Preface

School principals are a critical component in the revitalization of our teachers and our schools. Developing a deeper understanding of practices that support teacher learning will promote more effective leadership.

Teacher shortages, teacher turnover, standards-based reform, accountability, and an increasingly diverse population are among the many issues facing principals in the 21st century. What's more, just as the work of school leaders is becoming increasingly complex and more demanding, the country faces an anticipated shortage of experienced principals (Kelley & Peterson, 2002; Stricherz, 2001). More and more principals are leaving their posts because of the inherent stress and extremely complicated nature of their work (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2002; Kelley & Peterson, 2002). Furthermore, training has been inadequate to help them manage that work (Klempen & Richetti, 2001). There is thus an imminent need for designing more effective supports for principals. One way to accomplish this is to share with principals how to better support their teachers, a principal's most valuable resource.

ABOUT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One important way to provide teacher support is through professional development. As Roland Barth (1990) said, "Probably nothing within a school has more impact on students in terms of skills development, self-confidence, or classroom behavior than the personal and professional growth of teachers" (p. 49). To be effective leaders, principals need to understand what makes for effective professional development. The research on which this book is based focuses on how principals effectively exercise leadership in support of teacher learning. The primary way in which teachers are supported in their personal and professional growth is through professional development programs. However, the lack of time to be devoted to these programs is a recurrent theme in practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; Little, 1990, 2001; Mann, 2000; Meier, 2002; Sizer, 1992).

In reviewing literature on professional development models currently practiced (Drago-Severson, 1994, 1996, 2001), six types of models emerged: training; observation/coaching/assessment; involvement-in-an-improvement process; inquiry, individually guided or self-directed; and mentoring. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1990) identified five distinct models in their review of staff development. My developmentally oriented review of this literature furthers their fine work by focusing on the demands embedded in these models and the different types of supports and challenges teachers need in order to engage effectively in professional development activities and grow from them.

The models described in Table P.1 are in a sequence that reflects an increasingly internal or self-developmental focus. Table P.1 summarizes their characteristics.

As shown in Table P.1, there is a lack of clarity and consensus as to *what* constitutes teacher development, *how* to support it, and *how* models are translated to practice (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Lieberman & Miller, 2001; Peterson & Deal, 1998). Currently practiced models of teacher growth operate on different assumptions and expectations about how teacher growth can be supported (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Drago-Severson, 1994, 1996, 2001). Furthermore, much of what is expected of, or needed from, teachers in order for them to succeed in these professional development models demands more than an increase in their funds of knowledge or skills, or *informational learning.* Successful participation in some models may demand *transformational learning.* I define transformational learning as learning that helps adults better manage the complexities of work and life.

Educational researchers and practitioners emphasize the need to reassess what constitutes professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Lieberman & Miller, 2001). Recently, researchers maintain that effective professional development for teachers must be (a) embedded in and derived from practice, (b) continuous and ongoing rather than one-shot experiences, (c) on-site and school based, (d) focused on promoting student achievement, (e) integrated with school reform processes, (f) centered around teacher collaboration, and (g) sensitive to teachers' learning needs (Hawley & Valli, 1999). Yet Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2001) question this consensus and emphasize that these new visions for professional development are implemented in significantly different ways.

Joellen Killion (2000) offers insights into teacher preferences for learning in her discussion about eight schools that were selected as "model professional development schools" (p. 3). Killion's research showed teacher preferences for informal, diverse, and continuous development practices, concentrating primarily on their preferences for spontaneous rather than planned opportunities. Informal learning for the teachers in her study meant that teachers were able to determine how they preferred to learn, based on their work contexts. Killion (2000) discusses informal learning as "teacher planning, grade-level or department meetings, conversations

