



# Learning & Teaching in Educational Leadership



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## Learner-Centered Leadership Versus Learning-Centered Leadership: Small Differences in Words, Large Differences in Meaning<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

New approaches to leadership require that aspiring administrators and administrators already on the job acquire new knowledge and skills from their professional preparation and on-the-job experiences. This Newsletter article explores some of the meanings, similarities and differences between two related approaches currently being used in the literature on school leadership: *learner-centered leadership* (Danzig, 2003; Danzig, Blankson, & Kiltz, 2007; Danzig, Borman, Jones, & Wright, 2007a, 2000b; Danzig, Chen, & Spencer, 2007; Danzig & Wright, 2007; Kiltz, Danzig, & Szecsy, 2004) and *learning-centered leadership* (Goldring, Murphy, Elliott, & Cravens, 2007; Mitgang, 2008; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2006; Southern Regional Education Board, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Wallace Foundation, 2006, 2008).

learning. It follows that learner-centered leadership necessarily seeks to give a higher priority to the interests of the learner than the demands of the state.

Learner-centered leadership extends the learner metaphor to include teachers, administrators, staff, community members and others who provide leadership in educational settings. This perspective recognizes that leadership is not only found in the principal's office and that many others bring knowledge, experiences, and leadership to the variety of duties and responsibilities associated with leading a school. Applying the role of learner to school leaders implies a reduction in hierarchy and formal status and increased emphasis on voluntary and reciprocal relationships. Learner-centered leaders prioritize democratic structures and facilitate

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### Learner-Centered Leadership:

#### A Brief Definition and Discussion

Learner-centered leadership is an approach to leadership preparation and professional development that focuses on the development of independent learners capable of using their knowledge to raise questions and solve problems in concrete situations. The learner-centered approach to leadership is derived from experimentalist and constructivist views of schools and learning (Dewey, 1916, 1938; Vygotsky, 1978). As a result, it seeks to build upon learners' assumptions about how the world works to help them achieve progressively deeper levels of understanding. As a matter of pedagogy, learners are encouraged to assume control over the conditions of their

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<sup>1</sup> References available at [www.eyeducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG\\_newsletters/Danzig\\_References\\_LTEL-SIG\\_Sp09.pdf](http://www.eyeducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG_newsletters/Danzig_References_LTEL-SIG_Sp09.pdf)

## LTEL-SIG Executive Committee, 2008–9

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Chair</b>                           | Tricia Ferrigno, <i>University of Kentucky</i>                     |
| <b>Past Chair</b>                      | Terry Orr, <i>Bank Street College</i>                              |
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| <b>Graduate Student Representative</b> | Daniel Reyes-Guerra, <i>Florida Atlantic University</i>            |

### **Learner-Centered Leadership Versus Learning-Centered Leadership**

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ways for individuals to negotiate the bases for successful practices.

#### **Sources for the Learner-Centered Leadership Concept**

One of the earliest applications of learner-centered principles to school leadership is found in a chapter titled “A Culture in the Making: Leadership in Learner-Centered Schools” by Ann Lieberman, Beverly Falk, and Leslie Alexander (1995, 2007). According to Lieberman et al., the concept of learner-centered leadership is built on the foundation where “the purpose of education was to create the conditions for student development and autonomy while establishing a pattern of support for continuous progress within a school community nurtured by a democratic ethic” (2007, p. 26). Lieberman, et al. (2007) outline multiple roles for school leaders which embrace a learner-centered approach: “educators, problem solvers, crisis managers, change agents, enablers, consensus builders, and networkers” and propose that learner-centered leaders give meaning to the many ways that the day-to-day activities of participants contribute to school and organizational purposes, with the aim of connecting individuals to the wider community of learners (pp. 27–28).

The learner-centered concept is further elaborated in a report by the National Research Council (2000) *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. The

Report identifies four different learning environments, each with its own assumptions and emphases. Freedom, self-direction, and relevance are primary factors as learners need real-world problems brought into classrooms. The learner-centered approach is inclusive and suggests that schools need to build local and global communities of learners based on common interests (National Research Council, 2000).

#### **Assumptions about Assessment in Learner-Centered Leadership**

Implicit in this view of learner-centered leadership is an appreciation for the ways in which people want practical and useful information that connects prior experience with the work that they do. Seeing oneself as a learner opens up the space for school leaders to build their own curricula, and to question what needs to be learned in order for them to accomplish individual goals and organizational responsibilities. The assessment of learner-centered leadership is based on the view that a long term timeframe is needed to learn from experiences and achieve expertise.

*Assessing leadership.* A learner-centered approach examines the learner’s engagement in the world. Therefore, assessment in a learner-centered curriculum involves rich sources of information such as journals and writing portfolios, action- and project-based materials, and real world applications. Assessment is based on the knowledge that is relevant for school leaders and engagement in the world in which they live and work

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# Message from the SIG Chair

**Tricia Browne-Ferrigno**, University of Kentucky  
*tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu*

This issue of the LTEL-SIG newsletter has an expanded format thanks to collaborative efforts by editor Allison Borden (University of New Mexico), associate editor Stacey Edmonson (Sam Houston State University), and publisher Bob Sickles (Eye On Education). During the 2008 AERA annual meeting in New York City, the editorial team decided to publish one larger issue this year with two major articles on topics of interest to all newsletter readers—all members of the LTEL-SIG, Division A, and Division J of AERA. This wide readership is possible through the generous support of Bob Sickles and his Eye On Education staff. Thank you, Bob, for your long-term and continuing support of the SIG!

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or have suggestions for its improvement, please contact Allison (*aborden@unm.edu*) or Stacey (*sedmonson@shsu.edu*). If you are seeking a book publisher, please consider Eye On Education. For more information, go to <http://www.eyeducation.com/guidelines.asp> or contact Bob Sickles, President and Publisher of Eye On Education (*sickles@eyeducation.com*).

