Volume 11, Issue 1, February 2016

A monthly educational administration e-newsletter, keeping you linked and us green.

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UCEA Connections Editors
Amy Reynolds, Angel Nash, & Gopal Midha
UCEA Headquarters Graduate Research Assistants

UCEA Mission Statement

UCEA is a consortium of higher education institutions committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of schools and children.

We fulfill this purpose by:

- Promoting, sponsoring, and disseminating research on the essential problems of schooling and leadership practice;
- Improving the preparation and professional development of educational leaders and professors; and,
- Positively influencing local, state, and national educational policy.
2016 UCEA Convention Updates

The 30th annual UCEA Convention will be held at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan. The Convention will open on Thursday, November 17th and will close on Sunday, November 20th. The purpose of the 2016 UCEA Convention is to engage participants in discussions about research, policy, and practice in education with a specific focus on educational leadership.

Members of the 2016 Convention Planning Committee are UCEA President Elect April Peters-Hawkins (University of Georgia), Wayne Lewis (University of Kentucky), Kristy Cooper (Michigan State University), and Dana Thompson Dorsey (University of North Carolina).

Watch for more forthcoming information on the release of the Call for Proposals!

2016 UCEA Graduate Student Summit Updates

The 5th annual UCEA Graduate Student Summit (GSS) will be held at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan. The summit will commence at 1:00pm on Wednesday, November 16th and conclude at 12:00pm on Thursday, November 17th. The purpose of the 2016 UCEA GSS is to provide graduate students a space to engage in authentic dialogue about their scholarly work. This summit will offer opportunities to meet and network with graduate students and faculty, to present your work and receive feedback on your research. It will include:

- Paper sessions, in which you will share your research and receive constructive feedback.
- Mentor feedback sessions, in which you will get direct feedback from distinguished UCEA faculty on a paper that you would like to publish, a proposal, or your dissertation research plan.
- Networking sessions,
- Social gatherings for graduate students, and
- More to come on additional session types in the full GSS Call for Proposals!

Watch for more details on the release of the full UCEA GSS Call for Proposals on the GSS website and Graduate Student list serv (sign up here to receive messages)!
2016 Convention Hotel

We are proud to announce the 2016 Convention Hotel – the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan! Recently renovated, it is located on the river walk and includes a food court and Starbucks. Room rates are as follows:

Single/Double/+: $159.00

For the UCEA room rates, please use this passkey to explore the hotel and make your reservations online, or call (313) 568-8000.

Attention PSRS!: Call for Nominations for the 2016 Excellence in Educational Leadership Awards

The Award

The Executive Committee of the University Council for Educational Administration is asking for nominees for the 19th Annual Educational Leadership Award, in recognition of practicing school administrators who have made significant contributions to the improvement of administrator preparation. This distinguished school administrator should demonstrate an exemplary record of supporting school administrator preparation efforts. This award, one of national recognition, provides a unique mechanism for UCEA universities to build good will and recognize the contributions of practitioners to the preparation of educational leaders. Funds to establish the Educational Leadership Award were originally donated to UCEA by the Network of University Community School Districts, a consortium of school districts in university towns. However, UCEA now fully funds this important initiative.

The Procedure

The UCEA Plenum Representative (PSR) at each participating university should consult with colleagues and other constituencies designated by faculty to identify a worthy recipient. The PSR (or a designee) should plan to make the award presentation at an annual departmental, college, or university ceremony. The nomination deadline is Monday, March 28, 2016.

After that time, UCEA will provide official certificates of recognition to universities who have designated a recipient. UCEA will publish the names of the award recipients and their sponsoring university in the UCEA Review and place the recipient’s names on the UCEA mailing list for one year. If desired, UCEA also will provide a boilerplate press release for announcing the award recipient to news agencies; however, the university may choose to coordinate this announcement through its public relations office in order to include additional information about the award presentation.

