The Organizational Socialization of Rural High School Principals: Teacher Influences

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This article presents empirical findings from a recent study of how ten rural high school principals were socialized into instructional leadership roles. The data are analyzed in order to suggest ways to improve how principals are organizationally socialized in rural high schools.

Introduction

For a long time principals have reported that they learn their roles primarily through on-the-job experiences (Peterson, 1986; Wilson, 1982). These self-reports suggest that principals' role behaviors are shaped by school and district norms. If this is the case, principal successions may afford unique opportunities for teachers and central office personnel to promote instructional leadership as they organizationally socialize new principals.

Jacobson (1988) calls rural school districts the school administration "farm system" because novice school administrators frequently gain experience in rural districts before accepting positions in urban and suburban schools. For this reason, rural school district personnel are often involved in hiring and socializing new principals. Frequent principal successions may negatively impact instructional leadership in rural high schools, but they may also become opportunities for promoting leadership that will lead to school improvement. In order to promote and sustain school improvement efforts during periods of principal succession, teachers and superintendents need to find ways to socialize new principals into appropriate instructional leadership roles.

Unfortunately, little empirical data has been gathered about how high school principals are organizationally socialized (Greenfield, 1985a), and even less has been gathered about how *rural* principals are socialized (Alvy & Coladarci, 1985). One purpose

of this article is to present empirical findings from a recent study of how ten rural high school principals were socialized into instructional leadership roles. Findings are presented in three sections, each of which examines the role of the faculty in the organizational socialization process. The first section focuses on the content of the messages principals received from teachers. The second describes how teachers sent messages. The third explains how these messages influenced newly hired principals' instructional leadership behavior.

The second purpose of this article is to analyze the data and suggest ways to improve how principals are organizationally socialized in rural high schools. The final two sections analyze patterns in the data and suggest ways teachers can be involved in organizationally socializing new principals.

Definition of Key Terms

Organizational socialization theory (London, 1985; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) provides a framework for studying how principals' behavior is influenced by superintendents and teachers. London (1985) defines *organizational socialization* as:

> the process by which an employee learns the values, norms, and required behaviors that permit participation as a member of the organization. This process may also mean

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relinquishing attitudes, values and behaviors that do not fit. Socialization establishes shared attitudes, habits, and values that encourage cooperation, integrity, and communication.
(p. 20)

Implicit in this definition is the idea that new organizational members are influenced by the norms and expectations of organizational members.

Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) point out that superintendents influence principals' behavior: "Frequently organizational norms and expectations of superiors become the central point for principals as they make decisions" (p. 22). But this explains only one aspect of principals' experiential learning. Principals' instructional leadership behavior is also influenced by teachers' expectations for instructional leadership. Mechanic (1962) and others (Brim & Wheeler, 1966; Foskett, 1967; Katz & Kahn, 1978) recognize that subordinates influence managerial behavior. Corbett & Rossman (1988) explain that this is especially true in schools because teachers control access to classroom information. Therefore, analyzing faculty influences is critical to understanding how principals are organizationally socialized.

Instructional leadership is defined by applying three of Lipham and Hoeh's (1974) functions of the principal to their definition of leadership. The three instructional functions of the principal pertain to (1) staff personnel, (2) curriculum development, and (3) student personnel. The non-instructional functions (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974) pertain to community relations and the management of business and facility operations.

Furthermore, Lipham and Hoeh (1974), define leadership as:

that behavior of an individual which initiates a new structure in interaction with a social system; it initiates change in the goals, objectives, configurations, procedures, input, processes, and ultimately the outputs of social systems.
(p. 19)

Accordingly, instructional leadership is defined as change and initiation of new structures in the performance of the principal's staff personnel functions, curriculum development functions, and student personnel functions.

Sample and Data Collection

In the summer of 1988, based on one Midwestern state's department of public instruction figures, it was determined that 27 high school principals had just completed their first year in one of the state's public high schools. Eleven of these 27 principals agreed to participate in this study. Data collection occurred between November, 1988 and April, 1989. The participating principals were all males in the second year of their first principalships. They were asked to reflect on the first 20 months in their new positions.