## Advocacy for Quality Leadership Preparation

UCEA and LTEL-SIG are longtime collaborative advocates for high quality leadership preparation through the joint Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs. During the 2008 UCEA annual meeting in Orlando, members of the UCEA/LTEL-SIG Taskforce participated in a “fishbowl” panel discussion about their local or statewide efforts to assure quality leadership preparation. The panelists responded to numerous questions about fostering collaborative interest to evaluate programs or conduct follow up surveys of graduates using Taskforce-developed instruments. The panelists’ experiences range from initial efforts in generating interest in program evaluation to completed statewide studies. If you are interested in learning more about the stumbling blocks and stepping stones to conducting program evaluation, then contact the panelists for first-hand information: **Julia Nell Ballenger** (Stephen F. Austin State University), **Bill Black** (University of South Florida), **Gini Doolittle** (Rowan University), **Joy C. Phillips** (East Carolina University), **Diana Pounder** (University of Utah), **Cynthia Reed** (Auburn University), **Jenny Tripses** (Bradley University), **Megan Tschannen-**

**Moran** (College of William & Mary), **Pamela Tucker** (University of Virginia), and **Robert Lewis Watson** (Missouri State University).

Additional information about the Taskforce’s efforts and study findings is available at <http://www.ucea.org/evaluation/about.html>. Please contact **Margaret Terry Orr** (Bank State College of Education) or **Diana Pounder** (University of Utah) if you would like to become part of this national initiative.

## SIG Recognition for Graduate Students and Members

During the 2008 annual meeting of the LTEL-SIG, members approved the recommendation by Margaret Terry Orr (Bank Street College) for an Annual Outstanding Dissertation Proposal Grant Award. The intent of the \$500 grant is to recognize and support proposed dissertation research appropriate to the work and purposes of the LTEL-SIG. We hope that professors who chair dissertations will share this information with their advisees and support the mission of the LTEL-SIG to expand research on learning and teaching in educational leadership. Information about all four LTEL-SIG awards appears in this issue.

## SIG Bylaws Revision

The AERA SIG Executive Committee has prepared a standard bylaws template for use by all SIGs. Although the LTEL-SIG approved new Bylaws last spring, we must repeat the process to align ours with the new AERA template. All SIGs will have until the end of the 2009 calendar year to submit a set of draft bylaws. The SIG Executive Committee will review the drafts and recommend them for consideration and adoption by the AERA Council. Once the AERA Council approves the draft, the bylaws will be presented to SIG members as a membership referendum as part of the annual election for a vote and adoption. The immediate past chair of the LTEL-SIG is responsible for this task. Please thank **Margaret Terry Orr** (Bank Street College) and her committee for their work on this important task.

## Changes in SIG Leadership

Earlier this spring we elected new officers to the LTEL-SIG Executive Committee. We look forward to introducing them to the membership at the 2009 annual SIG meeting during the AERA conference in San Diego.

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## Dr. Margaret Terry Orr Honored with Distinguished Research Award

Dr. Margaret Terry Orr received the LTEL-SIG Distinguished Researcher Award at the SIG meeting at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. This award, given biennially in even-numbered years, recognizes a recipient's distinguished record of excellence in research related to teaching and learning in educational leadership and administration. In an excerpt from her nomination letter, Dr. Ruth Powers (Silverberg) of the College of Staten Island (CUNY) noted that Terry is deeply admired and appreciated for her many contributions to the field of leadership preparation. Terry's record of publications and presentations is impressive and, at the time of the award, included at least seven books, 13 book chapters, 29 articles, 55 refereed presentations, 11 non-refereed presentations, and 30 invited addresses and presentations. As impressive as they are, the numbers do not begin to measure the effect Terry has had on the field of leadership preparation. Terry's use of both qualitative and quantitative data has added indescribably to our understanding of what we do. She has represented multiple perspectives on leadership and its effects, allowing us to better frame the work we do to improve schools through better leadership. She has helped to raise the profile of leadership preparation to an empirically based approach to school reform. This has led practitioners and researchers throughout the field of education to give greater attention to the enterprise of developing school leaders. Terry also consistently engages new entrants to leadership preparation in her research. She has helped many researchers begin work in the field, helped them understand the importance of this research, and encouraged them to initiate their own studies. She has accomplished all of this while providing leadership to the LTEL-SIG as well as many other organizations devoted to improvement of leadership preparation.

Likewise, Dr. Robert Kottkamp of Hofstra University recognized Terry's contribution to leadership preparation through the origin and growth of the UCEA/LTEL-SIG Taskforce to Evaluate Educational Leadership Preparation Effectiveness. In his words, Terry was the engine of the actual research that began with conceptual and methodological framing of a multi-strand research agenda. Terry's early research, its publication, and her informative writing to the whole field explaining the work and possibilities of the Taskforce attracted others and began building the powerful magnet it has become for both neophytes and accomplished researchers. A forthcoming special issue of *EAQ*, which Terry is editing, will contain empirical research on preparation program evaluation that will equal or exceed the total number of 4 empirical studies on leadership preparation published in the journal between 1975 and 2002 (Murphy & Vriesenga, 2004). Her research and that of colleagues she has attracted, when published in the field's flagship journal, will vastly enhance the perceived legitimacy of doing and publishing research on the work we professors spend the most time and energy on: preparing future leaders. In his congratulatory note to Terry, Kottkamp explained that "I credit you primarily for actualizing the research that has made the Taskforce credible and a beacon of possibility and hope for the future. I believe that looking back in 20 years from now, we may find that your work has been central in birthing a new model of programmatic research that is cross-institutional, collegial and fecund."

The members of the LTEL-SIG express our congratulations to Terry Orr on earning the 2008 Distinguished Research Award, and we likewise express our sincere appreciation for her outstanding contributions to the field of educational leadership and administration.

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### Message from SIG Chair *Continued from page 3*

Please join me in thanking the following elected members of the Executive Committee for their service to the LTEL-SIG: Secretary **Sandra Harris** (Lamar University), Member-at-Large **Judy Alston** (Ashland University), and Member-at-Large **Donald Hackmann** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) who also served as SIG Program Chair. Two appointed members of the Executive Committee will also complete their terms of office this

spring. Please join me in thanking the 2008-2009 Program Chair **Edith Rusch** (University of Nevada-Las Vegas) for her efforts these past two years to assure quality presentations during the AERA conferences and Graduate Student Representative **Daniel Reyes-Guerra** (Florida Atlantic University) who will graduate this semester.

I look forward to seeing many of you soon at the 2009 AERA conference. Safe travels to San Diego!

