3.38	1.14
18	My district has a designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics.	3.27	0.91
21	My district provides sufficient technical support for how to use data to influence instruction.	3.22	0.97
17	My district provides sufficient resources for staff training and in-services.	3.20	1.11
28	My district provides central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.	3.14	1.00
24	My district provides adequate instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.	3.10	1.11
26	My district provides sufficient opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff.	3.06	1.14
31	My district provides adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students.	3.04	0.98

23	My district provides time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans.	2.94	1.15
32	My district provides principals with adequate opportunities for professional development on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students.	2.80	1.11
20	My district provides sufficient assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.).	2.78	0.94
19	My district provides sufficient training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific.	2.74	0.90
29	My district provides training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement.	2.66	0.92
22	My district provides sufficient time with staff outside the school day for collaborations and data analysis.	2.60	0.97

In summary, the mean scores in Table 1 indicated the high value principals placed on the supports in context of being critical to their effectiveness as instructional leaders. However, mean scores in Table 2 revealed that principals were more likely to view that they didn't have adequate or sufficient access to the supports. The discrepancy in both mean and percentages ratings between the two tables (showing the 2 sets of supports) indicated that supports being provided by districts are neither adequate nor sufficient to meet principal needs. Themes emerging from these two finding will be examined in the discussion section.

Differences in access to supports compared by the free and reduced lunch of the school. A series of analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to compare the effects of Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) status on each of the survey items for principals' perceptions of

access to district provided supports. The three categories of FRL were 0-40% of students

receiving FRL, 41-65% receiving FRL and 66-100% receiving FRL. The ANOVA tables are

provided in Table 3 (Appendix C) for each of the survey items. Statistically significant group

differences were found for three of the survey items and are presented here.

There was a significant difference among the three FRL groups on how they responded to

"my district provides sufficient resources for staff training and in-services," $F (2, 57) = 4.30$, $p =$

.018. Specifically, post hoc comparisons determined that principals in the highest FRL schools

(66-100%) differed significantly in their ratings on this item compared to ratings of principals in

the lowest FRL schools (0- 40%) and those from the middle FRL schools (41-65%). Cross tab

analysis indicated that principals in the highest poverty schools (55%) *disagreed* or (5%)

strongly disagreed, respectively, to having access to resources for staff training and in-services.

In contrast, 44% of the principals in the lowest poverty schools and 54% of principals in schools

in middle poverty levels indicated *agreed* in response to having access to this support. These

findings indicate that principals in higher poverty schools are not as satisfied with the level of

resources provided for professional development for their staff in comparison to their principal

peers at lower poverty schools.

Group differences were noted for the pattern of ratings on "my district offers sufficient

support in the forms of coaches and mentors for teachers," $F (2, 56) = 3.569$, $p = .035$. Post hoc

comparisons indicated that principals in the highest income schools (low FRL) were less

satisfied with district provided support in the form coaches and mentors than their principal peers

at the highest poverty schools. Cross tab data indicated that principals from the lowest FRL

schools (0-40%) *disagreed* (31%) or *strongly disagreed* (19%) to having sufficient access to this

support whereas only 15% of principals from the highest poverty schools (66-100%) *disagreed*

to having access to this support. Conversely, principals working in the highest poverty schools either *agreed* (45%) or *strongly agreed* (30%) that they had adequate or sufficient access to this support whereas among principals in the highest income schools (low FRL), only 19% *agreed* and 13% *strongly agreed* with this statement. These findings indicate that principals in lower poverty schools are not as satisfied with the level of resources provided in the forms of coaches and mentors for teachers in comparison to their principal peers at lower poverty schools.

There were significant group differences in response patterns among the three FRL groups on "my district provides adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students," $F(2, 56) = 4.819$, $p = .012$. Post hoc comparisons determined that principals in the highest poverty schools differed significantly in their ratings from those principals and in the middle level and low levels of FRL schools. Crosstab data indicated that 42% and 16% of principals, respectively, in the (66-100%) highest FRL schools, *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* to having access to this support. In comparison, only 25% of the principals at the middle and 25% at the highest level FRL schools *disagreed* that they had adequate access to this support and none of the principals from these schools indicated a strong disagreement with the statement. These findings indicate that principals in higher poverty schools are not as satisfied with the level of resources provided for guidance, analysis and interpretation of data and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students, comparison to their principal peers at lower poverty schools.

