Commentary:

Measuring Colorado Superintendents' Perceptions of Principal Preparation Programs

Spencer C. Weiler and Martha Cray

Because leadership for school improvement is now becoming essential for future principals, educational leadership preparation programs must adequately prepare administrators for this important role.[1]

Introduction

Over the years, many scholars have criticized traditional leadership preparation programs for failing to produce qualified educational leaders capable of moving public education into the 21st century.[2] As a result, many university-based principal preparation programs have introduced reforms aimed at better preparing future school leaders. Many of these focus either on the needs of students by establishing more convenient schedules with greater accessibility or on the needs of the universities by creating more stable groups of students. Unaddressed in these reform efforts is attention to the needs of aspiring educational leaders as identified by school superintendents. Failure to include superintendents' voices creates a disconnect between public schools and university-based principal preparation programs that needs to be remedied if America's children are to receive a quality education that will genuinely prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century.

In this article, the results of a survey of Colorado superintendents are presented as a means to begin the process of documenting superintendents' perceptions of principal preparation programs. The study was guided by four research questions, as follows:

♦ What are superintendents' perceptions of delivery models related to principal preparation?
♦ Is there a relationship between the size of a school district's student population and superintendents' perceptions of principal preparation programs?

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♦ Is there a relationship between the geographic location of a school district and superintendents' perceptions of principal preparation programs?
♦ Is there a relationship between the type of school district and superintendents' perceptions of principal preparation programs?

The article is divided into four sections. It begins with a review of literature on principal preparation delivery models. The second section describes the research design of the study while the third presents the analysis of results. The article closes with implications of the findings and conclusions.

Review of Literature

Leak, Petersen, and Patzkowsky defined educational leadership as "...initiating, implementing, and institutionalizing school-wide change that results in continuous improvement of student learning outcomes."[3] To meet such demands, aspiring principals must receive quality training in educational leadership preparation programs.[4] Alsbury and Whitaker identified three waves of reform for principal preparation programs beginning in the 1980s aimed at improving the traditional approach.[5] However, in the end, they concluded that each of these approaches was a reaction to a trend or event, such as the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, as opposed to designing an optimal program to develop educational leaders.[6]

Reform efforts aimed at improving traditional principal preparation programs have included the introduction of cohorts, partnerships, and online delivery. In this section, the strengths and weaknesses of these delivery models are reviewed along with a discussion of the vital skills all principal preparation programs, regardless of delivery model, ought to develop in their graduates.

Traditional Principal Preparation Programs

The traditional approach consists of a series of required courses that students take at their convenience. Quinn wrote that traditional principal preparation programs lack "...a common, cohesive, framework that defines knowledge, skills, and disposition leaders are expected to possess and apply."[7] Levine concurred describing university training for aspiring principals as a series of seemingly unrelated courses taken on campus.[8] Problems attributed to the traditional approach include an inability on the university's part to adjust to current trends in educational leadership,[9] an overemphasis on theoretical knowledge that is lacking practical application,[10] and the exclusion of the school district in the training process.[11] Most telling of all is the fact that 47% of surveyed school principals considered their academic training outdated and irrelevant to their development as educational leaders.[12] However, this is not to say that the traditional approach is without merits. Jackson and Kelley identified skills that graduates of a traditional preparation program can acquire, including the ability to develop a school wide vision, promote a healthy school culture, manage a large organization, and involve the greater community in the educational process.[13]

Cohort Principal Preparation Programs

The cohort model typically consists of sequential coursework where enrollment in courses is restricted to those individuals admitted into the cohort. As a result, a group of students takes the same courses together as they complete the desired degree. The cohort model has been studied extensively, and many advantages have been identified. First, the cohort approach positively impacts

the overall learning as measured by students' abilities to transfer concepts from the classroom to the school building.[14] Milstein and Krueger identified "...accelerated learning, more productive dialogues, enhanced opportunities to learn from the expertise of others, and closer relationships with professors."[15] In addition to increased learning, cohorts benefit students socially. Students receive greater support in cohorts and develop professional networks that continue after the program is completed.[16] These social benefits extend to individual students who experience "stronger social and interpersonal relationships" as a result of the overall experience.[17]

This is not to suggest that the cohort model will ensure that all future graduates will be prepared to lead in the 21st century. According to Levine, universities rely too heavily on the strengths of the cohort model as they offer an excessive number of off-campus programs.[18] The benefits of the cohort approach are predicated upon a stable faculty and access to the resources a university offers its students.[19] In addition, some cohort groups develop a negative disposition that results in "tension and adversarial relationships."[20]

According to Jackson and Kelley, for the cohort model to become and remain a successful approach to preparing principals, certain factors must be in place. First, a clear vision is vital, and that vision must guide key decisions related to the cohort.[21] In addition to a clear vision, the university must commit itself to an ongoing evaluation of the cohort process by exploring the best ways to serve the needs of students and school districts.[22] If a clear vision and a commitment to revisiting the cohort's design exist, the cohort model appears to be superior to the traditional approach.