To nominate a candidate, please navigate to the following link and follow instructions for the following:

- Navigate to: http://www.ucea.org/opportunities/excellence-educational-leadership-award-2/
- Upload a letter of nomination
- Complete the fields in the electronic nomination form which include specific bio data fields and a field for a 1-3 sentence Statement of Significant Contribution

Nominations must be received by

Monday, March 28, 2016

Please email ucea@virginia.edu or call (434) 243-1041 with questions

UCEA Welcomes New Member Institutions

UCEA extends a warm welcome to our newest Member Institution, George Mason University!
2016 WILLIAM L. BOYD NATIONAL EDUCATION POLITICS WORKSHOP

Sponsored by the Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration

UCEA and the Politics of Education Association are pleased to invite your participation in the 2016 William L. Boyd National Education Politics Workshop for emerging scholars. At this time we are accepting registrations for both scholars and mentors.

Call for Emerging Scholars
(students and new academics/researchers)

The Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration invite graduate students and recent doctoral graduates to a special 2 1/2-hour workshop. The William L. Boyd National Educational Politics Workshop, scheduled on the first afternoon of the AERA annual meeting, will give emerging scholars (students and new academics/researchers) the opportunity to learn about current and promising research in the politics of education field and interact with leading politics of education scholars.

Registration—Emerging Scholars CLICK HERE

The Politics of Education Association was established in 1969 to foster and support research on political processes, policy, and outcomes relevant to education, to collect and disseminate data, research, and findings on politics of education to policy makers, practitioners, and scholars in the field of education and elsewhere, and to unite scholars, practitioners, policy makers, researchers, and others interested in the pursuit of research and development on educational politics, policy, and related issues.

Call for Mentors

The Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration invite its members to serve as mentors to current doctoral students and/or recent doctoral graduates. The Boyd Workshop aims to connect doctoral students and recent graduates with mentors in order to share their expertise and experiences in the discipline. Please note that volunteering will require attendance at a 2 1/2 hour workshop held on the first afternoon of AERA's annual meeting in Washington, DC. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please complete the electronic form found at the link below—even if you have served as a mentor at previous Boyd Workshops. Doing so confirms your willingness to serve as a mentor in Washington, DC in 2016.

Registration—Mentors CLICK HERE

When/Where: The workshop will take place on Friday, April 8th, 2016 from 3:30-6:00 pm at a location convenient to the AERA conference hotels.

Eligibility: Students with an interest in educational politics and currently enrolled in graduate schools in the U.S. or abroad are welcome to attend as are educational researchers who earned their doctoral degrees after March 1, 2015. There is no fee to attend, but space is limited. Applicants whose research interests are not clearly tied to education politics will not be accepted. The opportunity to submit an application will end January 17, 2016 at 5:00 pm or when we reach maximum capacity.

Questions: If you have any questions, please contact Dr. W. Kyle Ingle at william.ingle@louisville.edu or Dr. Dana Mitra at dmitra@psu.edu
Congratulations to the 2016 Clark Scholars! The David L. Clark National Graduate Student Research Seminar in Educational Administration & Policy, sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), Divisions A and L of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), and SAGE Publications, brings emerging educational administration and policy scholars and noted researchers together for two days of presentations, generative discussion, and professional growth. Many of the graduates of this seminar are now faculty members at major research institutions across the globe. This year, it will be held in April 2016 in Washington, D.C., prior to the annual AERA conference.