Although the study was not restricted to novice principals, it turned out that the eleven who agreed to participate were in their first principalships. Nor was the study designed to involve only rural principals. Ten of the eleven principals who agreed to participate in the study, however, were employed in rural school districts. This population reflects both the rural nature of the state in which the study took place and the "farm system" phenomenon described by Jacobson (1988). Data from the ten rural principals are reported here. Three of these had assistant principal experience, and seven had no prior administrative experience.

Nachtigal (1982) and Sher (1977) point out that defining "rural" is difficult because the term is associated with a wide range of characteristics. In most discussions of rural schools, however, two sets of factors consistently emerge: size/scale factors and cultural factors. Based on Nachtigal's (1982) discussion of the nature of rural schools, the schools employing the principals participating in this study were "rural" because they exhibited the following size/scale and cultural characteristics:

Size/Scale Characteristics

1. School personnel had multiple roles.

2. The curriculum was stretched to provide for student needs.

3. The school district had few bureaucratic layers.

4. Extra-curricular activities involved a high percentage of students.

Cultural Characteristics

1. The student population was homogeneous.

2. High school activities were a focal point in the community.

3. Housing patterns were isolated.

4. Many students rode busses to school.

In all ten schools the four size/scale characteristics were evident and confirmed in discussions with principals, teachers, and superintendents. All ten principals were employed in single-high school districts. Eight of the schools had fewer than 400 students in grades 9-12 and no assistant principals. The two other schools had approximately 500 students and one assistant principal.

The four cultural characteristics were also evident, except that one high school enrolled both white and Native American students. The other nine schools served populations which were almost exclusively white. The activities at these ten high schools were focal points of interest in their communities. All ten districts served geographically isolated families and bussed many students to the schools. Furthermore, all ten high schools were more than 20 miles from urban areas and served regions where farming, agri-business, or tourism played a large part in local economies.

In the numbering system used throughout data presentation and analysis, the smallest eight schools are numbered one through eight. The larger high schools with one assistant principal are numbered nine and ten.

Three semi-structured interviews (Miles, 1979) were conducted with all principals. The interviews, which are the focus of this article, explored the instructional leadership messages from teachers and the ways these messages influenced principals' instructional leadership behavior. Superintendents and key teachers were also interviewed as a way to triangulate data (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Key teachers were identified by the principals as those who were either formal or informal leaders on their faculties.

The interviews with principals were organized in the following way. Principals were first asked to identify instructional leadership messages they had received from teachers. Principals were then asked to describe how they received those messages. Did they recall any critical incidents? Finally, they were asked to describe how those messages had influenced their instructional leadership behavior.

The Content of Messages From Teachers

Principals reported that teachers had instructional leadership expectations in four main areas: (1) enforcing student discipline policies, (2) recognizing student achievement, (3) solving problems, and (4) supervising classroom instruction. In other words, principals reported that teachers expected them to be chief disciplinarians, coordinators of student recognition programs, problem solvers, and supervisors of classroom instruction.

Chief Disciplinarians

The dominant perception of these new principals was that teachers expected them to be chief disciplinarians. This expectation was reported frequently by the eight principals who did not have assistants.

Six principals (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) identified student discipline as a major teacher expectation, and four of these six (2, 3, 4, and 6) said disciplining students was *the primary* instructional leadership expectation of teachers. The comments of Principals 2 and 4 represent how principals viewed this teacher expectation.

Principal 2 said:

Attendance and discipline is a top expectation... I think I spend more time on attendance and discipline than I would like to. Teachers can't, don't want to, or are sick of particular students. The more I deal with these students the more I have to deal with family problems, which takes even more time.

Principal 4 said, "They want me involved with student personnel functions...I spend an inordinate amount of time on discipline and attendance."

Teachers did not rely as heavily on the two principals with assistants (9 and 10) for this function, but these principals also perceived the need to be involved in the broad range of student personnel functions. For example, Principal 10 said:

[District norms] reinforced my personal beliefs that the principal should be effective and maintain tight control over that area [student personnel functions]. My role is similar to the

assistant principal's. I have to be careful with discipline and attendance even though I have an assistant principal.