Partnership Principal Preparation Programs

One of the more recent efforts at reforming the principal preparation programs has seen universities entering into partnerships with local school districts. The partnership approach takes into account the difficulties associated with adequately preparing school leaders and shares those challenges between the university and the school district.[23] According to Whitaker, these partnerships are mutually beneficial, and the end results are graduates who are well prepared to lead schools.[24]

In addition to all of the benefits associated with a cohort model,[25] the partnership offers added advantages including the development of highly qualified administrators who are prepared to enter into leadership positions upon graduation and involvement of district personnel in the instruction process.[26] The partnership benefits the university by significantly increasing the overall quality of applicants seeking admission into the principal preparation program.[27]

Whitaker pointed out that a successful partnership requires the university and the school district to commit time and resources to making the partnership successful. He noted: "The organizations must have adequate resources, financial and human, to address the complex needs of the program."[28] In other words, partnerships should not be entered into lightly because they require a significant commitment from all involved.

Online Principal Preparation Programs

Brown and Green defined online delivery as instruction "delivered using the Internet as a medium of communication."[29] Some critics contend that principal preparation programs fail to adapt to the needs of the students.[30] Online delivery addresses this issue by providing students, regardless of location, with greater access through increased opportunities and convenience.[31] As DeMoulin

stated, "People are able to attend college at their time and location using the Internet 24 hours seven days a week. They are able to receive the same content and instruction online as on ground."[32] In addition to convenience and access, some researchers claim that online instruction provides those students who might remain quiet in a traditional, face-to-face classroom with the opportunity to "speak out" in an online course,[33] and that the overall quality of instruction is enhanced through the use of technology.[34]

A number of concerns related to online instruction have been identified. According to Chen, the instructor's commitment to careful planning is a prerequisite for successful online instruction, and such planning is not a guarantee.[35] A component of careful planning is purposefully working to help all students feel comfortable with the technology being used.[36] Also, despite planning, Card and Horton found that online instruction fails to replicate the same student-to-student interaction that is typically found in a classroom.[37] Finally, Levine suggested that efforts to enhance access and convenience have resulted in developing "...an army of unmotivated students seeking to acquire credits in the easiest way possible."[38]

Conclusions

Regardless of the delivery model, principal preparation programs cannot lose sight of their charge, which is to prepare educational leaders for the 21st century. Upon graduation from a principal preparation program, successful candidates should be able to "...make sense of programs, provide instructional leadership, keep buildings safe and functional, manage and develop a mix of students, parents, and classified and non-classified staff, and allocate and administer shrinking budgets while sharing decision making authority."[39] This daunting task requires a significant commitment from universities.

If universities want to demonstrate a strong commitment to developing capable educational leaders, they will need examine their recruitment progress.[40] According to Milstein and Krueger, current recruitment practices far too often focus on filling seats and not on identifying potential leaders.[41] Whitaker asserts that partnerships generally have the most successful recruitment process as a result of the close relationship universities develop with local school districts.[42] Regardless of the delivery model, Whitaker and Vogel assert, "...it is imperative that leadership preparation programs recruit and train candidates who have the skills and the desire to assume administrative positions in schools."[43] The importance of a proper recruitment process is illustrated by the fact that school districts have reported a shortage of qualified applicants for administrative positions.[44]

In addition to recruitment, universities must ensure a proper amount of academic rigor that will adequately support aspiring educational leaders.[45] Hess and Kelly argued that academic rigor emerges as principal preparation programs ensure curriculum, instruction, and mission complement one another.[46] Levine referred to this process as a "systematic self-assessment" and contended that too few programs actually engage in such an improvement process.[47] Rigor includes providing students time to reflect on current practices and look for ways to improve public education.[48] Finally, principal preparation programs committed to providing students with a rigorous delivery model will examine the quality of the internship experience afforded aspiring principals.[49]

To ensure that principal preparation programs genuinely meet the needs of local school districts requires more than a committed

search for best practices. It ultimately requires feedback from those who are hiring and further development of graduates of the principal preparation programs. For that reason, superintendents' perceptions of principal preparation programs are important.