# 2009 AERA Program, LTEL-SIG

## 1. Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership-SIG Business Meeting

Mon, Apr 13, 6:15pm–7:45pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Conversation: Leading from the Middle: Developing and Sustaining Success of the Assistant Principal

Facilitators:

Rhonda L. McClellan, Texas Woman's University  
Dana E. Christman, New Mexico State University  
Catherine Marshall, University of North Carolina

## 2. Demonstration: Case Studies in Elementary-Level Instructional Teacher Leadership

Tue, Apr 14, 10:35am–12:05pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Sara Ray Stoelinga (Consortium on Chicago School Research), Melinda M. Mangin (Michigan State University)

## 3. Paper Session: Leadership Dispositions and Student Achievement: Polishing the Lens of Social Justice

Tue, Apr 14, 12:25pm–1:55pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Chair: Arnold B. Danzig (Arizona State University)

Discussant: Patrick M. Jenlink (Stephen F. Austin State University)

*A 2 Year Study of Equity Dispositions in Principal Candidates*

Linda Kight Winter (Winthrop University), Mark W Mitchell (Winthrop University)

*Using an Equity Audit Investigation to Prepare Doctoral Students for Leadership in Demographically Changing Times*

Sandra L. Harris (Lamar University), Michael Hopson (Lamar University)

*Leading Change to Improve Student Achievement: Novice Leaders Take the Reins*

S. David Brazer (George Mason University), Scott C. Bauer (George Mason University)

*Relationship Between Rural Principal Leadership Skill Proficiency and Student Achievement*

Pam Winn (Tarleton State University), Mary Cauble (Tarleton State University), Susan L. Erwin (Tarleton State University), James Gentry (Tarleton State University)

## 4. Symposium: Pushing the Boundaries of District-University Relationships for Quality Leadership Preparation: Five Case Lessons

Wed, Apr 15, 10:35am–12:05pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Chair: Margaret Terry Orr (Bank Street College of Education)

Discussant: Cheryl L. King (Education Development Center, Inc.)

*Defining the Knowledge Base for Leadership Preparation*

Margaret Terry Orr (Bank Street College of Education), Jacob Easley II (Mercy College)

*Creating a Bridge Within a Continuum of Leadership Development: Fort Wayne, Indiana*

Margaret E. Barber (Lehigh University), Tricia Browne-Ferrigno (University of Kentucky)

*Complex Partnering: Boston, Massachusetts*

Brian T. Lord (Education Development Center, Inc.), Cheryl L. King (Education Development Center, Inc.)

*Collaborating Amidst District Turbulence: St. Louis, Missouri*

Jacob Easley II (Mercy College), Carolyn J. Riehl (Teachers College, Columbia University)

*Fitting Leadership Preparation Into High-Stakes District Reform: Providence, Rhode Island*

Michelle LaPointe (Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands–Education Development Center), Charlotte North (Education Development Center, Inc.)

## 5. Symposium: Teacher Leader Program

**Development: Universities Respond to the Field**

Wed, Apr 15, 12:25pm–1:55pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Chair: Sara Ray Stoelinga (Consortium on Chicago School Research)

Discussant: Mark A. Smylie (University of Illinois)

*Teacher Leader Program Development: Results From a National Survey*

Melinda M. Mangin (Michigan State University)

*Bridging the Chasm Between Leadership and Instruction: The Masters in Instructional Leadership Program (MIL) at the University of Washington*

Chrysan Gallucci (University of Washington)

*The Evolution of a Teacher Leadership Masters Program: The Leadership in Education Program at the University of Minnesota*

Jennifer York-Barr (University of Minnesota)

*Teacher Leader Program Development: In Compliance With the State at the University of Illinois at Chicago*

David Mayrowetz (University of Illinois–Chicago), Mark A. Smylie (University of Illinois)

## 6. Paper Session: The Praxis of Preparation: Multiple Perspectives

Wed, Apr 15, 2:15pm–3:45pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

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## 2009 AERA Program

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Chair: Kathleen Topolka Jorissen (Western Carolina University)

Discussant: Cynthia J. Reed (Auburn University)

*In One Voice: Faculty and Principals Call for New Possibilities in Leadership Preparation*

Eleanor E. Drago-Severson (Teachers College, Columbia University), Patricia Maslin-Ostrowski (Florida Atlantic University)

*Leaders Learning in Action and on Action While Connecting to Real Problems in Education*

Patricia Maslin-Ostrowski (Florida Atlantic University), Michele Acker-Hocevar (Florida Atlantic University)

*Preparing Leaders Through School District-University Collaboration: A Partnership Pilot Internship Program's Results*

Daniel Reyes-Guerra (Florida Atlantic University), Meredith L. Mountford (Florida Atlantic University)

*Practicum Experience in an Educational Leadership Program: Perspectives of Supervisors, Mentors, and Candidates*

Binbin Jiang (Kennesaw State University), Tak C. Chan (Kennesaw State University), Mary M Chandler (Kennesaw State University), Judy Patterson (Kennesaw State University)

### 7. Paper Discussion: Pedagogy and Learner Outcomes

Thu, Apr 16, 9:05am–9:45am; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Ballroom 6A

*A Contingency Model for Ethical Decision Making by Educational Leaders*

James E. Green (Georgia Southern University)

*Assessment, Alignment, and Accreditation: Measuring Candidate Growth of Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions Toward the ISLLC Standards and a Conceptual Framework*

Deborah E. Erickson (California Lutheran University)

*Fostering Dispositional Shifts to Community Engagement Leadership Through Performance Assessment: Benefits and Limitations*

Hanne B. Mawhinney (University of Maryland–College Park)

*Preparing Educational Leaders Utilizing Media Technology: Applications for Media, Government, and Public Communications Learning*

Jennifer Ingrid Friend (University of Missouri–Kansas City)

*Preparing School Leaders: Action Research on the Leadership Study Group*

Estelle Kamler (Long Island University)

### 8. Paper Session—The Evolving Educational Leadership Classroom

Thu, Apr 16, 12:25pm–1:55pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Room 17A

Chair: Michael C. Johaneck (University of Pennsylvania)

Discussant: Nona A. Prestine (The Pennsylvania State University)

*Preparation of School Leaders for Supporting Adult Development: From University Classroom to Practice*

Eleanor E. Drago-Severson (Teachers College, Columbia University), Anila Asghar (Johns Hopkins University)

*Changing Perspectives Through Purposeful Immersion Into Collaborative Processes*

Michelle D. Young (University of Texas), Ann O'Doherty (University of Texas–Austin), Elizabeth Goodnow (University of Texas–Austin), Mark A. Gooden (University of Texas–Austin)

*Online Leadership Cases: Instructional Tool for Developing Administrative Decision Making*

Pamela D. Tucker (University of Virginia), Sara L. Dexter (University of Virginia)

*Changing Times, Changing Faculty: Trends in the Educational Leadership Professoriate, 1965–2008*