Analysis of variance: Differences in access to supports compared by years of experience. A series of analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to compare the effects of years of administrative experience on each of the survey items for principals' perceptions of

access to district provided supports. The three categories of years of experience were identified

as: 1-3 years, 4-10 years and 11 or more years. The ANOVA results are provided in Table 4

(Appendix D) for each of the survey items. Significant group differences were found for two of

the survey items and are presented here.

There was a significant difference among the three years of experience groups on how

they responded to "my district provides sufficient assistance with the process of data collection

and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of school environment (rather

than simply counting suspensions, etc.)," $F(2, 55) = 6.692$, $p = .003$. Post hoc comparisons

determined that principals with the least amount of administrative experience (1-3 years) differed

significantly from those with the 4-10 years and 11 or more years of experience. Cross tab data

showed that 48% and 5% of principals in the least experienced group *agreed* or *strongly agreed*,

respectively, that their districts provided sufficient access to this support. In comparison to the

most experienced principals, only 17% *agreed* and none *strongly agreed* with having sufficient

access to this support. Of principals with 4-10 years of experience, only 5% *agreed* and 5%

strongly agreed to having sufficient access to this support. Overall, the principals with the least

experience indicated the most sufficient access to assistance with the process of data collection

and analysis to improve the safety and order of their schools.

An ANOVA revealed group differences for responses to "my district provides central

office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of

unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school," $F(2, 55) = 7.009$, $p = .002$. Post hoc analysis

indicated that the responses of the group with the least years of experience differed significantly

from the group with 4-10 years of administrative experience, but only approached significance

for the difference between those with the least and most experience. Cross tab data showed that

52% and 14% of principals with 1-3 years of experience, respectively, *agreed* or *strongly agreed* to having access to this support. However, only 20% of principals with 4-10 years of experience *agreed* with having access to this guidance and support and no principals in this group *strongly agreed*. Of the principals with 11 or more years of experience, 39% *agreed* that their districts provided access to this support. In general, principals with the least number of years of experience indicated the most agreement with having access to central office guidance and support in supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into their schools.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Several of the findings of the present study warrant further consideration. The results will be discussed in reference to the 8 criteria of the AWSP Leadership Framework, which formed the foundation for the supports identified in the survey for the present study. The discussion is framed in the context of the review of literature, which points to the positive relationship between principal leadership and student achievement (AWSP Leadership Framework, 2014; Elmore, 2000; Marzano & Dufour, 2011; Waters et al., 2003). The review of literature indicates that instructional leadership has been identified as a significant factor that impacts student learning (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; 2003; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Waters et al.). The literature on supports provided to principals suggests that districts need to provide targeted supports, that consider factors like years of experience of principals and the poverty levels of schools in which they work, especially given the current climate of high stakes accountability (Copland, 2001; Davis et al., 2005; Mead, 2011; Murphy, 2009).

First, the pattern of the principals' responses indicated a general agreement that all of the supports identified in the survey were viewed as critically important to their effectiveness as school leaders. The high ratings across survey items add validation to the AWSP Framework of identified supports. The AWSP Leadership Framework and the suggested supports under each criterion demonstrate an obvious understanding of the professional needs of principals. For the present study the top supports identified by principals as critical to their effectiveness as instructional leaders were directly related to enhancing the instructional core in a school. The top three supports identified were: *time outside the school day to collaborate with staff on instructional practices and data analysis, receiving professional development in best practices to support the learning of subpopulations of students, and using resources for staff training and in-services*. The first two of these supports require data of student growth as evidence for the