Table P.1   Summary of Professional Development Models

Characteristics	Training	Observation/ Coaching/Assessment	Improvement Process	Inquiry, Collaborative Action Research	Self-Directed	Mentoring
Target of development?	Information, knowledge, and skills development	New teaching methods through skills development	Increased knowledge and skills needed to participate in decision making	Improved decision-making skills, collegiality, collaboration	Increased self-direction pursuing self-interests	Psychological development of self through context of relationship
Types of initiatives	Most inservice, Hunter model	Peer coaching, clinical supervision, teacher evaluation	Developing new curricula, research into better teaching, improvement processes	Collaborative action research, collaborative research, study groups, roundtables	Self-directed learning, journal writing, evaluation with teacher, setting goals	Supportive, longer-term relationship
Goals	Improved student achievement, improved teacher knowledge, and skills	Improved student achievement by improving teacher performance	Improved classroom instruction practices and improved curriculum	Improved teaching practices and improved student learning	Improved collegiality and opportunities for reflection	Psychological development of self
Mode of delivery	Mostly "single-shot" experiences	Several conferences and/or meetings	Longer term, may span several years	Variable, depends upon context & current problems	Variable, depends upon context and current problems	Usually longer term, may extend over several years
Underlying assumptions	Techniques and skills are worthy of replication	Colleague observations will enhance reflection and performance	Adults learn most effectively when faced with important and meaningful problems to solve	Self-managed and nonhierarchical; teachers have knowledge and expertise that can be brought to inquiry	Adults are capable of judging their own learning needs; adults learn best when they are agents of their own development	Development occurs in the context of a relationship; mentoring skills can be taught to adults

SOURCE: This table adapted from Drago-Severson (1994), *What Does Staff Development Develop? How the Staff Development Literature Conceives Adult Growth* (p. 57).

about students, reflection on students' or teachers' work, problem solving, assisting each other, classroom-based action, research, coaching and supporting one another, making school-based decisions, developing assessments, curriculum, and instructional resources" (p. 3).

Creating these types of learning opportunities, Killion (2000) discovered, ignites and sustains teachers' excitement for "learning, growing, and changing their classroom practices" (p. 3). Furthermore, she contends that these types of experiences can be created in schools regardless of financial resources, provided that other nonfinancial resources, such as human resources and time, are available. She found that teachers said the "alignment of school goals with student learning needs" (p. 3) was also key to their development preferences and that adequate resources in terms of time and funding, as well as a "strong principal," were also important.

Blase and Blase (2001), among others (Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves, 1994; Killion, 2000; Rallis & Goldring, 2000), emphasize the key ingredients for support of teacher learning. They also advocate for a collaborative approach to leadership for teacher learning. This is critical because collaborative approaches provide greater access to pertinent information and alternative points of view, assist reflective practice, help cultivate a culture that supports learning and growth, and facilitate change. The principal's role in such an approach is as a facilitator (rather than the authority) who provides resources for effective work, including creating opportunities for teachers to engage in dialogue and reflection. But how do principals create these new and desired opportunities for teacher learning and development? This book addresses this question and illuminates the ways in which the principals in this study implemented four pillar practices to support adult learning and growth and designed reflective contexts in which teachers had opportunities to work collaboratively in support of their own and other's learning. In summary, research on professional development indicates that teachers seek collaborative, ongoing, informal, and democratic forums to support their learning.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Finding better ways to support those adults who teach and care for children should be a priority (Howe, 1993; Levine, 1989; Lieberman & Miller, 2001; Renyi, 1996). Current theories on school leadership and the principal's role in relation to adult learning suggest four possible ways in which principals can support adult development. Principals can (1) create a developmentally oriented school culture (Evans, 1996; Sarason, 1982, 1995); (2) build interpersonal relationships with teachers (Barth, 1990; Bolman & Deal, 1995); (3) emphasize teacher learning (Johnson, 1990, 1996; Johnson et al., 2001); and/or (4) focus on teachers' personal growth (Elmore, 2002; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1995). However,

the question of how *specific* leadership practices support teacher growth within a school has not been explored (Danielson, 1996; Donaldson, 2001; Guskey, 1999; Levine, 1989; Lieberman & Miller, 2001). Thus work that explores connections between adult development and leadership holds great promise.

Despite some theoretical discussions about the need to support adult growth and development in schools (Kegan, 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Levine, 1989, 1993; Oja 1991), the leadership roles and practices of principals in relation to adult development in school settings remains virtually unstudied (Boscardin & Jacobson, 1999; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998, 2002; Lieberman & Miller, 1999, 2001). Lieberman and Miller (2001) emphasize the need for developing a better understanding of *what* principals do to facilitate teacher development, as well as *how* they do it. Theories of adult development can be powerful tools for supporting the development of adults in schools (Brookfield, 1987; Cranton, 1996; Daloz, 1986, 1999; Glickman, 1990; Kegan, 1994; Levine, 1989; Mezirow, 1991, 2000; Oja, 1991).