Donald G. Hackmann (University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign), Martha M. McCarthy (Indiana University)

### 9. Paper Discussion: Leadership Preparation: A Global View

Thu, Apr 16, 4:05pm–4:45pm; Place: San Diego Convention Center, Ballroom 6A

*Leadership as a Public Pedagogy for Socially Just Practice: Considerations for Leadership Preparation and Practice*

Patrick M. Jenlink (Stephen F. Austin State University)

*Educational Administrator Preparation Programs: A Cross-National Investigation of Teaching and Learning in School Leadership*

Rosemary Y. Foster (University of Alberta), Jose Da Costa (University of Alberta), Janice A. Wallace (University of Alberta)

*Journey Into Leadership: Aspirant Leader Development in Australia*

Bruce G. Barnett (University of Texas–San Antonio), Gary Omahony (Omahony & Associates Consulting)

*A Leadership Critical Friends Group: A Year in the Life*

Kevin Fahey (Salem State College)

*Preparing Educational Leaders for Action-Learning and Democratic Activism*

Patricia A. Marcellino (Adelphi University)

## **Learner-Centered Leadership Versus Learning-Centered Leadership**

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(Danzig, Blankson, & Kiltz, 2007). Orr (2006) reports that superintendents view the importance of “learning from others and learning from their own experiences” and cites multiple locations in which they want to learn: 1) the culture, 2) community, 3) sacred cows, 4) district history, 5) formal and informal power structures, 6) history of the position, 7) how issues and actions are interpreted, 8) board expectations, 9) who to trust, 10) how to take time away from the job. This is not traditional content knowledge. It requires rethinking how learners apply information to accomplish personal and professional goals.

The Learner-centered Leadership project at Arizona State University used multiple ways to access and assess the learning of participants. In classes for aspiring administrators, university professors and practicing school administrators worked together to design curricula and assess what students learned by writing research briefs, doing actions projects, and participating in class networks and blogs. Professional development combined assessment activities including self report measures of satisfaction, sunrise storytelling, leadership narratives, and action research projects. Projects were based on the priorities of the novice administrators and district mentors, and then assessed by teams of experienced administrators from within and outside of participants’ respective schools and districts (Danzig et al., 2007a, 2000b; Kiltz et al., 2004).

### **Learning-Centered Leadership: A Brief Definition and Discussion**

Multiple researchers use the term learning-centered leadership to focus on improving student achievement and reforming organizational culture of schools. The Wallace Foundation’s *Mission Statement* lists “strengthening education leadership to enhance student achievement” as one of three current objectives (Wallace Foundation, 2008); the Foundation supports research and policy initiatives related to what it calls “learning-centered leadership” under its *Education Leadership: Leading for Learning* program.

The Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) *Learning-Centered Leadership Program* “recognizes the crucial role principals and school leadership teams play in improving schools and increasing student achievement” and “assists states and districts with the

redesign of educational leadership preparation and professional development programs to align such programs with accountability systems and standards that focus on student learning (SREB, 2007b, p. 1). SREB modules related to learning-centered leadership include topics such as: 1) Using Data to Focus Improvement, 2) Creating a High-performance Learning Culture, 3) Leading School Change to Improve Student Achievement, 4) Designing Assessment to Inform Instruction, 5) Organizing Resources for a Learning-Centered School, and 6) Developing Internship Programs to Prepare Learning-Centered Leaders.

Researchers at Vanderbilt University and the University of Pennsylvania also use the term learning-centered leadership to focus on the priority of school leaders to raise student achievement. The conceptual foundation for learning-centered leadership argues that leadership behaviors have an indirect influence on student outcomes— “leaders influence the factors that, in turn, influence the outcomes (e.g., student graduation)” (Murphy et al., 2006, p. 5). Student outcomes are based on a “tripartite perspective” which places value on *quality* (high student achievement), *value added* (growth or gain), and *equality* (consistency of achievement across subpopulations of students) (Murphy et al., 2006, p. 6).

The learning-centered leadership framework identifies eight dimensions that are associated with leadership behaviors in effective schools: “1) vision for learning, 2) instructional program, 3) curricular program, 4) assessment program, 5) communities of learning, 6) resource acquisition and use, 7) organizational culture, and 8) social advocacy” (Murphy et al., 2006, pp. 6–7). According to its proponents, successful schools are “marked by a strong ‘production emphasis,’ ... ‘ongoing commitment to results,’ ... where “learning-centered leaders in high-performing schools work ceaselessly to create an environment of high performance expectations for self, staff, and students” (Murphy et al., 2006, p. 21).

### **Sources for the Learning-Centered Leadership Concept**

Conceptually, the learning-centered leadership framework also draws from the National Research Council’s (2000) research on how people learn, with priority given to assessment-centered learning environments rather than learner-centered environments. Assessment-centered environments begin with the view that national standards along with a national focus on

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accountability are part of the current focus on schooling in the U.S.; accountability is neither good nor bad per se, and is more of a function of how assessments are used in educational settings. Good assessment practices also recognize the importance of learners taking ownership and initiative, the importance of self-correction, and a reduction in rote learning in favor of understanding; good assessments also help teachers re-think what is working, and assist teachers' movement back and forth between process and content skills (National Research Council, 2000). Formative assessments are seen as a way of providing opportunities for corrective feedback and the monitoring of mistaken assumptions.

### **Assumptions about Assessment in Learning-Centered Leadership**

Porter et al.'s (2006) *Framework for the Assessment of Learning-Centered Leadership* bases the assessment of learning-centered leadership on what the authors' define as the intersection of two dimensions: 1) *core components of school performance* which include: 1a) high standards for student performance, 1b) rigorous curriculum, 1c) quality instruction, 1d) connections to external communities, and 1e) systemic performance accountability and 2) *key processes of leadership* including 2a) planning, 2b) implementing, 2c) supporting, 2d) advocating, 2e) communicating, and 2f) monitoring (Porter et al., 2006, p. 4). The authors explain that the assessment of how (or the extent to which) school leadership plans for a rigorous curriculum, for example, is measured in the intersection between planning (2a) and rigorous curriculum (1b) (Porter et al., 2006).