Research Design

To answer the research questions posed in this study, the authors designed a survey instrument[50] which was mailed with a return envelope to the population of Colorado school superintendents (n=178). Subsequently, a second mailing, consisting of an email and an electronic copy of the survey, was sent to those nonrespondent superintendents for whom an email address was available. Finally, a third mailing, consisting of the original letter, was sent to a selected group of superintendents to ensure a sufficient response rate overall and across subcategories. The goal was an overall response rate of 35% or more of the population as well as the categories, and associated subcategories, of size (student enrollment), geographic location, and type of school district.[51]

Table 1 lists the seven subcategories of student enrollment and the number of school districts which fall within each subcategory. Colorado is a vast state geographically, and, as a result, the Colorado Department of Education has developed eight subcategories which were used in this study to identify school districts by geographic location (See Table 2). Table 3 breaks out Colorado school districts by five subcategories, ranging from urban metropolitan to rural, as follows:

- Denver Metro: Districts located within the Denver-Boulder standard metropolitan statistical area which compete economically for the same staff pool and reflect the regional economy of the area.
- Urban-Suburban: Districts which comprise the state's major population centers outside the Denver metropolitan area and their immediate surrounding suburbs.
- Outlying City: Districts in which most pupils live in population centers of 7,000 persons but less than 30,000 persons.
- Outlying Town: Districts in which most pupils live in population centers in excess of 1,000 persons but less than 7,000 persons.
- Rural: Districts with no population centers in excess of 1,000 persons and characterized by sparse widespread populations.[52]

Analysis of Results

This section begins with an analysis of the response rate to the survey, which is then followed by analyses of superintendents' responses to the survey items as they relate to the research questions. In addition to analysis of general results, analyses of disaggregated data based upon the school district's student population, geographic location, and type are presented to determine if there were variations in superintendents' responses based upon these variables.

Survey Response Rate

In response to the first mailing, 49 of 178 surveys were completed and returned, a 27% response rate.[53] Of the 59 superintendents receiving the second mailing (email), ten completed the survey. The third mailing yielded 18 additional responses. In all, 77 superintendents completed the survey for a response rate of 43%. (See Table

Table 1
Breakout of Colorado School District Size
by Student Enrollment

Student Enrollment	Number of School Districts
25,000 +	8
10,001 – 24,999	11
6, 001 – 10,000	4
1,201 – 6,000	43
601– 1,200	31
301 – 600	34
1 – 300	47
Total	178

Table 2
Breakout of Colorado School Districts
by Geographic Location

Geographic Location	Number of School Districts
Metro	19
North Central	20
Pikes Peak	26
Northwest	19
West Central	12
Southwest	22
Southeast	28
Northeast	32
Total	178

Note: "Metro" refers to school districts within the Denver-Boulder standard metropolitan statistical area.

Table 3
Breakout of Colorado School Districts by Type

Student District Type	Number of School Districts
Denver Metro	14
Outlying City	14
Urban-Suburban	15
Outlying Town	49
Rural	86
Total	178

4.) Response rates for district size (student population) ranged from 37% to 54%. For type of district, they ranged from 36% to 50%; and for geographic location, response rates ranged from 25% to 60%. Responses from two areas of the state did not meet the 35% threshold: West Central (25%) and Southwest (32%).

Educational Considerations

Table 4
Survey Return Rates by School District Student Population, Location, and Type

	Number of Surveys Mailed	Number Returned	Return Rate (%)
Total	178	77	43
Student Population			
25,000 +	8	4	50
10,001 – 24,999	11	6	54
6,001 – 10,000	4	2	50
1,201 – 6,000	43	16	37
601 – 1,200	31	13	42
301 – 600	34	16	47
1 – 300	47	20	42
Location			
Metro	19	8	42
North Central	20	12	60
Pikes Peak	26	11	42
Northwest	19	7	37
West Central	12	3	25
Southwest	22	7	32
Southeast	28	16	58
Northeast	32	13	41
Type			
Denver Metro	14	7	50
Outlying City	14	5	36
Urban-Suburban	15	6	40
Outlying Town	49	20	41
Rural	86	39	45