### 2016 Clark Scholars

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emily Anderson</td>
<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Austin</td>
<td>University of Notre Dame</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Baker</td>
<td>Texas State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marsha Cale</td>
<td>Old Dominion University</td>
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<td>Yvette Cantu</td>
<td>Texas State University</td>
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<td>Pedro De La Cruz</td>
<td>New York University</td>
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<td>Sean Dotson</td>
<td>Washington State University</td>
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<td>Dorothy Egbufor</td>
<td>Howard University</td>
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<td>Loverty Erickson</td>
<td>Montana State University</td>
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<td>Stephanie Forman</td>
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<td>Asia Fuller-Hamilton</td>
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<td>Sarah Galey</td>
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<td>Wellinthorn Garcia</td>
<td>Hofstra University</td>
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<td>Emily Germain</td>
<td>University of Texas at Austin</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Gil</td>
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<td>Sarah Guthery</td>
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<td>Michelle Hall</td>
<td>University of Southern California</td>
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<td>Ayesha Hashim</td>
<td>University of Southern California</td>
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<td>Kortney Hernandez</td>
<td>Loyola Marymount University</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Jekanowski</td>
<td>Florida Atlantic University</td>
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<td>Gregory Johnson</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</td>
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<td>Emily Kern</td>
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<td>Andrew Leland</td>
<td>Rutgers University</td>
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<td>Julia Mahfouz</td>
<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
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<td>Jason Neuss</td>
<td>University of Louisville</td>
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<td>Adina Newman</td>
<td>George Washington University</td>
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<td>Frank Perrone</td>
<td>University of Virginia</td>
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<td>Amanda Potterton</td>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
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<td>Jennifer Preston</td>
<td>North Carolina State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Quinn</td>
<td>Oakland University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Ramlackhan</td>
<td>University of South Florida</td>
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<td>Joanna Sánchez</td>
<td>University of Texas at Austin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maureen Sanders-Brunner</td>
<td>Ball State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teresa Schwartz</td>
<td>University of Massachusetts at Boston</td>
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<td>Alea Thompson</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
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<td>Sivan Tuchman</td>
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<td>Robert Vagi</td>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
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<td>Pamela VanHorn</td>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Wachen</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annette Walker</td>
<td>Western University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathleen Winn</td>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rui Yan</td>
<td>University of Utah</td>
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### 2016 Clark Seminar Faculty

**UCEA**
- Sarah Nelson Baray, Texas State University
- Monica Byrne-Jimenez, Hofstra University
- Donald Hackmann, University of Illinois
- Wayne Lewis, University of Kentucky

**AERA - Division A**
- Terah Venzant Chambers, Michigan State University
- Terrance Green, University of Texas at Austin
- Hans Klar, Clemson University
- Penny Tenuto, University of Idaho

**AERA – Division L**
- Edward Fierros, Villanova University
- David Garcia, Arizona State University
- Luis Huerta, Columbia University
- Janelle Scott, University of California—Berkeley
Call for papers—Research in Educational Administration & Leadership (TheREAL)

Research in Educational Administration and Leadership (REAL)—an official publication of Turkish Educational Administration Research & Development Association—is now open for submission.

The REAL is a peer-reviewed international journal publishes papers in English. The REAL embraces manuscripts of all research methods including quantitative, qualitative, mix-methods studies, case studies, reviews, and new practices of research. The Editorial team also welcomes conceptual papers seeking to address a wide spectrum of issues in the practice and theory of educational administration and leadership.

Details at http://dergipark.ulakbim.gov.tr/eyla/index
UCEA Presents
Café UCEA
An audience participation talk show streamed live on Google+ page and YouTube!
or http://bit.ly/CafeUCEA3-1-YT
Send questions and comments before or during the event on Twitter or Google+ with the hashtag #CafeUCEA

Staying engaged, keeping it short!

Participants:

Edward Fuller
Associate Professor
Penn State University

Sheneka Williams
Associate Professor
University of Georgia

Facilitator:

John Nash
Associate Professor
University of Kentucky,
UCEA Associate Director for Communications

01.28.16
2:30PM, EDT
What the Research Says
About Measuring Principal Effectiveness

Listen in to examine state policies and political contexts concerning principal evaluation and preparation programs!

In this episode of Café UCEA we will discuss new findings on measuring principal effectiveness in the recent special issue of the Journal of Research on Leadership Education.

Join John Nash as he discusses this with Ed Fuller, of Penn State University, and Sheneka Williams, of the University of Georgia, live on Google Hangouts On Air and the UCEA YouTube channel, Thursday, January 28 at 2:30 PM Eastern.
UCEA would like to announce a new report for policy makers and professors of educational leadership.

**Now available online.**

Save the date for a webinar about the report on February 23rd!