*Assessing leadership.* With support from the Wallace Foundation, proponents of learning-centered leadership are piloting a new leadership assessment instrument, the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED). According to its website, the VAL-ED will measure "how well a principal ensures six core components of schools related to student achievement are in place" (<http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/x8081.xml>). The VAL-ED is a self-report instrument, which asks principals to identify activities and time spent during the school day. During its pilot phase, validity and reliability issues are being addressed by the authors. At this time, it is uncertain whether the VAL-ED will be used as a formative assessment of novice or rising school leaders,

as a summative assessment to identify/select highly qualified school leaders or as both formative and summative assessment.

### **Discussion**

Learner-centered and learning-centered leadership differ significantly in the way in which they address student achievement and in the relative priority they give the interests of individual learners versus the interests of the state. Although each approach draws upon many of the same intellectual and research sources they represent very different approaches to the preparation, ongoing education, and assessment of school leaders.

#### **1. The Priority on Increasing Student Achievement**

The priority on assessment in general and on raising student achievement is characteristic of the learning-centered leadership approach. For example, the SREB module on administrative internship programs states, "Internship programs that provide opportunities for aspiring principals to practice the leadership behaviors that are linked to increasing student achievement are an essential element of a quality principal preparation program" (SREB, 2008). While the proponents of learning-centered leadership recognize the interdependent and indirect influences of leadership (Goldring et al., 2007; Murphy et al., 2006), defining the principal's central responsibility as 'increasing student achievement,' implies more of a direct relationship between leadership behaviors and student achievement rather than the indirect and interdependent effects argument cited in the research (Elmore, 2008; Pont et al., 2008).

The learner-centered leadership approach values self-determination and human agency for learners. The priority on assessment and on maximizing learning misses the ways that people learn from experience and how they achieve value in their lives. The priority on student achievement also runs counter to the deep commitments *to learners* that are found in the practices of teachers and administrators in successful school reform efforts (Borman, Carter, Aladjem, & Le Floch, 2004).

#### **2. Interests of Individual Learners versus the Interests of the State**

There are many questions that school leaders need to consider as they design schools for the future that are not related to raising student achievement. Whose learning is valued? What learning is valued? What are the significant outcomes of schooling? These questions are part of the larger concern with whose interests are served by schools

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# Industry Standards for Preparation Programs in Educational Leadership<sup>2</sup>

Joseph Murphy, Vanderbilt University  
Margaret Terry Orr, Bank Street College

Beginning with the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (Griffiths, Stout, & Forsyth, 1988), considerable energy has been devoted to the reform of the profession of educational leadership. Among universities, this work has centered on two tasks: improving the quality of research on leadership to inform and guide leaders' work (Firestone & Riehl, 2005; Murphy & Vriesenga, 2006; Pounder, 2000), and strengthening the quality and effectiveness of its preparation programs (Murphy, 2006; Young, Crow, Ogawa, & Murphy, 2009).

On the second issue, which is our focus here, several major research reviews in the 1990s laid bare the essential problems with leadership preparation programs (Bredeson, 1996; McCarthy, 1999; Murphy, 1992). Much of the criticism centered on the core dimensions of programs—student selection, content, pedagogy, field experience, and assessment—and the outdated assumptions (often seen as rooted in 1950s and 1960s principal as manager expectations) that framed them. The core elements to quality leadership preparation first surfaced in the hallmark 1978 UCEA study (Silver & Spuck, 1978) and were expanded upon in later proposals for preparation program improvement (Murphy & Forsyth, 1999). Yet, despite these recommendations, many programs remained unchanged.

In recent years, further research and analysis of leadership preparation programs increased criticism and calls for policy intervention and alternative approaches to school leadership preparation (Frye, O'Neill, & Bottoms, 2006; Hess & Kelly, 2005; Levine, 2005). While some critiques reiterate claims of programs' outdated and insufficient designs, other criticisms point to the need for programs to address changing expectations for principal leadership, particularly to foster school improvement and meet accountability expectations for school performance.

An equally important change force, however, is within the field of leadership preparation programs itself, and how it has begun to respond to criticisms and define new

directions in the education of perspective school leaders (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Murphy, 2006; Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002). On one front, important research initiatives have been undertaken to locate and describe elements of quality leadership preparation programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Orr, 2006). Such reviews center on the same essential program design dimensions, but reframe their role around the assumption that selected quality attributes contribute to the development of aspiring school leaders, and not simply create conditions to impart knowledge about school leadership and management. Even more recently, leading researchers in the field have synthesized available research on the effectiveness of leadership preparation and core program features (Young, Crow, Ogawa, & Murphy, 2009).

This research is now being extended to investigate the relationship between leadership preparation approaches and graduate outcomes as school leaders (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2007; Leithwood, Jantzi, Coffin, & Wilson, 1996; Orr & Barber, 2007; Orr & Orphanos, 2008). The results show that some program approaches as reflected in the elements of each dimension are more efficacious in terms of what graduates learn and do as school principals.

On another front, foundations, professional associations and governmental and other agencies have engaged in concerted efforts to improve the quality of leadership preparation programs. First is widespread reform in setting and adopting standards for leadership and its preparation and using these for program accreditation and review (Murphy, 2005; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2008). Second is providing more funds for innovative program approaches. Examples of funded initiatives include the Danforth Foundation initiative (Milstein, 1992), the federal School Leadership Program (U. S. Department of Education, 2005), the Broad Foundation's support of leadership preparation programs, and the Wallace Foundation district-funded initiatives in school leadership and its support of the Southern Regional Educational Board curriculum development work (Jacobson, O'Neill, Fry, Hill, &

<sup>2</sup> References available at [www.eyeoneducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG\\_newsletters/Murphy\\_References\\_LTEL-SIG\\_Sp09.pdf](http://www.eyeoneducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG_newsletters/Murphy_References_LTEL-SIG_Sp09.pdf)

*Continued on page 10*

## **Industry Standards for Preparation Programs in Educational Leadership**

*Continued from page 9*

Bottoms, 2002). Third is self-study by individual programs and their state and national professional associations, such as through the work of the National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation, sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002), and the UCEA/LTEL-SIG Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs (Orr & Pounder, 2006). Finally, states are encouraging or requiring preparation programs to redesign themselves according to new standards and program expectations, informed by the above policy and research, as well as other work (Murphy, Moorman, & McCarthy, 2008).

This combined work, however, lacks clearly-articulated specificity on how to best operationalize program designs and delivery to prepare quality leader candidates. What is clear, however, is that graduates' careers and subsequent leadership practices and school improvement work can be strongly shaped by the focus and learning opportunities created by core preparation program features. But what quality elements are most essential and influential in program features?