Superintendent's Overall Perceptions

Superintendents were asked to identify the ideal principal preparation delivery model, the most common principal preparation delivery model, and the least effective principal preparation delivery model. (See Table 5.) For the ideal delivery model, 39% of Colorado superintendents selected university cohort programs offered in their district, with university-district partnership cohort courses their second choice at 22%. Thirty-four percent (34%) of superintendents identified individual enrollment in a university program as the most common delivery model, followed by university cohort programs offered at universities with 25%. Over half (51%) of Colorado superintendents selected individual enrollment in an exclusively online program as the least effective delivery model. Second were state-approved alternative certification programs at 22%.

The results indicated that over 60% of superintendent identified the ideal delivery model for principal preparation as either a university cohort program offered in the district or a university-district partnership arrangement to offer courses. However, neither of these models was cited by superintendents as the most common. Instead, more traditional university-based approaches of individual enrollment or university cohorts were cited by over half (59%) of superintendents as the most common delivery models. Interestingly, as more universities embrace online principal preparation programs, a majority of superintendents in this survey found them to be the least effective approach. In addition, almost a quarter of respondents judged state-approved alternative certification programs to be the least effective. Overall, superintendents valued university-based programs if their district was directly involved in the delivery model.

Disaggregating Superintendents' Perceptions

Table 6 presents results related to how superintendents rated principal preparation delivery models when disaggregated by district size as measured by student population. Although the results disaggregated by size were in general agreement with overall superintendent ratings of ideal, most common, and least effective delivery models, the percentages of support varied across districts. For

Table 5
Superintendent Ratings of Delivery Models

Type of Delivery Model	Delivery Model Rating					
	Ideal		Most Common		Least Effective	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
University cohort program offered at district	30	**39**	13	16	1	1
University cohort program offered at university	7	9	20	**25**	2	3
Individual enrollment in a university program	9	13	26	**34**	5	6
Individual enrollment in a campus-based program with some online	5	6	4	5	0	0
Individual enrollment in an exclusively online program	1	1	5	6	39	**51**
State-approved alternative certification program	1	1	1	1	17	**22**
University-district partnership cohort courses	17	**22**	3	4	3	4
No response	7	9	7	9	10	13

Note: The two most frequent responses (%) in each category are in boldface.

Table 6
Superintendent Rating of Delivery Models by District Student Population

Student Population	Ideal Delivery				Most Common Delivery				Least Effective Delivery			
	University Cohort Program Offered at District		University-District Partnership Cohort		University Cohort Program at University		Individual Enrollment in University Program		Individual Enrollment in Exclusively Online Program		State-Approved Alternative Certification Program	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
25,000 +	2	50	2	50	0	0	2	50	2	50	1	25
10,001 – 24,999	4	67	2	33	0	0	2	33	2	33	2	33
6,001 – 10,000	2	100	0	0	1	50	1	50	2	100	0	0
1,201 – 6,000	7	44	2	12	2	12	6	37	8	50	5	31
601 – 1,200	3	23	5	38	4	31	4	31	9	69	2	23
301 – 600	7	44	2	12	4	25	6	37	9	56	4	25
1 – 300	5	25	4	20	7	35	4	20	7	35	3	15

Table 7
Superintendent Ratings by Location

Location	Ideal Delivery				Most Common Delivery				Least Effective Delivery			
	University Cohort Program Offered at District		University-District Partnership Cohort		University Cohort Program at University		Individual Enrollment in University Program		Individual Enrollment in Exclusively Online Program		State-Approved Alternative Certification Program	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Metro	2	25	3	37	0	0	5	62	5	62	1	12
North Central	5	42	4	33	4	33	4	33	7	58	3	25
Pikes Peak	5	45	2	18	3	27	3	27	6	54	3	27
Northwest	4	57	1	14	0	0	4	57	2	28	2	28
West Central	2	67	0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0	2	67
Southwest	3	27	1	14	4	57	2	18	6	86	0	0
Southeast	8	50	1	6	4	25	6	37	6	37	4	25
Northeast	1	8	5	38	3	23	1	8	8	61	2	15

example, a higher percentage of large school district superintendents rated university cohort programs offered at their districts ideal as opposed to those representing smaller districts. On the other hand, a higher percentage of superintendents serving smaller school districts selected university cohort programs at universities as the most common delivery method. However, there was general agreement among superintendents, regardless of district size, that individual enrollment in exclusively online programs represented the least effective delivery approach.