principal to receive a rating of proficient or distinguished. In the review of literature, effective principals who focused on student learning, identified the importance of providing targeted and continuous staff development, and created collaborations amongst staff to examine data on student work were successful in creating a quality learning environment (Wahlstrom et al., 2010, Waters et al., 2005). Furthermore, Marzano et al. (2005) and Reeves (2006) point out that effective school leadership monitors and improves teaching and learning by investing in time to collaborate with teachers in analyzing and using data to select best practices and interventions. A rationale for principals indicating such a high affirmation for the value across supports may lie in the fact that in today's climate of high stakes accountability and the laser like focus on student achievement, principals are examining their own instructional competency and know and understand the value of professional preparedness. This is further enhanced by the fact that most principals are also implementing a new, standards based evaluation framework tool, which requires authentic and timely feedback to teachers on content and pedagogy. As principals are also expected to lead their schools in collaboration with teachers, they need to be experts on instructional practices and the use of data to drive targeted instruction (Waters et al., 2005). Another reason why principals indicated their belief that these supports are critical to their effectiveness as instructional leaders may be because of the new AWSP evaluation tool for principals. This tool with its more detailed four point rating scale as opposed to the older binary scale of satisfactory or unsatisfactory may also be a factor in creating an understanding of instructional leadership for principals and the value of these supports to enhance their effectiveness as school leaders.

Second, the pattern of the principals' responses to the adequacy of the availability of the supports that they rated as critically important was lower than their ratings of the importance of

the supports to their effectiveness as school leaders for every item of the survey. This pattern

indicates that although they perceived these supports as critical to their effectiveness as leaders,

they were less likely to perceive that their districts provided the necessary supports either

adequately or sufficiently. The review of literature indicated that traditional supports provided

by districts are typically connected with areas like budgeting, transportation, maintenance and

staffing (Blazer, 2010). Moreover, Wahlstrom et al. (2010) identified three supports that districts

believed influenced principals' practices and student achievement. These included a focus on

goals for student achievement, tracking professional development needs of teachers and creating

opportunities and structures for teacher collaboration. In contrast, principals, in the Wahlstrom et

al., (2010) study reported that they wanted supports in the form of resources (e.g., personnel and

funding), encouragement for building relationships with parents and community, assistance with

data for decision-making purposes, and district curricula to support student achievement.

Districts following a traditional paradigm of professional development and supports may be

disconnected with the current professional needs of their principals. It may be that in the present

study, districts have been providing a system of support that is generic and even traditional. The

information from this survey, provided by principals indicates the need for districts to provide

supports in a differentiated manner, considering contextual and demographic details of the

school and the principal.

Principals reported having the least amount of access to *having time outside the school*

day for collaborations and data analysis; training coverage and support for building community

involvement; training in best practices to prevent violence and on issues that are community

specific and on the collection, analysis of data to build a comprehensive picture of culture and

climate of the school and. Principals viewed access to these specific supports which address the

culture and climate of schools and the community lower than other supports like having coaches

and mentor for teachers and having a designated process and timelines that aide the hiring of

quality staff which were rated as having the highest access. This may be due to the fact that in

previous research Cusick (2003) determined that the most important school features desired by

communities were clean, orderly and smooth running schools so that children had access to a

positive learning environment. The principals' responses to the survey appear to call for support

directly related to teaching and the support of high quality instruction. Taken together, this

information suggests that districts need to have a greater understanding of the targeted needs of

each principal and the teachers they lead, before focusing on supports that address the specific

needs of the community in which their principals serve.

An interesting observation was on how the support, *the ability to have time with staff

outside the school day for collaborations and data analysis* received the highest rating in terms

of critical importance, yet the lowest rating in terms of adequacy of access to the support as

provided by their districts. Time for collaborating with staff has been noted as a significant factor

for enhancing effective instructional leadership (Dufour et al., 2010; Marzano et al, 2009;

Reeves, 2006). The lower ratings of access to adequate time with staff in this study

communicates the principals' understanding of the urgency of the need to work with their

teachers to meet the challenges of their student's learning needs and creating growth for them.

Although it is common practice for districts to provide paid professional development time for

teachers, these professional development opportunities are often district directed rather than

guided by the buildings' goals and needs. This may well be the case in the present investigation,

however the nature of professional development opportunities were not explored herein.