The Policymaker’s Guide to Research-Based Policy for Principal Preparation Program Approval and Licensure explores code, rules and regulations, and State Board of Education documents for all 50 states and the District of Columbia and provides detailed state profiles as well as state-to-state comparisons of 9 policy areas and 22 sub standards that support the development of effective leaders.
Successful School Leadership
International Perspectives

Edited by Petros Pashiardis & Olof Johansson

"The challenge of synthesizing and summarizing international perspectives on "successful/effective" school leadership is a daunting task that the authors have completed masterfully. The chapters within this book respect key aspects of context related to understandings of successful/effective school leadership including local, regional, national, political, cultural, historic, and economic factors. I find this book to be an excellent resource for students in leadership preparation programs with an appreciation for difference and diversity. The authors acknowledge the limitations in the various case studies of leadership presented. Yet each chapter provides important perspectives on the meaning of successful leadership and its practices within a global frame." Paul V. Bredehoef, Emeritus Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

Successful School Leadership identifies the characteristics, behaviours and practices of successful and effective school leaders through the adoption of a systemic view of the quality of school organizations. Edited by Petros Pashiardis and Olof Johansson, chapters explore the similarities and differences between successful and effective school leaders and across various socioeconomic contexts. Capitalizing on the experiences of the international contributor team, this book will inform the preparation and further development provided to school leaders in an era where ministries of education, universities and multinational organisations (such as the OECD) are increasingly interested in the leadership of our schools.

Systematic analyses of multi-perspective data provided from around the world and offers the readers a comprehensive picture of the key behaviours and practices central to successful and effective school leadership. An original contribution to the theoretical perspectives on the subject is derived through insights from empirical research, case studies, and bibliographical literature from the field.

Petros Pashiardis is Professor of Educational Leadership at the Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus. He has been the President of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM) (2004-2008) and a Fulbright Scholar during his doctoral studies in the USA.

Olof Johansson is Professor of Political Science and chair of the Centre for Principal Development at Umeå University, Sweden, and an executive member on the board of governors of the Consortium for the Study of Leadership and Ethics in Education (CSLEE), a program center of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) based at the University of Virginia (USA).
20% discount with this flyer!

Education Policy Perils
Tackling the Tough Issues

Edited by Christopher H. Tienken, Seton Hall University, USA and Carol A. Mullen, Virginia Tech, USA

Education Policy Perils provides educators and those interested in the future of public education with research-based and practical analyses of some of the foremost issues facing public schools today. The collection, written by experienced scholar-practitioners, offers insights that include descriptions of challenges facing educators and recommendations for overcoming them with an eye toward more successful policy and better implementation. The authors apply their expertise to a range of issues from international testing to policy challenges related to curriculum on the state and national levels. This volume is a vital resource during a pivotal time of major changes in education policy.

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For more information visit: www.routledge.com/9781138898196
Poco a Poco: Leadership Practices Supporting Productive Communities of Practice in Schools Serving the New Mainstream

By Martin Scanlan, Minsong Kim, Mary Bridget Burns, & Caroline Vuilleumier

Culturally and linguistically diverse students frequently do not receive equitable educational opportunities. Schools across public and private sectors that are striving to ameliorate this problem typically work in isolation, not collaboratively. This article examines how communities of practice emerge within a network of schools striving to effectively educate these students. We employ qualitative case study methodology drawing data from relational network survey data, archival documents, interpersonal communications, and field notes. In cycles of coding, we analyze these data to identify the learning architecture that structures the communities of practice within this network.

The Role of District Office Leaders in the Adoption and Implementation of the Common Core State Standards in Elementary Schools

By Francesca T. Durand, Hal A. Lawson, Kristen Campbell Wilcox, & Kathryn S. Schiller

This multiple case study investigated district leaders’ orientations and strategies in their elementary schools proceeded with state-mandated implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). We identified differences between schools achieving above-predicted outcomes on state CCSS assessments (“odds-beaters”) and schools achieving predicted outcomes (“typical performers”). The implementation of multiple race-to-the-top (RTTT) innovations recommends a theoretical hybrid consisting of policy implementation theory, leadership theory, organizational change theory, and organizational learning theory, especially learning-focused leadership strategies such as bridging, brokering, and buffering strategies for crafting coherence across organizational boundaries. This mixed methods study used statistical regressions for sampling and interviews to collect data. Inductive and deductive methods were used to identify themes that might differentiate the two kinds of sample schools and their district leaders.