To address this need and build on this and our own related work, we have extracted a blueprint for reform and improvement of leadership preparation programs. This blueprint is a framework which we describe as "industry standards for preparation programs in educational leadership" (see Table on page 11). The framework is organized around the same core elements used in earlier criticisms and innovative preparation program reviews as cited above.

These core elements are: program mission and vision; student recruitment and selection; program content; instructional approaches; internship and other field work; assessment; faculty quality and organizational supports. Drawing on the above standards-setting work, research on quality leadership preparation, and our own field-based experiences in supporting program improvement, we provide critical dimensions to core program elements that positively influence quality leadership development. Our biases for these dimensions are two-fold—that their aim be 1) to prepare leaders who are able to focus on instruction and its continuous improvement and 2) to foster progressive capacity building in leadership from learning to applying in authentic settings.

Consequently, we begin with an overarching standard: program vision and mission which clearly outlines this intentionality. Second, the dimensions of the core program elements of recruitment, selection, curriculum, instruction, clinical work, internship and assessment should all then reflect this intentionality in who is selected, the learning experiences created, and the demonstration of leadership knowledge and capacity. Third, the human and organizational resources of the program should also reflect this intentionality, drawing from both the university and local districts to make learning as powerful and efficacious as possible. Finally, how well the program succeeds in meeting its aims requires a program stance on evaluation and continuous improvement.

While elsewhere we unpack this framework and related evidence for these standards in considerable detail, here we introduce the standards to invite discussion, feedback and further refinement.

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### **From the Graduate Student Representative**

**Daniel Reyes-Guerra**, Florida Atlantic University

Although titled as the Graduate Student Letter, this is addressed to all LTEL-SIG members, so please keep reading!

The coming AERA Annual Meeting marks my last as a graduate student. It has been an honor to serve the LTEL-SIG as the graduate student representative. My hope is that the participation of graduate students will increase through greater outreach by the SIG to graduate students. This is symbolized by including a graduate student representative on the executive committee, and actualized by the increased communication that our SIG has made to graduate students.

But more is needed. Graduate students should be exhorted by their advisors, mentors, and dissertation chairs to participate in this SIG. The students who are studying innovative practices for the development of the next generation of educational leaders should have in-depth exposure to what this group has to offer. You who guide these graduate students need to call their attention to us.

There are two things based on my participation in this SIG that I would like to share. The first is that graduate students and their advisors need to be aware of the pointed emphasis that the LTEL-SIG places on promoting and rewarding efforts in the field. The 2009 Outstanding Dissertation Proposal Grant Award and the 2009 Robert Kottkamp Outstanding Dissertation Award represent the importance

*Continued on page 14*

## Table

### Industry Standards for Preparation Programs in Educational Leadership: Elements and Dimensions

#### 1. *Program mission and vision*

- Is based on a well-developed and articulated set of foundational principles about leadership and its preparation that frame program content and experiences

#### 2. *Candidate recruitment*

- Has a proactive plan to secure desired candidates
- Encourages candidates to apply or be nominated based on their potential leadership qualities and demonstrated instructional effectiveness

#### 3. *Selection*

- Assesses and values the extent to which candidates demonstrate:
  - Intent to be school leaders
  - Prior leadership experience
  - Excellence in teaching
  - Commitment to and experience working as an advocate for children and families
  - Commitment to and alignment with the foundational principles of the program
- Selects candidates who meet eligibility and admissions requirements of the institution
- Is selective in admissions

#### 4. *Curriculum*

- Aligns with the foundational principles of the program
- Is constructed on the ISLLC leadership standards
- Reflects research on effective leadership and school improvement
- Reflects best practice in curriculum design
- Integrates technology effectively
- Is integrated into a coherent scope and sequence
- Is intellectually challenging
- Is scaffolded on practice
- Highlights skills and qualities needed to lead schools and school improvement effectively

#### 5. *Clinical work*

- Aligns with the foundational principles of the program
- Is aligned with the ISLCC leadership standards
- Anchors the program (i.e., is an integral part of the program)
- Is woven throughout the program (i.e., not confined to internship)
- Features authentic leadership work (not passive activities and observations)
- Is aligned with the school year and the time-flow of leadership responsibilities
- Is tightly linked to classroom learning experiences

#### 6. *Internship*

- Is designed around the quality dimensions of clinical work above
- Meets the ELCC standards for an effective building-level internship
- Is developmental, with increasing responsibilities progressing to independent leadership responsibilities
- Is supervised by a highly qualified school leader and a faculty advisor
- Is of considerable length and intensity

#### 7. *Instruction*

- Reflects deep understanding of developmental learning principles
- Features active instructional practices to evoke transformative learning
- Makes appropriate use of technology
- Emphasizes the development of higher-order cognitive processes through applied learning experiences

#### 8. *Candidate assessments*

- Are based on ISLCC standards
- Are based on the program's foundational principles
- Reflect best practice in measurement
- Are scaffolded on authentic conditions of leadership and problems of practice
- Are more than a collection of course grades

#### 9. *Faculty*

- Demonstrates dedication and commitment to the vision, mission, and guiding principles of the program
- Maintains close contact with schools
- Includes a balance of theoretical and practical experiences
- Includes a sufficient number of full time and part time faculty
- Demonstrates recency in highly effective leadership experience in schools and districts
- Includes educators from partner districts
- Engages in regular professional development experiences to strengthen knowledge and skills
- Works as a community of professional practice

#### 10. *Program structure and delivery*

- Promotes supportive learning structures for students (e.g., cohort design)
- Makes available and integrates technology appropriately
- Fosters the development of a community of practice among students and faculty
- Ensures timely program completion
- Ensures that learning experiences occur during the school day (not on the margins of the teacher's day)
- Links students with excellent mentors

#### 11. *Partnerships*

- Ensures that practitioner partners are meaningfully involved in all core program elements (e.g., recruitment and selection, instruction, program evaluation, and so forth)
- Draws on local districts for current issues, problems, and challenges facing educational leaders
- Works collaboratively to develop authentic and meaningful clinical and internship experiences, with high quality mentoring

#### 12. *Program evaluation*

- Is an important and well planned dimension of the program
- Uses best practices of program evaluation and assessment
- Measures institutional performance across a variety of desired outcomes
- Provides performance feedback for changing the program
- Ensures that evaluation data are directed to strengthening the program