In addition to interviews with principals, interviews with key teachers explored what faculties considered the major instructional leadership issues in their schools. Many of them said student discipline was a major responsibility of the principal. The comments of a teacher in School 5 illustrate this concern:

> People knew that we had a bad group of kids coming. This was evident in the middle school...They didn't have a lot of respect, a lot of motivation. They didn't participate in a lot of things. So our concern was, let's get somebody in here who can put a strong hand on things, and establish firm discipline. And everyone knew that, whoever got the job, they [sic] were going to have their hands full.

A third set of data also indicates that teachers felt student discipline was a primary responsibility of principals. Each principal was asked to develop a pie chart representing the expectations of their teachers in all five functional areas of the principalship (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974). Key teachers were also asked to develop a pie chart to illustrate the percentage of time the principal ought to spend in each area. Table 1 was developed by computing the averages of principals' perceptions and teachers' reports.

Column Two of Table 1 indicates that rural high school teachers expected principals to spend a high percentage of their time dealing with student personnel functions. Furthermore, the table illustrates that new principals accurately perceived their teachers'

expectations. In the three instructional functions, averages of the perceptions of principals differed by fewer than three percentage points from the reports of teachers.

Averages, however, sometimes mask differences. But in this case, a school-by-school comparison also indicates that principals accurately perceived teacher expectations. Sixty-six percent (33 of 50) of the estimates made by the principals differed by fewer than 11 percentage points from the expectations reported by key teachers interviewed for this study.

To summarize, three sets of data indicate that disciplining students was a major faculty expectation of these ten rural high school principals. This expectation was evident in principals' perceptions of teacher expectations, in teachers' reports of their instructional leadership concerns, and in the data depicting how principals were expected to spend their time.

Other Teacher Expectations

Principals reported three other instructional leadership messages from teachers. The first two expectations were consistent among the faculties, but the third expectation—concerning the principal's role in supervising classroom instruction—was a mixed set of messages.

First, principals reported that teachers expected them to solve problems. This was reported by all ten principals. When asked about being a problem solver, Principal 2 said, "Yes, that's a big one. It takes an enormous amount of my time."

Second, in nine schools principals perceived that teachers expected them to develop appropriate ways to recognize and reward student achievement.

Table 1
Averages of Percentage of Time Principals Should Spend in Five Functional Areas

Functions	Principals' Perceptions of Teacher Expectations	Reports of Key Teachers
Student Personnel	36.5%	34.0%
Staff Personnel	26.0%	25.0%
Curriculum Development	16.0%	18.0%
Community Relations	8.5%	16.0%
Bus./Plant Management	13.0%	7.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Principals were expected to organize and publicize honor rolls, award ceremonies, scholarship programs, and so forth.

The third pattern of teacher expectations involved the norms for the principal's role in supervising classroom instruction. Within their faculties, principals perceived teacher expectations which were clear, but not shared by all teachers. Five principals (1, 2, 4, 7, and 10) identified multiple teacher attitudes toward the principal's involvement in classroom instruction. Therefore, more than ten expectations are reported in the following findings.

The most dominant faculty norm reported by the principals was that supervision of classroom instruction was a mere formality. Eight principals (all but 3 and 8) indicated that this was an attitude held by some of their teachers. The comments of Principal 6 reflect these principals' perceptions:

> I think most of them, especially those who have been here any length of time, have expectations that it [classroom supervision] is part of the job of the principal. Once it is done, it is done. They don't see it as...an exchange to improve a teacher.

A second attitude was perceived by five principals (1, 2, 4, 7, and 8) who reported that many of their teachers expected them *not* to be involved in supervising instruction. Furthermore, some principals said that teachers resisted their involvement in classroom supervision.

Principal 8 felt teacher resistance was reflected in teachers' reactions to the initiation of pre-observation conferences as a component of the supervision process. He explained that some teachers would stop him in the hall to tell him their lesson plan for their scheduled observation; this, they felt, served as their pre-conference. Principal 8 interpreted this as a form of resistance to his involvement in instruction, so he stopped holding pre-observation conferences.

Principal 4 reported even stronger resistance to his involvement in the instructional program. He commented:

> This faculty doesn't want me involved, beyond a minimal level, with their domain. They'll accept me, but they don't want me there. I'm not to be involved in what they teach, how they teach, when they teach. They want me very involved in student personnel functions.

Similarly, when Principal 9 was asked about teachers' expectations for principal-teacher cooperation, he said, "Teachers don't want the principal in the classroom."