Examining Administrators’ Instructional Feedback to High School Math and Science Teachers

By Chad R. Lochmiller

The purpose of this study was to explore high school administrators’ instructional leadership in math and science. Specifically, the study explored the feedback administrators provided to math and science teachers as part of their instructional supervision. A central goal for this study was to determine how differences in these content areas influenced the feedback administrators provided to teachers. The study was completed in five, comprehensive high schools located in the western United States. A multicase qualitative research design was used to complete this investigation. The study included more than 50 individual participants, including school administrators and classroom teachers.

District Leaders’ Framing of Educator Evaluation Policy

By Sarah L. Woulfin, Morgan L. Donaldson, & Richard Gonzales

Educator evaluation systems have recently undergone scrutiny and reform, and district and school leaders play a key role in interpreting and enacting these systems. This article uses framing theory to understand district leaders’ interpretation and advancement of a state’s new educator evaluation policy. The article draws on qualitative data from 14 Connecticut districts to highlight the relationship between state policy, district leadership, and the ideas about educator evaluation making their way into schools. We employed frame analysis to systematically analyze interview data from district leaders responsible for evaluation reform.

Work Environments and Labor Markets: Explaining Principal Turnover Gap Between Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

By Min Sun & Yongmei Ni

Knowledge about principals’ leadership roles in charter schools’ success has become more important as the number of charter schools increases and as we have learned more about the influence of principal leadership on school effectiveness. To contribute to the limited empirical literature on the principal labor market, this study explores the reasons for the disparity of turnover rates between charter school principals and their counterparts in traditional public schools (TPSs). It focuses on the differential distributions of observable factors, including principal characteristics, principal leadership practices, school contexts, and working conditions. It also examines how the associations between these observables and the likelihood of principal turnover differ between these two types of schools. This study uses data on a nationally representative sample of principals from the Schools and Staffing Survey in the 2007-2008 school year and its following-year Principal Follow-up Survey. The main analytic strategies include logit models and the Fairlie nonlinear decomposition technique.
It's Not Funny: A Case Study
By Sylvia Méndez-Morse
This case study may be used with personnel supervision, school law, and other school leadership courses. It describes the behavior and actions of one teacher toward another. Student discussions can focus on supervision, workplace mobbing, workplace bullying, as well as sexual harassment. Students should focus on a school leader’s role in such situations.

Principals and School Counselors: Separate Entities in Identifying Achievement Gaps in College Readiness for African American Students With Disabilities
By Laura A. Roberts & Tamisha M. Bouknight
This case illustrates an example of how one school relied solely on aggregate data and failed to address the college readiness needs of African American students with disabilities. However, the way in which the school counselor identified this opportunity gap may not have been the most ethical approach, and now she is faced with a dilemma.

“That’s Not in My Job Description!”: Personnel Management in the Accountability Era
By Corrie Stone-Johnson
This case examines the challenges facing a high school principal in a struggling suburban district in the Rust Belt. This school is faced with declining achievement of entering students and a loss of both teaching and support staff. In this context, the principal struggles with the assignment of non-professional duties, which do not fall under the work of either teachers or counselors but are critical to the successful operation of the school.

Strong One Lasting One: An Elementary School Principal’s Ability to Establish a Positive School Culture by Building Trust
By Goldy Brown III
Trust is a key element in improving learning and teaching. Reviewing research on the topic of establishing trust by school leaders illuminates actions needed to make a positive difference in the culture of a school. Using the concept of mindfulness, the instructional leader was able to regain the trust of the community, parents, faculty, and staff.

