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School Boards, Superintendents, and Students: Making Large Impacts

As we look to the many stakeholders in education and a variety of roles, this edition takes a look at school boards, superintendents, teachers' evaluations as a major role of administrators. Additionally, one article showcases the factors that affect students' decisions in an educational leadership doctoral program as they access a terminal degree in our field.

In the article, *Ima Hogg, The Houston School Board and a Collaborative Model of School Leadership, 1943-1949*, **Linda Black** provides a narrative on how important leadership is from a woman's point of view. During Ima Hogg's first school board term she was placed on two committees and her leadership skills were amplified. She used a collaborative model in obtaining information from the community. Ima Hogg described the collaborative nature of schools as, "...all the personnel and departments in the schools cooperate in helping the child use what the school has to offer..." In sum, Ima demonstrated her leadership skills in re-vitalizing the Visiting Teacher Program; in organizing resources and people to support the programs, and in using a collaborative model in working with those in the field with those affected by the program. The work includes dedication to school boards in our past.

The next article, *Superintendent and School Board Relations: Impacting Achievement through Collaborative Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities*, **Greg Weiss, Nate Templeton, Ray Thompson, and Joshua Tremont** share emergent research to inform practitioners regarding practices that lead to effective school board – superintendent relations. Implications for the professional practice are *first*, the role of the superintendent is changing with a growing influence at a macro level; *second*, school board-superintendent discord occurs when there is misuse of position; *third*, the impact the community has on the superintendent-school board working relationship is dynamic and fluid; and *fourth*, the school board and superintendent have the enormous task of providing a quality education to the students in the community.

Following this, **Andy Nixon, Abbot Packard, and Margaret Dam** provide a study on *Teacher Contract Non-renewal in the Rocky Mountains*. The Rocky Mountain States are classified as Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah. The study answered four research questions: 1) What is the priority of reasons that school principals would recommend non-renewal of a teacher's contract? 2) Which behaviors do principals observe most frequently from ineffective teachers? 3) Which complications obscure school principals' ability to deal with ineffective teachers? 4) Are principals' responses unique based on demographic differences in principal years of experience, type of school, or location of school? Ethical violations and inappropriate conduct were identified as the most likely reasons principals would initiate a contract non-renewal. Principals reported that lack of instructional skills is observed most frequently from ineffective teachers. In answering the third question, time is reported as a primary barrier.

In the article, *Superintendents and Professional Development: Voices from the Field*, **Juan Niño, Mike Boone, Israel Aguilar, and Dessynie Edwards** focus on understanding the role of the school leadership and superintendents, in providing quality professional development to improve instruction for all students. Professional development of a comprehensive school district change effort is described. This qualitative work examines the leadership behavior of the superintendent in providing quality professional development to improve student achievement in the school district. Participants were five districts in Texas of various sizes. It was found that superintendents who demonstrate leadership in professional development establish policies and organizational structures that support continuous learning for all staff members. They ensure that resources of time, money, and personnel needed for professional development are provided and match district-wide goals.

In the article, *Factors Affecting Doctoral Program Selection*, **Lesley F. Leach, Pam Winn, Susan Erwin, and Liza Benedict** endeavor to answer the following questions: What factors influenced doctoral-level students' decisions to attend particular Educational Leadership programs? Did the factors differ by students' age, ethnicity, and gender? The participant responses were analyzed descriptively in aggregate as well as disaggregated by gender and age. The participants were asked to identify factors that influenced their choice to attend their current Educational Leadership doctoral program from a prepopulated list. The top three factors were convenience, delivery of coursework, and tuition cost. The implications for practice would be how best to market the Educational Leadership doctoral program so you can recruit an adequate amount of quality students. Finally, it was found that students are concerned about the delivery of coursework. The majority of students desire a mixture of online and face-to-face learning.

The article, *Impacts of Teacher Evaluations: The importance of Building Capacity Through Excellence in The Application of the Teacher Evaluation Process*, **Susan Nix and Gary Biggam** state the purpose of this study was a concern for the interaction between a system of appraisal and the impact of the social system of a school on the outcome or results of a formal teacher evaluation. The content analysis utilized historical data. Then the information was compiled into a comparative analysis table whereby the PDAS could be examined in comparison. Most all teachers are being reported as excellent, but the lack of student success to the same degree indicated this impossibility. If the connection between teaching effectiveness and student success is accepted, then something is not working. PDAS encourages the multiple methods of assessment in addition to the 45 minute formal observation. Decisions made for contract continuation should be based on consistent data collected over time with support and intervention to remedy the situation.

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