Perceptions of teacher resistance to the principals' involvement in classroom instruction were balanced by a third attitude described by Principals 3 and 10. They said teachers welcomed their involvement in classroom instruction. According to these principals, teachers saw the principal's involvement as one way to maintain effective school programs. (Both schools had earned national awards for excellence during the mid-1980s.)

Welcoming the principal's involvement in the instructional program was not, however, perceived to be a faculty norm in eight of the ten schools. For the most part, principals perceived norms suggesting that classroom observations were a formality, and that principals' ought to be little involved in classroom instruction.

Faculty Socializing Methods

The second area explored with the principals concerned the ways teachers sent messages about instructional leadership norms. Surprisingly, principals were able to provide few specifics about how they received instructional leadership messages from teachers. The most common response to the question, "How did you receive that message?" was something like, "I don't know, I just got it."

In general, however, principals reported that teachers sent instructional leadership messages in two ways—one formal, the other informal. Post-observation conferences were the formal occasions when principals received instructional leadership messages from teachers. Nine of the principals (all but 2) identified these conferences as times when they learned teacher expectations.

The most consistently reported informal occasions when principals received instructional leadership messages were informal conversations with teachers. Eight principals (all except 4 and 6) said they received instructional leadership messages in casual conversations with teachers.

Several studies of the principal's role have identified face-to-face, informal interactions as dominant aspects of principals' work (Martin & Willower, 1981; Morris, Crowson, Porter, Gehrie, & Hurwitz, 1984; Wolcott, 1973), and others (Manasse, 1985; Peterson, 1986) have described principals' work as varied, brief, and

fragmented. These characteristics of principals' work may partially explain why these ten principals could recall few specifics about how they learned teacher expectations.

Still, it is surprising that principals could recall almost no critical incidents or exchanges. Other studies have found that principals highly value their relationships with teachers and that they work hard to develop positive faculty relations early in their tenure (Greenfield, 1985b; Lortie, Crow & Prolman, 1983). It may be significant that principals could not specify where or when they received instructional leadership messages from teachers. The implications of this will be discussed later.

Effects of Teacher Messages on Principal Behavior

Throughout their interviews principals were asked to describe how teacher messages had influenced their instructional leadership behavior. Three effects on behavior were reported the most frequently. Five principals said they worked hard on discipline and attendance, five said they tried to change teacher attitudes, and five said they became more accessible to teachers. Resisting teacher expectations and serving teacher needs were behavioral effects reported by four principals. Table 2 matches principals with the behavioral effects they reported.

First, student discipline expectations influenced principals' behavior. Principal 5, for example, said much of his time was spent dealing with student discipline issues: "In terms of handling tough situations with kids, and consistent discipline, I am concerned that they [teachers] get the reinforcement and support they need."

Principal 6 also reflected on how teachers' student discipline expectations affected his behavior. Here is a case where a principal did not want to enforce policies as strictly as he did, but teacher expectations shaped his behavior. Principal 6 explained, "It bothers me. I try to nail kids harder than I would otherwise...I'm walking hallways more. I get involved more in discipline."

Principal 4 was another who worked hard on student discipline and attendance. He said:

> I spend more time with discipline and atten-
> dance than I think I have to; but, if I don't, it is
> going to get away from me. I set myself up as a
> hammer; now I'm paying the price for it. Now
> I'm expected to handle all the discipline. I'm
> slowly trying to work out of this by changing
> expectations. I'm not around as much.
> Teachers and students wanted me in the halls
> during passing time. The whole damn building
> became mine during those three minutes and
> the noon hour.

This principal's reference to changing expectations is an example of the second behavior reported by five principals. Principals 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 disagreed with and resisted certain teacher expectations, so they tried to change them. The comments of Principal 2

Table 2
Principals' Reports of Teacher Influences on Their Behavior

Effects on Principals' Behavior	School									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Worked hard on discipline and attendance.		X		X	X	X		X		
Tried to change teacher attitudes.		X		X	X				X	X
Became more accessible to teachers.	X					X	X	X	X	
Resisted teacher expectations.	X	X		X				X		
Provided service to faculties.	X	X			X	X				

provide another example. He felt teachers wanted him to be stricter with student discipline. He said:

> There is a fair percentage [of teachers] that thinks I should be more forceful in these areas [discipline]... Occasionally I have to sit down and have a talk with myself to remember where I'm coming from, and occasionally I have to talk with them to remind them of where I'm coming from, even though they don't like it... I keep trying to bring it to their attention; but, from the bottom up, they take a punitive approach to everything.