Third, the poverty rate of the school had bearing on the principals' perceptions of the degree of adequacy of the supports provided by their districts for three of the AWSP suggested supports. Specifically, principals in the highest poverty schools were significantly more likely than their peers in lower poverty schools to indicate that they were not provided adequate or sufficient support in the form of resources for staff training and in-services and adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data to close the achievement gap for subpopulations of students. Reeves (2006) explained that high levels of poverty in schools as measured by FRL counts are often associated with lower levels of student achievement and are associated with achievement gaps in learning for subpopulations of students (Murphy, 2009). Teaching by using research-based best practices and leadership that monitors and supports learning are two factors that can close the achievement gap created by poverty (Reeves, 2006). The present responses of principals in high poverty schools indicate an unmet need for support in analyzing data and training their teachers to use data to provide targeted instruction and interventions to larger numbers of subpopulations of students. The principal's responses reflect their need to create the learning opportunity for all their students and close the achievement gap for their subpopulations. Perhaps the principals are in high poverty schools that do not have access to supports.

Interestingly, principals in the highest socio-economic (low FRL) schools indicated having the least access to support in the forms of coaches and mentors for their teachers. This finding likely stems from the national (Title 1) and state (Learning Assistance Programs) additional funding provided to schools of high poverty. These funds can be used for the hiring of extra staff (e.g., interventionists, coaches, mentors) and paying staff for professional

development outside the school day. In contrast, schools with low FRL rates do not receive the extra support in terms of resources like money and personnel.

Principals who are in their in their early careers (1-3 years of experience as building administrators) were more likely than their more experienced counterparts to perceive access to higher levels of supports for a number of the AWSP recommended supports. The two supports that were indicated as significant were related to central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school, and guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data for to build a more comprehensive picture of safety and order of school environment. These two items are related to functions that ensure school safety and the managing of resources. Both of the supports are needed to create a positive learning environment and are critical for new principals. Clark et al., (2009) cite experience on the job as being associated with greater effectiveness as a principal. Indeed, Wahlstrom et al (2010) suggest that it takes five years for a principal to reach their full potential as an effective leader. Thus, it is not surprising that districts might focus their efforts to support early career principals more so than more experienced principals in the smooth running of the building and in efforts to address the achievement gap. The review of literature suggests that districts provide a number of activities for new principals like mentoring, coaching, and professional development to support principals in acquiring deeper knowledge of curriculum, pedagogy and assessments (Daresh, 2004; Hirsh, 2008; Lovely, 2004; Peterson, 2001). Additional examples include direct support from the district for budgeting, hiring, displacing and transportation provided to newly hired principals during orientation or administrative retreats (Blazer, 2010). Traditional district trainings might also include guidelines to manage day-to-day functions, like timelines and procedures for the hiring of teachers that impact the instructional

core and student achievement (Davis et al., 2005; Honig et al., 2010; Walstrom, 2010). Given the findings of the present investigation, it would behoove districts to also survey their more experienced principals and provide them access to supports they identify as necessary to their effectiveness as a school leader. Another explanation is that perhaps it is that principals that more experience know enough to know that they need more than early career principals.

Taken together, the results of the present investigation indicate that principals have their unique needs for professional supports. Moreover, districts should consider their professional development offerings for principals across the stages of their careers and make the supports available relative to the features of the current schools where principals work. Principals indicated this need for differentiation in their responses. According to the AWSP User's Guide (2013),

Although principals may have the authority to make decisions, they may not be supported in making those decisions. Thus, as they establish the scope of the work, it is important for supervisors to ask whether they have enabled the principal to use his or her authority by providing adequate support (e.g., resources, time, professional development, information (p.4). Given that the principals in this study were in strong agreement with the critical importance of the AWSP recommended supports, districts should consider their efforts to provide these supports to all of their school leaders.

Strengths and Limitations

In the present study, 60 principals participated in the survey and created a sample size of approximately 10% of the principals in the state (see Campbell et al., 2014). Information from this survey created a strong foundation for understanding the perceptions of principals in elementary schools in Washington in regards to the supports they view as critical to their

effectiveness and school leaders and their current access to those supports. However, a limitation

of this study was that only elementary school principals from suburban districts were surveyed.