The research on which this book is based employs such a constructive-developmental perspective to learn about how a group of principals effectively exercise their leadership in support of teacher learning within their schools. The need for practices and practical information—informed by theories of adult learning and development—about how to better support teacher learning is *real* and urgently needed. How do principals effectively support teacher learning? This book addresses this question. In presenting the principals' stories, I hope that I have painted a picture of what these practices are and why they work to effectively support adult learning, development, and growth.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Each chapter in this book is organized around three core themes: (1) the principal as principal teacher developer; (2) principles of adult learning and constructive-developmental theory (i.e., illuminating underpinnings of reflective practice, teaming, leadership roles, and mentoring and discussing how constructive-developmental theory can be employed as a powerful tool to inform practice); and (3) the school as a context for teacher learning.

In this research, I examined how 25 school leaders from public, Catholic, and independent schools with varying levels of financial resources across the United States understand the effectiveness of their leadership practices on behalf of supporting teacher learning and growth. The study was built upon lessons from an earlier four-and-a-half-year ethnography, in which I examined how one principal exercised leadership on behalf of teacher development and how adults in her school experienced her practices. This new research describes how the larger sample of

principals understand how their leadership practices work, and describes the challenges associated with implementing them in their particular school contexts. In addition, most chapters present a case from the earlier study to illustrate how particular initiatives work within one school and how teachers within that school make sense of these practices.

Chapter 1 introduces the need for a learning-oriented model of school leadership, exploring connections between adult learning, developmental theory, and leadership practices. I describe the setting for this research and its methodology. Next, I orient readers to the four pillar practices of my *learning-oriented* model of school leadership: teaming, providing leadership roles, engaging in collegial inquiry, and mentoring. The principals in this sample employ these mutually reinforcing, broad *forms of adult collaboration,* to different degrees, in support of adult learning and development.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the principles of psychologist Robert Kegan's (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory of adult growth and development, since I draw primarily on it throughout this book to interpret the principals' practices that support transformational learning. I also employ this theory to call attention to the diverse ways in which teachers might experience the practices constituting my learning-oriented model of school leadership and to show that supports for teacher growth need to take different forms, depending on individual needs. This chapter provides an overview of three key ideas from Kegan's (1982, 1994, 2000) framework: (1) theoretical principles, (2) three essential "ways of knowing" that are most common to adulthood and why they matter when considering how to support adult learning in schools, and (3) the central aspects of a "holding environment" (Kegan 1982, 1994).

Chapter 3 describes how the principals have conceived and enacted their roles in shaping positive school climates that support teacher learning. While nearly all principals voiced the importance of building a positive school climate by appreciating teachers, they have different priorities and ways of working to create cultures supportive of teacher learning. I discuss the challenges they encounter and how they define their leadership approaches, and present contextualized examples of practices they use for shaping school climates that support teacher learning. I also introduce three grounding ideas for their leadership in support of teacher learning: (1) sharing leadership (e.g., engaging in dialogue and inquiry, seeking feedback, participating in decision making); (2) building community (e.g., involving teachers in policy development, encouraging relationship building among adults, developing a collaborative mission and value sharing); and (3) embracing and helping adults to manage change, and foster diversity (e.g., annual evaluation and goal setting, ideas for curricular and policy improvement, and implementing changes).