Principal 10 tried to change teacher attitudes about classroom observations. He said, "They [observations] are for evaluation. I'm trying to change the emphasis to supervision...I've worked harder to emphasize supervision as a positive experience."

The third behavioral effect reported by five principals was that they became more accessible to their faculties. Principal 7 described how his "open door" policy affected his behavior:

> You keep this going because this [accessibility] is what they want...I have to be accessible at all times. A very clear message that I have sent to my people - if you've got a question, call me at home...I sometimes have to cancel classroom observations, or they are shortened if an emergency comes up.

Two other behaviors were reported by four principals. First, Principals 1, 2, 4, and 8 reported that they resisted teacher expectations. For example, Principal 1 realized that coaches and advisors of extra-curricular activities wanted to run their programs without interference from the principal. Therefore, he closely examined extra-curricular programs to be sure that district policies were followed.

Second, Principals 1, 2, 5, and 6 reported that teacher expectations caused them to provide service to their faculties. Principal 2 found that faculty meetings increased his work load. After trying to implement shared decision-making at faculty meetings, he realized, "This results in my spending more time on school issues - nobody to delegate to."

Similarly, Principal 1 pointed out that he serves teachers' needs regarding instructional change:

> I've shouldered the burden for instructional change when I saw the need. It has affected

the ways I spend my time. More of my time is consumed in things I would like to come from the teachers. I have to do ground work, instead of support and assistance.

Serving the needs of the faculty was an expectation that, like the student discipline responsibility, emerged from interviews with both principals and key teachers. During interviews with key faculty members, teachers spoke little of the need for the principal to provide leadership to the staff or curriculum development efforts. Instead they spoke primarily of the need for the principal to enforce discipline regulations and respond to teachers' needs.

Data Analysis

One of the limitations of qualitative research of this kind is that conclusions must be drawn tentatively. Because these data were gathered from self-selected participants, it is not possible to generalize with statistical certainty. Three major patterns emerge from the data, however, which illustrate the expectations faced by many rural high school principals. The following analysis provides insight into some of the ways in which teacher expectations may influence the instructional leadership behavior of newly hired principals.

First, it appears that teachers socialized principals in the area that concerned them most -- student discipline. Teachers sent strong, clear messages about the principal's role in this area, but few messages about leadership in the areas of staff personnel and curriculum development.

This finding coincides with Corbett and Rossman's (1988) belief that teachers exercise power by controlling access to instructional programs:

> [Teachers] can control the flow of information tabout classroom activities to those with the authority to alter the situation. The result is that teachers often have tremendous ability to induce supervisors to act in ways they ordinarily might not, or more to the point, prevent them from acting at all.

In this study, based on principals' own reports, teachers influenced new principals' behaviors by sending clear messages about disciplining students and by sending few messages about staff personnel and curriculum concerns.

The situations described in this study illustrate the conflict between normative and empirical descriptions of the principal's role. Normative descriptions of the role suggest that principals ought to be instructional leaders. Empirical data from this study, however, indicate that principals are expected to spend much of their time enforcing student personnel policies, which requires them to focus on maintenance, not leadership.

This role conflict may be elucidated by considering the rationale for including student personnel functions as an instructional leadership function and by dissecting the term *instructional leadership.* First, student personnel functions were included because they afford opportunities for principals to work directly with students. Student personnel functions range from supervising extra-curricular activites and working with student government to disciplining students. Clearly, occasions when principals work directly with students are *instructional.* Furthermore, disciplinary conferences between principals and students may be among the most instructionally important work of principals.

So the problem may lie with the other part of the term *instructional leadership.* Enforcing discipline and attendance policies is instructional, but these situations are not times when principals function as leaders. Student personnel *leadership* would involve building positive school climates, reviewing and refining policy, and coordinating the policy enforcement efforts of many school personnel. Instead of providing *leadership* in this area, however, principals perceived that teachers primarily expected them to enforce student discipline policies in order to maintain a stable environment.