Table 7 presents results related to geographical location of school districts. Although the results disaggregated by location were in general agreement with overall superintendent ratings of ideal, most common, and least effective delivery models, the percentages of support varied across districts. For example, 67% of West Central

superintendents identified university cohort programs offered in their district as ideal while only 8% of Northeast superintendents agreed. These results were similar for identification of individual enrollment in university programs as the most common delivery model. Regional variations also appeared with regard to the least effective delivery models. While 62% of metro area superintendents judged exclusively one line programs least effective, only 28% of Northwest superintendents agreed. It is possible that there is less objection to online programs in more sparsely populated areas due to fewer nearby universities.

Table 8 presents result related to school district type, ranging from the Denver metropolitan area to rural school districts. Although the responses disaggregated by type of school district were in general agreement with overall superintendent ratings of ideal,

Table 8
Superintendent Ratings by School District Type

School District Type	Ideal Delivery				Most Common Delivery				Least Effective Delivery			
	University Cohort Program Offered at District		University-District Partnership Cohort		University Cohort Program at University		Individual Enrollment in University Program		Individual Enrollment in Exclusively Online Program		State-Approved Alternative Certification Program	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Denver/Metro	2	28	4	57	0	0	5	71	3	27	1	14
Outlying City	3	60	1	20	0	0	1	20	1	20	4	80
Urban-Suburban	6	100	0	0	1	16	1	17	3	50	2	33
Outlying Town	6	30	4	20	4	20	8	40	14	70	3	15
Rural	12	31	8	20	14	36	10	26	17	43	7	18

most common, and least effective delivery models, the percentages of support varied across type of district. For example, urban-suburban superintendents were in universal agreement (100%) that university cohort programs offered at their school district was the ideal delivery while only 28% of Denver/metro area superintendents agreed. With regard to the most common delivery model, 71% of Denver/metro area superintendents chose individual enrollment in university programs in contrast to 17% of urban-suburban superintendents. For the least effective delivery model, 70% of outlying town superintendents selected exclusively online programs while only 20% of outlying city superintendents did so. In addition, 80% of outlying city superintendents judged state-approved alternative certification programs to be the least effective delivery model in contrast to Denver/metro and outlying town superintendents at 14% and 15%, respectively.

Implications of the Findings

The implications of the results of this study are threefold. First, the most common delivery model employed by Colorado universities for principal preparation, individual enrollment in university programs, was not selected as ideal by superintendents, who overwhelmingly preferred university cohort programs offered in their district or university-district partnership programs. However, even though they found individual enrollment in university programs less than ideal, it was not judged as the least effective—online and alternative certification programs were. Nonetheless, there were some differences among respondents when disaggregated by size of school district, region, and type that should be kept in mind. Overall, these results indicate that superintendents want to play an active role in universities' principal preparation programs and, as a result, universities would be well-advised to actively seek out their input and support.

Secondly, because superintendents have direct knowledge of the skills and abilities new principals must possess to be successful, their input is critical to the quality of principal preparation programs. Failure to include them as stakeholders in the development and improvement of principal preparation programs is detrimental to all involved. Inadequately prepared principals are less effective in their respective schools, and universities risk alienating superintendents, potentially leading them to look more favorably upon preparation programs offered outside traditional brick-and-mortar universities. Recall that disaggregated results indicated that in some regions of the state and in some types of school districts, superintendents were not strongly opposed to alternative certification programs.

Third, Colorado universities may want to re-examine the role of online delivery models for principal preparation in light of superintendents' perception of them as one of the least effective delivery models. Although student convenience and access are important considerations, universities cannot lose sight of their mission to prepare leaders who will play a significant role in improving the quality of education for all children in America. The research related to the impact an effective, or ineffective, administrator has on student achievement is clear,[54] and for that reason alone universities cannot settle for convenience or access as their benchmark for success. Rather, the benchmark has to be a commitment to providing those who seek principal licensure with the best preparation possible to ensure K-12 students will have access to the benefits associated with strong school leadership.

In conclusion, as Mulstein and Krueger stated, "Readiness for program change...means a general sense of doubt about the effectiveness of current practices has to exist."[55] Those involved in principal preparation programs need to constantly look for ways to improve their effectiveness. A key voice in this continual improvement process is that of local school district superintendents. Failure to heed this voice is risky, at best.