For a more comprehensive picture of supports for all principals in this state, future research

should include principals at the two other levels of schools: middle and high schools and include

schools from rural and urban areas. Such an endeavor would provide a more comprehensive

picture of the need of supports of principals in Washington State. This information would be

valuable to district and state leaders who want to create a systems wide, comprehensive support

framework to enhance principal practices for every level of their career and experience.

Another strength of this study was the framework used to determine the supports for

investigation. The AWSP Leadership Framework suggests supports that districts should provide

their principals under each of 8 criteria. The current investigation included representation of each

of these criteria and thus represents the full spectrum of the AWSP Leadership Framework. A

possible limitation of this quantitative survey method, which provided descriptive data on

principal's perceptions of the supports, was the lack of a qualitative voice. By conducting focus

group sessions, with a group of principals, more values, out of the box ideas and deeply held

opinions would be gathered adding further perspective to these results.

Summary and Recommendations

This study was targeted towards elementary school principals, and focused on the

supports suggested by the AWSP Leadership Framework under each of the 8 criteria. The

purpose of this study was to gather information about the value and access of supports from the

principal's perspective. The principal's voice in selecting supports that were critical to their

effectiveness as instructional leaders, created an authentic relevance for this study. Principals

indicated their own perception of access to supports provided either adequately or sufficiently by

their districts. These findings provide central office personnel who currently supervise, coach or mentor principals directly with relevant data that can be used to create high impact professional development opportunities for their principals that are tightly aligned with the district's vision of an optimal learning environment for all their students. The recommendation of ongoing support is also suggested by the AWSP Leadership Framework which stated that "supervisors are called upon to mentor, coach, support and assist principals in improving their practice throughout the year" (p. 15).

The findings of the present investigation bring to light the following recommendations. First, principals need targeted individualized supports that are tightly aligned with the 8 criteria identified in the AWSP Framework. Districts leaders and supervisors could use a survey such as the one created for the present investigation to move away from the traditional paradigms of professional development and create relevant learning opportunities for their principals. Using the information from the survey, district leaders can create a more comprehensive support plan that addresses the needs of all their principals. Specifically, some of the identified supports could be the focus of the work conducted by coaches or mentors that are assigned to principals. While other identified supports like working on data dashboards for whole groups and sub populations of students lend themselves to collaborations with peers such as those provided through professional learning communities. Further, identifying supports that enhance a principal's practices will enable the evaluator to provide the needed support. Sharing the results from surveys such as this and the rank order of supports valued under each criteria, will help both supervisors and principals create an individualized professional growth plan of needs and address "reciprocal accountability".

Second, central office personnel can use the principals' perceptions of access to adequate or sufficient levels of supports to create a systems wide support plan. Support in the form of time, personnel, and funds can be planned and explained to principals across the district so that all are aware of the rationale for the distribution of supports. Trainings that involve nuts and bolts issues like hiring, reporting violations, and following the contract can be created, scheduled and a menu of the offerings can be shared with principals to take at their own level of need. Coaches and mentors can be allocated to principals depending on their needs, including years of experience and the socio economic status of their schools.

Third, schools of poverty have their own unique needs. The findings of this survey show that principals in schools with the highest poverty indicated that they did not feel that their districts provided them adequate access to supports like working with staff on data analysis to drive instruction, on building data dashboards for supporting the growth of subpopulations of students. Principals working in schools of high poverty have to deal with much higher numbers of students who come with varied learning needs and are currently lower achieving. Districts need to examine multiple forms of data on these high poverty schools, before carefully considering supports that will be provided to these principals. A plan of the supports needs to be created, published and reviewed periodically.

Finally, districts should not assume that principals with more years of experience have sufficient or adequate access to supports without first surveying their needs. Districts need to create a menu of differentiated trainings on basic managerial functions such as hiring procedures and train new and incoming principals as a part of their orientation. Additionally as cited in the review of literature districts need to provide supports like one on one coaching to principals

beyond their first two years. Also, districts need to make these supports available to all principals in their district.