# Using Equity Audits to Improve School Leaders<sup>3</sup>

**Sandra Harris**, Lamar University<sup>4</sup>

**Stacey Edmonson**, Sam Houston State University

**Mike Hopson**, Lamar University

Systemic equity has been discussed as a means to close achievement gaps between students of different backgrounds. Through systemic equity, all individuals have the opportunity and resources needed to learn and achieve. Scheurich and Skrla (2003) suggest using equity audits as pathways towards the development of equitable teaching strategies. An audit can serve as a catalyst for productive and deep discussions about the inequitable practices in place in schools (Skrla, Scherick, Garcia, & Nolly, 2005). Skrla et al. proposed 12 factors to be evaluated for understanding the level of equity already in place. These 12 factors can be divided into three main categories: (a) teacher quality equity, (b) programmatic

equity, and (c) achievement equity. Conducting an audit on teacher quality equity might involve an examination of teachers' levels of education, experience, mobility, and certification or assignments outside of their teaching area. Programmatic equity involves an evaluation of special programs such as English language learner programs, special education, or gifted and talented education. An evaluation of achievement equity areas might include standardized achievement test results, high school completion rates, or national test results. When evaluating inequality in educational organizations, five basic steps can be used to guide the evaluative process: These steps are:

1. Select an area for examination and disaggregate data collaboratively;
2. Analyze to explore why the pattern of inequity is occurring;
3. Collaboratively devise an appropriate solution;

*Continued on page 14*

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3 References available at [www.eyeeeducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG\\_newsletters/Harris\\_References\\_LTEL-SIG\\_Sp09.pdf](http://www.eyeeeducation.com/Downloads/LTEL-SIG_newsletters/Harris_References_LTEL-SIG_Sp09.pdf)

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Dr. Edmonson, Associate Professor, [sedmonson@shsu.edu](mailto:sedmonson@shsu.edu);  
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## UCEA/LTEL-SIG Task Force on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs: Updates and New Developments

**Co-Chairs: Margaret Terry Orr**, Bank Street College and **Diana Pounder**, University of Utah

At the annual work session at UCEA's convention in Orlando, we focused on ways to formalize electronic access to our surveys, create a shared data resource, and to organize new study groups.

UCEA will establish a survey hosting system for two task force surveys: its follow up survey of graduates and alumni; and its program description survey. The hosting system will enable interested faculty and institutions to field the surveys on-line confidentially for a small fee and receive summary findings and data files. UCEA will provide related materials such as IRB guidelines, scale construction and comparison findings for a national sample of programs. Task force members will work with UCEA to launch this system in January 2009 and support early trials.

Three subgroups for future task force meetings were formed: (1) a group among those who have been or are presently being funded under the federal School Leadership Program for innovative leadership preparation; (2) a group piloting the task force's teacher survey on graduates' leadership practices; and (3) a group exploring evaluation questions and issues for doctoral programs in leadership preparation. Anyone interested in participating in the task force or any of the subgroups, including the 2009 AERA work session, should contact Terry Orr ([morr@bankstreet.edu](mailto:morr@bankstreet.edu)). Those interested in participating in piloting the teacher survey on graduates' principal leadership should contact Maggie Barber ([meb205@lehigh.edu](mailto:meb205@lehigh.edu)). For more information on the task force presentations and publications, see [www.ucea.org/evaluation/about.html](http://www.ucea.org/evaluation/about.html).

# Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership (LTEL) SIG-Awards

## American Educational Research Association

LTEL-SIG brings together professors of educational leadership and administration, discipline specialists, educational theorists, curriculum developers, instructional technology specialists, learning specialists, educational researchers, classroom experts, practitioners, policy makers, and others concerned with Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership. The LTEL-SIG provides a forum for:

- A managed conversation on issues related to learning and teaching in Educational Leadership and Administration.
- The integration of theoretical quantitative and

qualitative studies of learning and teaching in Educational Leadership.

- Discussion of investigations conducted in real educational settings, including investigations involving application of technology to learning and instruction.
- Exploration of innovative methodologies.
- Analysis of the implications of research and practice for learning and teaching in Educational Leadership.
- Assessment of the relationship of learning and teaching in Educational Leadership to policy development at local, state, and national levels.

| Annual Outstanding Dissertation Proposal Grant Award (NEW)   | Robert Kottkamp Outstanding Dissertation Award   | Distinguished Research Award  | Outstanding Service to the Profession Award  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and support proposed dissertation research appropriate to work and purposes of LTEL-SIG</li> <li>• Proposal, dissertation completion timeline, and use of grant funds are considered</li> <li>• Recipient and chair recognized at annual business meeting</li> <li>• Recipient receives a certificate and \$500 check</li> <li>• Nomination submission deadline: <b>January 31</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize outstanding dissertation research aligned with work and purposes of LTEL-SIG</li> <li>• Dissertation must be completed during calendar year previous to award year</li> <li>• Nominator must be LTEL-SIG member</li> <li>• Recipient and chair recognized at annual meeting</li> <li>• Recipient receives a certificate and \$250 check</li> <li>• Nomination submission deadline: <b>January 31</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize distinguished record of excellence in research related to teaching and learning in Educational Leadership and Administration</li> <li>• Recipient must be current or former LTEL-SIG member</li> <li>• Recipient's research must be aligned with work and purposes of LTEL-SIG</li> <li>• Recipient recognized at annual business meeting and presented with \$300 check and plaque</li> <li>• Awarded biennially (even-numbered years)</li> <li>• Nomination submission deadline: <b>March 1</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize distinguished service aligned with work and purposes of LTEL-SIG</li> <li>• Recipient must be current or former member of LTEL-SIG</li> <li>• Recipient recognized at annual business meeting and presented with \$300 check and plaque</li> <li>• Awarded biennially (odd-numbered years)</li> <li>• Nomination submission deadline: <b>March 1</b></li> </ul> |

## **Learner-Centered Leadership Versus Learning-Centered Leadership**

*Continued from page 8*

and how to balance society's interest in having an educated population with individual interests in being educated. Learning-centered leadership takes for granted the state's interest in determining what it is that children should learn in school, which then becomes the responsibility of school leaders to monitor and enforce. The risk of this view is that a cycle of state accountability will substitute for learning.

A letter from a character in a novel by David Wroblewski illustrates the tensions between the state's interest to control what is learned in school and a more human-centered approach which prioritizes the interests of the individual and the personal knowledge that people gain from experience.