Endnotes

[1] Bruce G. Barnett, "Transferring Learning from the Classroom to the Workplace: Challenges and Implications for Education Leadership Preparation," *Educational Considerations* 32 (Spring 2005): 6.

[2] See, for example, Charles M. Achilles, "Searching for the Golden Fleece: The Epic Struggle Continues," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 30 (February 1994): 6; Frederick M. Hess and Andrew P. Kelly, "An Innovative Look, a Recalcitrant Reality: The Politics of Principal Preparation Reform," *Educational Policy* 19 (January and March 2005): 156; Arthur Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, The Education Schools Project (March 2005), 5, http://www.edschools.org/pdf/Final313.pdf; Mike M. Milstein and Jo Ann Krueger,

"Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs: What We Have Learned over the Past Decade," *Peabody Journal of Education* 72, no. 2 (1997): 100-101.

3 Lawrence E. Leak, Wesley O. Petersen, and Lyle R. Patzkowsky, "Developing Leaders for Urban Schools: The Baltimore Experience," *Urban Education* 31 (January 1997): 511.

4 Barnett, "Transferring Learning from the Classroom to the Workplace," 6; Mary Devin, "Save a Place for Leadership in the Debate on Adequacy : A New Model for Developing Leadership for Schools," *Educational Considerations* 70 (Fall 2004).

5 Thomas L. Alsbury and Kathryn S. Whitaker, "Superintendent Perspectives and Practice of Accountability, Democratic Voice and Social Justice," *Journal of Educational Administration* 45, no. 2 (2007): 155.

6 Ibid., 155.

7 Terrence Quinn, "Leadership Development: The Principal-University Connection," *Principal* 84 (May/June 2005): 13.

8 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 18.

9 Ibid., 43-46.

10 Quinn, "Leadership Development," 12.

11 Milstein and Krueger, "Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs," 100.

12 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 30.

13 Barbara L. Jackson and Carolyn Kelley, "Exceptional and Innovative Programs in Educational Leadership," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 38 (April 2002): 195.

14 Barnett, "Transferring Learning from the Classroom to the Workplace," 10.

15 Milstein and Krueger, "Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs," 105-106.

16 Ibid., 106.

17 Jackson and Kelley, "Exceptional and Innovative Programs in Educational Leadership," 196.

18 Levine, *Educating School Leaders,* 23.

19 Katherine C. Reynolds and F. Ted Hebert, "Learning Achievements of Students in Cohort Groups," *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education* 46 (Fall 1998): 36.

20 Jackson and Kelley, "Exceptional and Innovative Programs in Educational Leadership," 196.

21 Ibid., 207.

22 Ibid., 208.

23 Tricia Browne-Ferrigno and Lawrence W. Allen, "Preparing Principals for High-Need Rural Schools: A Central Office Perspective about Collaborative Efforts to Transform School Leadership," *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 21, no. 1 (2006): 3; Quinn, "Leadership Development," 15.

24 Kathryn Whitaker, "Preparing Future Principals," *Principal Leadership* 7, no. 3 (2006): 39.

25 A vast majority of partnerships follow the cohort model as the school district(s) and university enter into a mutually beneficial partnership.

26 Whitaker, "Preparing Future Principals," 39.

27 Browne-Ferrigno and Allen, "Preparing Principals for High-Need Rural Schools," 3.

28 Whitaker, "Preparing Future Principals," 38.

29 Abbie Brown and Tim Green, "Showing up to Class in Pajamas (or Less!): The Fantasies and Realities of On-Line Professional Development Courses for Teachers," *Clearing House* 76 (January/February 2003), 149.

30 Hess and Kelly, "An Innovative Look, a Recalcitrant Reality," 156.

31 Brown and Green, "Showing up to Class in Pajamas," 149. See also, Karen A. Card and Laura Horton, "Providing Access to Graduate Education Using Computer-Mediated Communication" *International Journal of Instructional Media* 27, no. 3 (2000): 235.

32 Donald F. DeMoulin, "Tennessee's Regents On-Line Degree Program: A Success Story" *Education* 126 (Fall 2005): 55-56.

33 Brown and Green, "Showing up to Class in Pajamas," 149.

34 Teresa Chen, "Recommendations for Creating and Maintaining Effective Networked Learning Communities: A Review of the Literature," *International Journal of Instructional Media* 30, no. 1 (2003): 37.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 37-38.