Conclusions

  Much of what has been discussed in the present study has implications for leaders in districts and at the state level. Principals have to be supported to meet the changing demands of the students that enroll in their schools and the higher expectations proposed by the district, state and community. The AWSP leadership framework's user guide states that "improved principal leadership is dependent upon district support" (p. 4). The review of literature also establishes the link between highly effective principal practices and student achievement. To create a high quality, relevant, environment of support, districts need to create a comprehensive system of supports to include: coaches, mentors, professional development, professional learning communities, job embedded trainings, onboarding activities, instruction on nuts and bolts and partnerships with higher education. In 1992, AWSP recognized "that student achievement would become the primary measure of a school's effectiveness" (p. 3). This belief led them to create professional standards for school leaders addressing eight highly effective leadership practices for principals that impact student learning. Districts need to use this standards based system, with current research on best practices, to provide supports connected to instruction and management issues to create a balanced menu of supports for school principals. This study adds to the research on principals' perceptions of high quality and targeted supports that are needed to enhance their effectiveness and make them exemplary instructional leaders.

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Appendix A

The Principal's Voice Survey: You are being invited to participate in a research study to identify principals' perceptions of the supports they feel are critical to enhancing their effectiveness as instructional leaders and the availability of these supports in their current positions as principals. This study is part of my capstone project for partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Education (Ed.D) in Educational Leadership at University of Washington Tacoma.

Survey Directions and Informed Consent: This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be anonymous. Information will not be traceable to a specific respondent and will be kept strictly confidential in a password protected program. Your participation is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. The survey is open until February 19, 2016 at 5:00 pm. For questions, please call Rita Chaudhuri at 253-273-6738. Contact information at UW Human Subjects Division (206-543-0098, hsdinfo@uw.edu) for any complaints or concerns regarding subject rights.

By clicking "next" to continue you acknowledge that you are a certified school principal employed in the state of Washington and have read and understood this consent form and that you agree to participate in this study. Your participation in replying to this survey indicates informed consent. If you do not wish to participate in this study, press cancel now. Please print a copy of this page for your records.

Part I – Demographic Questions

Please answer the following demographic questions about yourself.

1. Age
- Between 25-35
- Between 36 -45
- Between 46-55
- 55 years +

2. Gender
- Male
- Female

3. The number of years of experience you have as a certificated teacher or counselor
- 3-5years
- 6-8years
- 9+ years

4. The number of years of experience you have as an assistant principal or dean of students
- No experience
- 1-2 years
- 3-5years
- 6+ years

5. The number of years of experience you have as a school principal
- 1-3years
- 4-10 years
- 11+ years

6. The number of years of experience as a school principal in your present school
- First year
- 2-3 years
- 4-10 years
- 11+ years

7. Do you currently have an assistant principal or dean of students in your building?
- Yes
- No

8. The free and reduced lunch rate of your school
- 0-40%
- 41-65%
- 66-100%

9. Size of your school
- Up to 300 students
- 301-500 students
- 501-700students
- 701+ students

Part II- Perceptions about the critical need for supports

Each of the following statements identifies a type of support intended to enhance a principal's effectiveness as an instructional leader. You may or may not currently have access to these supports, so please rate your level of agreement as to whether or not each type of support would be critical to enhancing your effectiveness in your current role as a principal.

1. Resources for staff training and in-service are critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2. A designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3. Training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
   - Strongly agree
   - Agree
   - Neither agree or disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

4. Assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.) is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
   - Strongly agree
   - Agree
   - Neither agree or disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

5. Technical support for how to use data to influence instruction is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
   - Strongly agree
   - Agree
   - Neither agree or disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

6. The ability to have time with staff outside the school day for collaboration and data analysis is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
   - Strongly agree
   - Agree
   - Neither agree or disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

7. Time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans are critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. Instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts are critical for my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. District support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers is critical for my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. Opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff are critical to my effectiveness as an educational leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. The availability of resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff, and district procedures and time lines compatible with hiring quality staff are critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. Central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school is critical for my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. The provision of training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement is critical for my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. The handling of insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level is critical for my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. The availability of district guidance and support to analyze and interpret data, and develop a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16. The opportunity for professional development for principals on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students is critical to my effectiveness as an instructional leader.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Part III- Availability of Supports

For the following items please identify your level of agreement with the availability of each type of support in your current position as principal.