Chapter 4 discusses the financial resource challenges that these principals encounter (serving in schools with varying levels of financial resources) and how these challenges influence their leadership practices with

regard to teacher learning. The principals named several important context-specific challenges, including school size, mission, student population, teaching staff, their own past experiences, and school location. But by far the most common challenges cited, across all school types and economic levels, were resources: *financial, human,* and *time.* This chapter provides examples of the creative strategies principals employed to garner needed resources and implement practices that effectively support that learning. In so doing, I highlight how the types of initiatives that the principals employ to support teacher learning are differently influenced by their schools' location on a continuum of financial resources**.**

Chapter 5 focuses on the use of "teaming" to promote personal and organizational learning through various forms of professional partnering and adult collaboration. I discuss principals' views of this practice and weave in the adult learning and developmental principles informing the practice that support teacher learning and growth. Through case examples (e.g., curriculum teams, literacy teams, technology teams, teachers teaching in teams, and diversity teams), I show how many of these principals organize their schools for teamwork and describe their thinking about how teaming opens communication, decreases isolation, encourages collaboration, creates interdependency, and builds relationships.

Chapter 6 discusses how these principals understand the practice of providing adults with leadership roles and how they can support transformational learning. Examples include principals' conceptions of how this practice invites teachers to share ownership of leadership, authority, and ideas in their roles as teacher leaders, curriculum developers, or school administrators as they work toward building community and promoting change.

Chapter 7 explores how most of these principals focus on inviting adults to engage in collegial inquiry within the school. According to the majority, setting up situations in which adults are regularly invited to reflect on and talk about aspects of their practice in the context of supportive relationships encourages self-analysis, which can improve individual and the school community's practice. In addition, collaborative goal setting, evaluation, and conflict resolution can facilitate both adult learning and the growth of the institution. I discuss how collegial inquiry connects to developmental principles and how it works in practice to support teacher learning and growth.

Chapter 8 describes how the principals, across school types and resource levels, see their mentoring programs as initiatives that support teacher learning and development. I discuss various programs, at different stages of development, and how program purposes vary from "mission spreading" to exchanging information to providing emotional support for new and experienced teachers and/or staff. I also show how the principals select mentors according to different criteria, including understanding of the mission, teaching experience, disciplinary focus, and/or other

characteristics (nonacademic), and how these programs work in their schools. I emphasize why principals value this practice and how they think it supports teacher growth, and illuminate the adult learning and developmental principles informing this practice.

Through an in-depth case, Chapter 9 illustrates how one principal and her school approached their self-study evaluation as an opportunity for learning. By exploring the experiences of one principal, a few teachers, administrators, and staff, I highlight how teaming, providing leadership roles, collegial inquiry, and mentoring—the four pillars of my school leadership learning-oriented model—can work together to create a context supportive of teacher learning and development. This chapter illustrates how a school's self-evaluation process provided an opportunity for broadening perspectives, building community, and helping adults manage change and foster diversity. It was also an opportunity for adults to share leadership, power, and decision-making authority, demonstrating how principals can tailor forms of support and challenge to individual needs. The power of combining these practices to support teacher learning and development with the self-study evaluation process, common in schools across this sample, can serve as a context for growth.

Chapter 10 explores the range of ways the principals discussed the need for, and their efforts toward, self-renewal while balancing the demands of multiple responsibilities and the complex context-specific challenges of leadership (e.g., school size, student population, teaching staff, their own past experiences, and school location). In addition, I highlight a particularly powerful finding: the importance of reflective practice to principals in better supporting their *own* development, while they support the development of other adults in the school.

Chapter 11 discusses the implications and promise of the four practices discussed in this book for other school leaders. These developmental initiatives are the pillars of a learning-oriented school leadership model that can be adapted and used effectively by school leaders in different settings. In stressing the importance of considering each school's particular characteristics in supporting the learning and growth of all its members, the chapter highlights a qualitatively different way of thinking about professional development and leadership supportive of adults' transformational learning.

In summary, these principals, who serve in low-, medium-, and rich-resource schools, work creatively and differently to support teacher learning effectively—despite the constraints, challenges, and complex demands of leadership in the 21st century. By focusing on the practices they employ to support adult learning and growth within their schools, the challenges they encounter, and their creative solutions in the midst of resource limitations, this work can serve as a map for other school leaders. Moreover, given the demands of leading in a nation with an increasingly diverse population, researchers, policymakers, school reformers, and

school principals themselves are searching for more effective ways to train and support school leaders. This book offers insight into another way to accomplish these important national goals. Helping principals to more effectively exercise leadership in support of teacher learning and development is an initiative I believe is directly tied to improving the quality of teaching and fostering children's growth and achievement.