37 Card and Horton, "Providing Access to Graduate Education Using Computer-Mediated Communication," 235.

38 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 24.

39 Leak et al., "Developing Leaders for Urban Schools," 512.

40 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 31.

41 Milstein and Krueger, "Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs," 102.

42 Whitaker, "Preparing Future Principals," 45.

43 Kathryn Whitaker and Linda Vogel, "Joining the Ranks: Opportunities and Obstacles in Obtaining Principal Positions," *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* 18 (2005): 8.

44 Hess and Kelly, "An Innovative Look, a Recalcitrant Reality," 161. See also, Lora Cohen-Vogel and Carolyn D. Herrington, "Teacher and Leadership Preparation and Development: No Strangers to Politics," *Educational Policy* 19 (March 2005): 9.

45 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 24.

46 Hess and Kelly, "An Innovative Look, a Recalcitrant Reality," 156, 158.

47 Levine, *Educating School Leaders*, 23.

48 Milstein and Krueger, "Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs," 110.

49 Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, "Becoming a Principal: Role Conception, Initial Socialization, Role-Identity Transformation, Purposeful Engagement," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 39 (October

2003): 470. See also, Hess and Kelly, "An Innovative Look, A Recalcitrant Reality," 170-171.

[50] See Appendix for a copy of the survey instrument.

[51] Vockell and Asher established a minimum requisite response rate of 35% for subcategories. See, Edward L. Vockell and J. William Asher, *Educational Research*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 182-183.

[52] Colorado Department of Education, "Colorado Education Statistics: Setting Categories," http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/rvdefine.htm.

[53] An email address could not be obtained for 70 nonrespondent superintendents.

[54] Barnett, "Transferring Learning from the Classroom to the Workplace," 6. See also, Devin, "Save a Place for Leadership," 70.

[55] Milstein and Krueger, "Improving Educational Administration Preparation Programs," 101.

Name: School District:

Address: Student Population:

The purpose of this survey is to measure superintendents' attitudes towards various educational leadership preparation programs for principals. As you answer the following questions please consider the principals you have hired and the training they came to your district with.

1. **Ideal Preparation**: Read over the following list of various program models and select the three (3) most effective models in developing educational leaders.

Delivery Model	*Most Effective*	*Second Most Effective*	*Third Most Effective*
University Cohort Program-Courses offered in School District			
University Cohort Program-Courses offered at University			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a University Program			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a Campus-based Program with some online Courses			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in an Exclusively Online University Program			
State Approved Alternative Certification Program			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered in District			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered at University			

Please continue to the next page.

2. **Practical**: For this section you are to select the three most common principal preparation models you find in your administrative candidate pools.

Delivery Model	Most Common	Second Most Common	Third Most Common
University Cohort Program – Courses offered in School District			
University Cohort Program – Courses offered at University			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a University Program			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a Campus-based Program with some online Courses			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in an Exclusively Online University Program			
State Approved Alternative Certification Program			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered in District			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered at University			

3. **Red Flag**: Finally, select the three (3) least effective approaches to educational leadership in preparing principals in your school district.

Delivery Model	The Worst Preparation Model	The Next Least Effective Model	The Third Least Effective Model
University Cohort Program – Courses offered in School District			
University Cohort Program – Courses offered at University			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a University Program			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in a Campus-based Program with some online Courses			
Staff Member Individually Enrolled in an Exclusively Online University Program			
State Approved Alternative Certification Program			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered in District			
University-District Partnership Cohort Courses offered at University			

4. Read over the list of Institutions offering principal preparation programs in the state of Colorado and indicate your initial perception of an applicant from each ("negative" means you think poorly of the institution and its graduates; "indifferent" is that you have no strong opinions; "positive" means you think highly of the institution and its graduates; "don't know" means you are unaware of this institution).

Institution	Positive	Negative	Indifferent	Don't Know
Adams State University				
Colorado Christian University				
Colorado College				
Colorado State University				
Denver Seminary				
Fort Lewis College				
Johnson & Wales University				
Jones International University				
Mesa State University				
Metropolitan State College of Denver				
Regis University				
Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design				
University of Colorado				
University of Denver				
University of Northern Colorado				
University of Phoenix				
Western State College				

Educational Considerations