A New Supervisor With a New Agenda: A Principal Ponders Political Options and Risks
By Mary Lynne Derrington & Donald Larsen
A tenured respected principal learns that supervisory relationships with staff are only one side of the leadership coin. The other side turns up when a new assistant superintendent is assigned as his supervisor. Problems are imminent when the supervisor seems ready to usurp the principal’s traditional decision-making authority.

There’s Battle Lines Being Drawn
By Gary Schumacher & Craig Hammonds
This case is written for graduate students in a superintendency seminar course, a school-community relations course, or a school leadership course, such as a school politics course. It presents a highly charged school referendum issue in a school district that is comprised of two distinctly different communities. An initial referendum to construct a middle school failed by a wide margin.

Culturally Conscious Curriculum: The Fight Between State and Federal Policies in Tucson
By Ann E. Blankenship & Leslie Ann Locke
This case study outlines the struggle for desegregation and the adoption of culturally responsive curricula in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) as it attempted to balance state politics and federal court oversight. The case offers a detailed illustration of the political and legal events that led up to the adoption, elimination, and reinstatement of the TUSD Mexican American Studies (MAS) program.

Analyzing Data and Asking Questions at Shell School, Sea County Florida
By Charles Vanover
This case discusses early work to implement the Common Core State Standards at a fictitious school in Florida. The case is designed to support students’ efforts to use school accountability data for inquiry and to conceptualize change in schools where previous leaders’ efforts were not successful.

Gang Activity on Campus: A Crisis Response Case Study
By Mabangane Shaw & Sarah Meaney
This case study challenges readers to consider a contemporary issue for campus threat assessment and emergency preparedness: gang presence on college campuses. A body of research examining the presence of gangs and gang activity on college campuses has developed, revealing that gangs pose a viable threat for institutions of higher education. The question of whether and how to confront this issue raises questions regarding student safety, success and retention, as well as violence on campus.
Journal Research on Leadership Education
Editors: Gordon Gates and Sharon Kruse
December 2015; 10(3) - New issue!

Special Issue: The Policy Context of Race to the Top and the Future of Principal Preparation Programs
Guest editors: Sheneka M. Williams and Edward J. Fuller

Introduction to Special Issue
By Edward J. Fuller & Sheneka Williams

Evaluating State Principal Evaluation Plans Across the United States
By Edward J. Fuller, Liz Hollingworth, & Jing Liu
Recent federal legislation has created strong incentives for states to adopt principal evaluation systems, many of which include new measures of principal effectiveness such as estimates of student growth and changes in school climate. Yet, there has been little research on principal evaluation systems and no state-by-state analysis of the principal evaluation systems adopted at the behest of the legislation. This study uses survey data and document review to assess the components of principal evaluation systems in the 50 states and Washington, D.C. Finally, based on recent research, this study critiques the various components of these new evaluation systems.

The State of State Policies for Principal Preparation Program Approval and Candidate Licensure
By Erin Anderson & Amy Reynolds
Policies for principal preparation and licensure are important levers for improving school leadership. By developing a rubric of research-based practices, this University Council of Educational Administration study aims to provide a formative tool for policy makers. Using a policy analysis frame by Roach et al., this study explores the state code, rules and regulations, and accompanying state board/department of education documents to describe state policies for principal preparation program approval and candidate licensure. There is variation in the extent to which states have adopted policies in these areas. Proportionately, more states have adopted policies for licensure despite greater empirical evidence for preparation program approval.

Concluding Article
The Future of Principal Preparation and Principal Evaluation: Reflections of the Current Policy Context for School Leaders
By Sheneka M. Williams

Pedagogy and Practice
By Gordon Gates & Sharon Kruse

Facilitating Administrators’ Instructional Leadership Through the Use of a Technology Integration Discussion Protocol
By Scott McLeod
Digital learning tools are increasingly prevalent in classrooms, yet too often technology integration efforts by educators replicate rather than transform traditional instructional practices. Opportunities to take advantage of the new affordances that technologies bring to the learning environment thus become forfeit. Administrators’ use of a targeted discussion protocol can be helpful for facilitating analysis and revision of educators’ technology-infused lessons and units. This article describes how administrators in schools and preservice preparation programs can utilize such a protocol to enhance their instructional leadership and foster the success of their schools’ technology integration and implementation efforts.