The second pattern which emerges from the data is that, even though principals clearly described teachers' expectations, they could report few specifics about the ways teachers conveyed these expectations. The reason for this may be that teachers sent instructional leadership messages in ways that were subtle and indirect. This possibility coincides with Blase's (1989) findings. In his discussion of teachers' political strategies, Blase notes:

> Teachers who reported using diplomatic tactics frequently indicated their disapproval of mani-pulative and deceitful tactics. Yet curiously, such teachers also indicated that they were willing to employ tactics that were indirect, subtle, and somewhat covert; within the context of the professional literature such tactics are considered manipulative, because the "target" remains unaware of the influence. (p. 388)

Covert, subtle messages seemed to have been sent in these ten rural schools. For example, teachers felt that disciplining students was one of the principal's primary responsibilities, but principals could provide few details about how they learned that expectation.

Principals could, however, identify specific ways that teacher expectations influenced their behavior. The data suggest that teachers effectively influenced newly hired rural high school principals' instructional leadership behavior. Clearly, teachers were part of the informal socialization process. It may be wise for rural educators to capitalize on this influence by involving teachers more in organizationally socializing new principals. This suggestion is explained more in the next section.

A third pattern is formed by the four teacher expectations reported most often by the ten principals. All ten principals said they were expected to help teachers solve problems. Nine principals said teachers expected them to coordinate student recognition programs. Eight principals reported that teachers expected them to discipline unruly students, and seven principals said supervision of instruction was a mere formality for at least a portion of the faculty. These principals' perceptions, alongside data from interviews with key faculty, indicate that teachers in these rural high schools emphasized the service aspect of the principal's role.

Teachers' expectations of service from the principal are probably best understood by remembering that these are small, rural high schools which lack the resource and support personnel common in suburban and urban districts. Teachers in schools without business managers, building and grounds supervisors, and curriculum coordinators are likely to expect principals to take on these roles because they are the only professional educators available to serve teachers' instructional needs. Principals in schools of all sizes provide service to teachers, but the reports of these ten high school principals raise questions about the balance between administrative service and leadership in rural districts.

The pattern of expectations that emerges from this study suggests that principals in small, rural districts are expected to fill a variety of service functions -- functions performed by central office personnel in larger districts. In this study, teacher expectations for service far outweighed those for leadership. Rural high school principals and faculties should be aware of this imbalance when promoting instructional leadership in their schools. Rural educators ought to re-evaluate traditional administrative and teaching roles in order to

either develop norms of shared instructional leadership, or better balance expectations for leadership and service.

This is one area in which expectations faced by rural high school principals differ from those faced by urban and suburban principals. Wilson (1982) believes there are many such differences, and he writes that "more specific research is needed to assist rural principals in their unique settings" (p. 47). This study provides data about one situation unique to rural high school administration -- principals' perceptions of teachers' instructional leadership expectations.

In summary, the principals in this study perceived that teachers expected them to discipline students and provide service to faculties. Furthermore, they reported that their instructional leadership behaviors were influenced by these expectations, even though they could identify few specifics about how or when they learned them.

Suggestions for Improving the Organizational Socialization of Rural High School Principals

These data have implications for educators in rural school districts because improving the organizational socialization of rural high school principals can lead to improved instructional leadership in rural high schools. One way to improve principals' socialization would be to involve teachers in formal socializing activities. Anderson (1988) has described innovative ways that central office personnel socialize new principals, but nowhere is the role of the faculty addressed. The findings of this study, however, suggest that rural high school teachers should be formally involved in organizationally socializing new high school principals.

Why Should Teachers be Formally Involved?

All ten principals spoke clearly about how teacher expectations influenced them during their first year. Therefore, principal successions provide unique opportunities for teachers to shape principals' instructional leadership behavior. Greenfield (1984) recognizes this when he notes, "Powerful informal socialization processes in the work settings are likely to 'wash out' the technical knowledge and skills obtained

through part-time study in graduate schools" (p. 34). In other words, the norms and expectations of district personnel, including teachers, influence newly hired principals' behavior in powerful ways.