17. My district provides sufficient resources for staff training and in-services.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18. My district has a designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics.
- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

19. My district provides sufficient training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

20. My district provides sufficient assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.).
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

21. My district provides sufficient technical support for how to use data to influence instruction.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. My district provides sufficient time with staff outside the school day for collaborations and data analysis.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

23. My district provides time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

24. My district provides adequate instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

25. My district offers sufficient support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

26. My district provides sufficient opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

27. My district makes available adequate resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff and provides district procedures and time lines that are compatible with hiring quality staff.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

28. My district provides central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

29. My district provides training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

30. My district handles issues with insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

31. My district provides adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

32. My district provides principals with adequate opportunities for professional development on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students.
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Appendix B

Survey Email

February 1st, 2016

Dear School Principal,

You are being invited to participate in a research study to identify principals' perceptions of the supports they feel are critical to enhancing their effectiveness as instructional leaders and the availability of these supports in their current positions. This study entitled *The Principal's Voice* is part of my capstone project for partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Education (Ed.D) in Educational Leadership at University of Washington Tacoma. The AWSP Leadership Framework was used to construct the survey questions.

If you are currently an elementary school principal, I am requesting you to please respond to this approximately 15-minute electronic survey. Your answers will be stored within a password protected program and maintained in a manner that will not link you to any identifying information. Your response will help us better understand the principal's point of view of the supports they need to be effective instructional leaders. This survey is open until February 19, 2016 at 5:00 pm. If you would like information about the study, please direct any questions to me at: ritac2@uw.edu.

If you are having trouble connecting to this survey, please copy and paste the following URL into your browser:

https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/ritac2/285796

Thank you in advance for taking this survey.

Sincerely,

Rita Chaudhuri,

Director Elementary Education, Tacoma Public Schools and UWT Ed. D candidate.

Appendix C

Table 3.

ANOVA: Differences in supports critical to effectiveness as instructional leaders through FRL

categories.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My district provides sufficient resources for staff training and in-services.	Between Groups	9.09	2	4.55	4.307	.018
	Within Groups	60.16	57	1.06		
	Total	69.25	59			
My district has a designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics.	Between Groups	2.74	2	1.37	1.71	.19
	Within Groups	44.04	55	0.80		
	Total	46.78	57			
My district provides sufficient training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific.	Between Groups	2.48	2	1.24	1.543	.222
	Within Groups	45.71	57	0.80		
	Total	48.18	59			
My district provides sufficient assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.).	Between Groups	0.51	2	0.25	0.271	.764
	Within Groups	52.44	56	0.94		
	Total	52.95	58			
My district provides sufficient technical	Between Groups	5.18	2	2.59	2.835	.067
	Within Groups	52.07	57	0.91		

support for how to use data to influence instruction.	Total	57.25	59			
My district provides sufficient time with staff outside the school day for collaborations and data analysis.	Between Groups	1.05	2	0.52	0.543	.584
	Within Groups	54.89	57	0.96		
	Total	55.93	59			
My district provides time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans.	Between Groups	2.45	2	1.23	0.927	.401
	Within Groups	75.28	57	1.32		
	Total	77.73	59			
My district provides adequate instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.	Between Groups	5.71	2	2.86	2.525	.089
	Within Groups	64.47	57	1.13		
	Total	70.18	59			
My district offers sufficient support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.	Between Groups	11.79	2	5.89	3.569	.035
	Within Groups	92.45	56	1.65		
	Total	104.24	58			
My district provides sufficient opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff.	Between Groups	0.33	2	0.16	0.132	.877
	Within Groups	68.24	55	1.24		
	Total	68.57	57			
My district makes available adequate	Between Groups	1.13	2	0.57	0.696	.503
	Within Groups	44.75	55	0.81		

resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff and provides district procedures and time lines that are compatible with hiring quality staff.	Total	45.88	57			
My district provides central office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.	Between Groups	0.83	2	0.41	0.418	.661
	Within Groups	55.34	56	0.99		
	Total	56.17	58			
My district provides training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement.	Between Groups	0.21	2	0.11	0.122	.886
	Within Groups	49.72	57	0.87		
	Total	49.93	59			
My district handles issues with insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level.	Between Groups	4.53	2	2.27	1.841	.168
	Within Groups	67.69	55	1.23		
	Total	72.22	57			
My district provides adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students.	Between Groups	8.80	2	4.40	4.819	.012
	Within Groups	51.13	56	0.91		
	Total	59.93	58			
My district provides principals with adequate	Between Groups	3.91	2	1.96	1.633	.204
	Within Groups	68.27	57	1.20		

opportunities for professional development on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students.	Total	72.18	59

Appendix D

Table 4.