“In the end, the difference between you and me comes down to the difference between the artist and the factory man. The artist does not know what he wants, but looks for good paint, good brushes, and good canvas. He trusts that talent will produce a desirable result. Sadly, for most people it does not. The factory man says, what can I make that I can *rely* on? It may not be the ideal, but I must be able to tell my customers that each time they buy, they will receive the same product. The factory man values predictability above “mere” excellence for good reason—would you frequent a bakery where one cake in ten was inspired, but the other nine inedible?” (Wroblewski, 2008, pp. 190–191)

Learner-centered leadership argues against this “factory mentality” in school and the accompanying priority on assessments to maximize learning; it views these efforts as contributing to a dehumanizing process, which at the very least, causes some learners to reject school as a place of learning. Learner-centered leadership prioritizes human connections, empowerment, and self-determination and recognizes the limits of prediction, control, and production.

### **Conclusion**

Learner-centered leadership and learning-centered leadership are similar sounding terms, which draw from some of the same sources. There are fundamental differences, however, between the two approaches to school leadership. The learning-centered leadership approach prioritizes learning, and school leaders' central concern for raising student achievement. This concern is matched with a commitment to the evaluation and

assessment of school leadership itself, as illustrated by the VAL-ED.

Learner-centered leadership prioritizes the interests of the learner, and is a counterbalance to the interests of the state. The learner-centered leadership approach highlights the value of personal and tacit knowledge, and the importance of reflection as a way of learning from experience. Learner-centered leadership pays attention to the conditions that affect learning, balancing internal criteria relevant to the learner and the social and economic conditions in which learners find themselves.

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## **Using Equity Audits to Improve School Leaders**

*Continued from page 12*

4. Implement the solution;
5. Monitor the results. (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003, pp. 91–92)

Once the information has been obtained, it should be broken down by gender, race, and socioeconomic status to compare student differences within and among the groups. The audit invites leaders to look at a larger picture of education outside of mere test scores to confront and improve issues of inequality (Gerstl-Pepin, 2004).

Equity audits are one effective method to examine inequity in schools and move to create a more socially-just education. For this reason, it is crucial to emphasize the importance in social justice in the development of future educational leaders (Harris & Hopson, 2008).

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## **From the Graduate Student Representative**

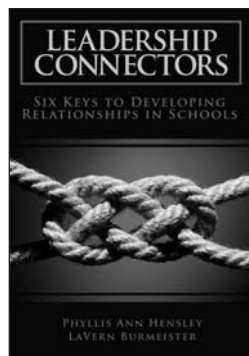
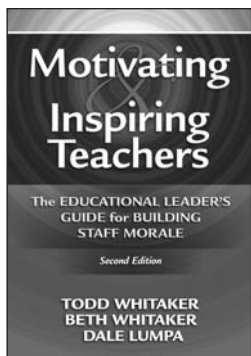
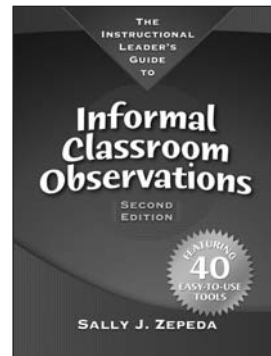
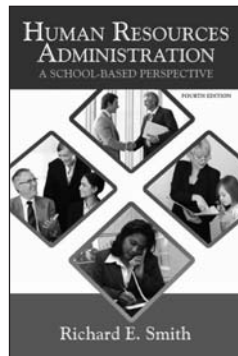
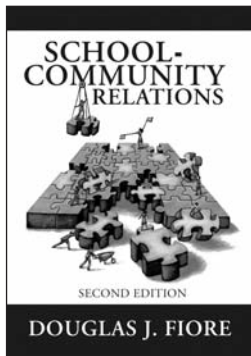
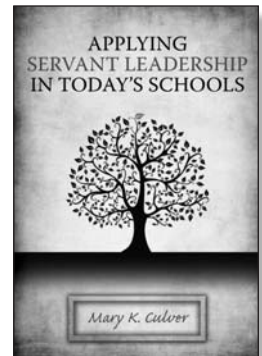
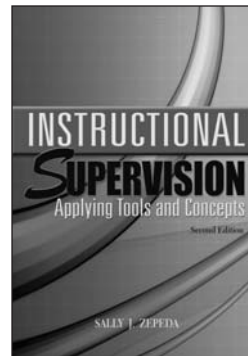
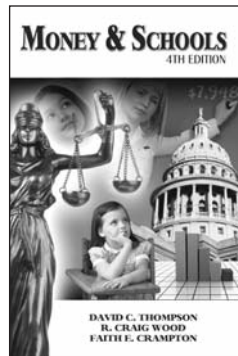
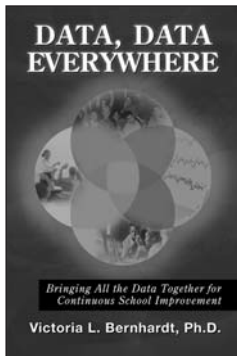
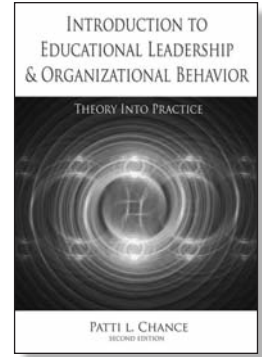
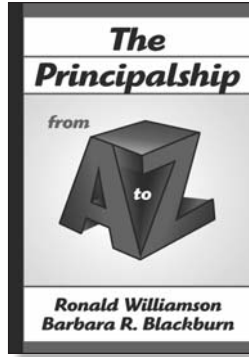
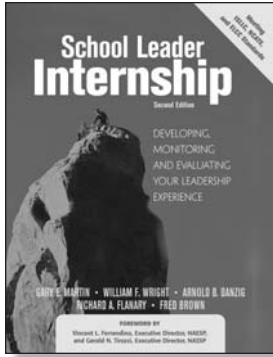
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our scholars place on student research and contributions. If you are a graduate student and have not yet joined the LTEL-SIG, do so and apply for these awards!

Based on my experience as a graduate student who also teaches educational leadership to aspiring school administrators, the other important thing I have discovered is how essential it is for those who are teaching and learning with this group of educators to have a firm grasp of the needs of aspiring leaders and how to address them *together*. The LTEL-SIG is dedicated to helping us all do exactly that. It is the most important thing I have benefited from as a member of this SIG.

I look forward to seeing you all in San Diego!

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## Feature Article...

# *Learner-Centered Leadership Versus Learning-Centered Leadership: Small Differences in Words, Large Differences in Meaning*

Arnold Danzig  
*Arizona State University*



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