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https://members.ucea.org/member_journals
THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LEADER

Making Classroom Observations More Efficient – And Effective

School administrators often face the challenge of developing and implementing personalized and engaging teacher observation routines that are not viewed solely as top-down mandates. Recently, systems have been established and utilized that enable instructional leaders to collect and record classroom data that prompts self-reflection and collaborative conversations amongst colleagues. The brief and unobtrusive routines allow school leaders to pinpoint what the qualities that make a difference in student success and prompt them on what to look for in classroom interactions. Such systems result in visible leadership, professional effectual learning decisions, self-reflection, instructional conversations between leaders and teachers, and meaningful coaching and mentoring.

Keywords: instructional leaders, collaboration

STUDENT LEARNING AND CURRICULUM

Tennessee Bill Would Close Some Virtual Schools

A Tennessee lawmaker is working to close virtual schools that are contracted to for-profit management corporations. The proposed bill, HB2360, seeks to ban virtual schooling that is not of high quality, as proven by the school’s academic challenges. For example, one K-12 school has had the lowest possible academic progress since it opened five years ago. Some of the nine public virtual schools in Tennessee were developed locally. The schools’ missions, sizes, enrollment requirements, and academic success vary.

Keywords: online learning, low performing schools, school management

TEACHERS

Teacher Protests Close Dozens of Detroit Schools

Over 60 public schools in Detroit, Michigan were forced to close for a day earlier this month as a result of teachers’ coordinated efforts to call in sick for the day. The planned absences, known as “sickouts,” were staged by teachers across the district that serves approximately 46,000 students. Teachers and union leaders are against the emergency management of the city’s school system. They are also opposed to Michigan Governor’s plan to split the debt-ridden school system into two systems. The Governor’s proposed budget overhaul would include paying down the half a billion dollars in debt, educating students, and eventually turning the school system back over to an elected board.

Keywords: teacher sickouts, budget overhauls, elected school boards

RECENT RESEARCH

Have E-Days Gained Enough Traction to Usurp the Snow Day?

Schools systems around the country and abroad are taking different approaches to the ways students are expected to spend their time when they are absent from school. Increasingly, schools are implementing expectations that call for students to attend school and complete assignments remotely using the internet. The model, known as “e-days,” is being used by in different ways by districts to supplement instruction when students miss school due to inclement weather and teacher professional development. While districts are acknowledging that internet access can affect the degree to which students can participate, preliminary research shows that some students who are using e-learning demonstrate successful outcomes. Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, New Jersey and Alabama are currently using e-days.

Keywords: online learning, remote instruction

REFORM

Massachusetts Enlists Districts in School Turnaround Efforts

Several elementary schools in a diverse, urban Massachusetts district have successfully complete the turnaround process. They have improved their state school ratings performance over the span of four years to become some of the best schools in their district. Massachusetts has provided both pressure and support to help the turnaround progress, and it has implemented a five year old accountability plan that assesses and labels both its schools and its districts. As noted by the Council of Chief State School Officers, Massachusetts is one of at least 11 states that uses the district rating accountability system.

Keywords: district rating, accountability, turnaround approach
Puerto and eight other states get plans approved for equal access to excellent educators

To ensure that all students have equal access to a high-quality education, the U.S. Department of Education announced the approval of plans from Puerto Rico, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Oregon, South Dakota and Texas to ensure equitable access to excellent educators. The plans for District of Columbia and 42 other states have already been approved.

The eight states and Puerto Rico who received approval of their plans were considered to be implementing strategies to problems that meet local needs. Each of these states engaged stakeholder groups to ensure that these plans include strategies towards eliminating identified equity gaps and are meaningful for the students, teachers and communities in which they'll be implemented.