ANOVA: Differences in access to supports compared to years of experience.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My district provides sufficient resources for staff training and in-services.	Between Groups	3.25	2	1.63	1.38	.26
	Within Groups	65.93	56	1.18		
	Total	69.19	58			
My district has a designated process to support principals in the enforcement of codes of conduct and professional ethics.	Between Groups	3.36	2	1.68	2.13	.129
	Within Groups	43.42	55	0.79		
	Total	46.78	57			
My district provides sufficient training for principals in best practices for the prevention and intervention of violence, including issues /ideas that are community specific.	Between Groups	2.93	2	1.47	1.82	.172
	Within Groups	45.20	56	0.81		
	Total	48.14	58			
My district provides sufficient	Between Groups	10.23	2	5.12	6.69	.003
	Within Groups	42.04	55	0.76		

assistance with the process of data collection and analysis to build a comprehensive picture of safety and order of the school environment (rather than simply counting suspensions, etc.).	Total	52.28	57			
My district provides sufficient technical support for how to use data to influence instruction.	Between Groups	4.46	2	2.23	2.37	.103
	Within Groups	52.73	56	0.94		
	Total	57.19	58			
My district provides sufficient time with staff outside the school day for collaborations and data analysis.	Between Groups	1.07	2	0.54	0.55	.58
	Within Groups	54.45	56	0.97		
	Total	55.53	58			
My district provides time and resources designated for professional development for administrators in the areas of curriculum alignment activities and development of instructional and assessment plans.	Between Groups	3.11	2	1.55	1.17	.319
	Within Groups	74.62	56	1.33		
	Total	77.73	58			
My district provides adequate	Between Groups	3.52	2	1.76	1.50	.233
	Within Groups	65.87	56	1.18		

instructional materials and in-service opportunities designated to support district reform efforts.	Total	69.39	58			
My district offers sufficient support in the form of coaches and mentors for teachers.	Between Groups	2.24	2	1.12	0.61	.55
	Within Groups	101.83	55	1.85		
	Total	104.07	57			
My district provides sufficient opportunities for training and collaborations among school administrators to define and apply evaluative criteria consistently for all staff.	Between Groups	1.88	2	0.94	0.77	.466
	Within Groups	65.49	54	1.21		
	Total	67.37	56			
My district makes available adequate resources (e.g., time) for recruiting staff and provides district procedures and time lines that are compatible with hiring quality staff.	Between Groups	4.43	2	2.21	3.03	.057
	Within Groups	39.47	54	0.73		
	Total	43.90	56			
My district provides central	Between Groups	11.41	2	5.70	7.01	.002
	Within Groups	44.75	55	0.81		

office guidance and support related to supervision and evaluation to prevent the transfer of unsatisfactory staff into a principal's school.	Total	56.16	57			
My district provides training, coverage and support for the principal's responsibilities for building community involvement.	Between Groups	1.69	2	0.84	0.99	.379
	Within Groups	47.84	56	0.85		
	Total	49.53	58			
My district handles issues with insurance, liability coverage, background checks, recruitment and training for volunteers at the district rather than building level.	Between Groups	2.39	2	1.19	0.93	.402
	Within Groups	69.65	54	1.29		
	Total	72.04	56			
My district provides adequate guidance and support for analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a data dashboard for closing the achievement gap for subpopulations of students.	Between Groups	5.95	2	2.97	3.09	.053
	Within Groups	52.90	55	0.96		
	Total	58.85	57			
My district provides principals	Between Groups	6.29	2	3.15	2.70	.076
	Within Groups	65.27	56	1.17		

| with adequate opportunities for professional development on effective teaching practices for subpopulations of students. | Total | 71.56 | 58 |