Hallinger and Murphy (1987) suggest that professional norms are one of four organizational obstacles impeding principals' instructional leadership. The data from this study confirm that faculty norms in rural high schools often do not promote patterns of effective instructional leadership, especially concerning staff personnel and curriculum development functions. These principals perceived few instructional leadership expectations in these two functional areas; and, in the area of student personnel functions, the expectation was not for leadership.

Teachers are the professional educators closest to the instructional core of the rural high school. In order for new principals to be socialized into appropriate instructional leadership roles, teachers need to be part of the formal process. Otherwise, faculty norms and expectations may function as "powerful informal socialization processes" (Greenfield, 1984, p. 34) that impede instructional leadership.

Formal Teacher Involvement in the Organizational Socialization Process

The first step in appropriately socializing new rural high school principals involves discussions among the superintendent and representatives from the board and faculty. These individuals should identify the most pressing instructional improvement needs in their schools. Unless agreement on basic priorities is reached, socialization messages are likely to be ambiguous, or possibly conflicting. Conflicting expectations may not be destructive in all situations; but, for rural schools experiencing frequent principal turnover, successive periods of ambiguity or conflict may reduce the likelihood that schools will have the instructional leadership needed for improvement.

The second reason why this is an important step is that principal successions afford the opportunity for faculties to review and adjust expectations for principals. In some of the schools studied here, a review of faculty norms may have led teachers to adjust their expectations for new principals. If this had occurred, principals might have perceived a greater faculty expectation for staff personnel and curriculum development leadership. This would have pleased Principal 5, who said, "I wish there had been more

interest in instructional leadership instead of attendance and discipline."

Several of these principals struggled with the gap they perceived between normative descriptions of the principal's role, which emphasize instructional leadership (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974; Roe & Drake, 1980), and their teachers' expectations, which focused on service to the faculty and disciplining students. All ten principals reported that they did not have time to be more involved in classroom instruction. Principal 1 said that dealing with discipline issues took up much of his time, as did Principal 6 who said, "So many behavior problems have led to frustrations. I can't spend time in halls and in classes. Discipline problems don't stop." The comments of these principals suggest that the perceived gap between theories of the principal's role and rural high school teachers' expectations may contribute to principal frustration. One way to bridge this perceived gap would be to make faculty expectations an issue for open discussion.

After instructional leadership priorities have been identified, teachers ought to be included on hiring committees. This was a common practice in the school districts studied here, but the value of involving teachers in this way is dependent on the successful completion of the first step, which includes faculty discussion of school improvement needs. So, although teachers may be sitting on hiring committees, this alone does not provide them with sufficient involvement in the socialization process.

Third, faculties ought to develop a plan for socializing a new principal. Just as Anderson (1988) suggests that central office personnel ought to develop appropriate socializing activities, so should teachers in rural high schools organize appropriate socializing activities. Only one of the principals in this study reported that the faculty sponsored any socialization activities. Principal 7 was invited to a picnic to acquaint him with the faculty. He said, "The faculty picnic made me feel more comfortable...makes you willing to help them, and work more for them." Other appropriate socializing activities organized by faculties might include weekly question and answer periods, presentations about school history and traditions, or welcoming activities involving students and community members. The point is that schools have unique cultures and teachers can help a new principal learn about and become part of that culture.

Conclusion

In summary, based on principals' own reports, teachers informally influenced newly hired rural high school principals' instructional leadership behavior. Because some of these informal influences may be counterproductive to overall school improvement, it is being suggested that teachers become *formally* involved in the organizational socialization process. Rural high school teachers who recognize the need for effective instructional leadership, and who recognize that principal successions may occur frequently, are likely to be willing to play an active, formal role in socializing a new principal.

Furthermore, teachers, superintendents, and community members should realize that, in the absence of formal socializing activities, informal socialization may increase in its influence. Some of these influences may increase the likelihood that a new principal will be unsuccessful and seek a position elsewhere. When this happens, principal successions become even more frequent. This cycle can be difficult to break, and can lead to years of ineffective leadership in rural schools. Involving teachers formally in the organizational socialization of new principals does not guarantee that new principals will experience success and stay longer in a particular school, but it is a step toward assuring that faculty norms for instructional leadership point the way toward school improvement, regardless of who occupies the principal's office.

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