The plans by the states focused on supporting, strengthening, or modifying teacher preparation and development programs and increasing data-driven decision-making. These plans are required by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which was reauthorized into law as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

ESSA provides $250 million towards preschool programs

The Every Student Succeeds Act has strengthened the ties between federal education policy and early-childhood programs carried out at the state and local levels by a $250 million grant program.

The law makes explicit that schools can and should collaborate with preschool programs on issues such as teacher training and transitioning children into kindergarten. This is considered a welcome change as compared to NCLB which made similar collaborations difficult.

At present, 18 states are planning to use around $250 million through the program administered by the federal Education Department. The funding would be going to states that have robust preschool programs and to those whose programs are just beginning, and is intended to improve access to high-quality pre-K for children from low-income families.

Keywords: Equal access, Educators, ESSA

Kentucky

School readiness severely impacted by poverty

Many Kentucky students were found at a disadvantage for learning before they began school, according to Kindergarten Readiness Screener data released by the Kentucky Department of Education. Only about 50 percent of the students who entered kindergarten in 2015-16 were found ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promoted their success.

Poverty seemed to be the key factor affecting student readiness. Nearly 64 percent of the students entering kindergarten in Kentucky in 2015 qualified for free- and reduced-price meals. Further, research showed that children from low-income families had a 525 word vocabulary by age 3 which was half that of children from middle and higher income families, and which put them at least two grade levels behind their peers when they entered kindergarten.

Keywords: poverty, school readiness

Maine

District leaders to get training to implement measures of student growth

Maine DOE plans to offer Student Learning Objective (SLO) training to school administrative units (SAUs) in February 2016 at four locations throughout the state. The SLOs are considered important measures of student learning and growth.

Teams from SAU team members would be provided a comprehensive overview of SLOs and would be provided knowledge of research-based approaches to SLO implementation, turn-key activities to facilitate with their SAUs and electronic resources to support districts in their SLO implementation. The trainings are expected to enrich the understanding of the SAUs on the research behind SLOs, what makes a quality SLO and how they can connect SLOs to professional practice.

Keywords: Learning Objectives, District leaders, Professional Development
MARYLAND

State Board reaches out to public in search for next State Superintendent

The Maryland State Board of Education is seeking public input as it begins the search for the next State Superintendent of Schools. Working with Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA), the Board has scheduled a series of public forums to help identify the abilities and skills necessary in the future Superintendent. The forums, facilitated by a member of HYA, will be held at five locations throughout the State. In addition, an online survey has been posted to collect information.

Keywords: Superintendent, public-private, recruitment

Record student enrollment in Maryland

Maryland’s public school enrollment hit a record high of nearly 880,000 students in 2015-16, with school systems along the Baltimore-Washington corridor largely driving the increase. The increase in enrollment has been steady since 2008.

Since 2008, enrollment in Maryland’s public schools has climbed by 35,740 students.

The school system in Maryland is likely to grow by an additional 10,000 students during the next six years. In districts like Montgomery which saw the largest increase, the rising enrollment is considered an outcome of increase in birthrates, family migration into Montgomery and more populated grades of younger students maturing through the school system.

Keywords: enrollment growth, public schools

 MASSACHUSETTS

Performance Assessment for Leaders a must for Massachusetts school leaders

In October 2015, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education launched full implementation of the Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL). PAL was developed in partnership with Bank Street College of Education and key stakeholder groups. In 2013-2014, the Department piloted and field tested the performance assessment tasks that make up PAL.

All principal and assistant principal candidates seeking licensure are now required to complete and pass four performance tasks that reflect the work of school leaders. These include developing a school vision and improvement plan, fostering a professional learning culture, instructional leadership and improving family and community involvement in schools (source: http://ma-pal.com/).

To support school leaders who are mentoring principal/assistant principal candidates, there is also a PAL Toolkit for School Leader Mentors providing overviews about the assessment, references to PAL resources, and descriptions of what PAL looks like in a school during implementation.

Keywords: Principal licensure, performance rubric

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See the ECS State Education Policy Database for legislative updates by date and topic.
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