K-12 Leadership and the Educational Administration Curriculum: A Theory of Preparation*

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Abstract

Increasingly, education schools are being blamed for intractable social problems they did not create and cannot solve. They have been faulted for the quality of the people who choose to become teachers and administrators. They have been blamed for the woes of low-performing schools and school systems. They have been criticized for their inability to close the achievement gap between the most advantaged and most disadvantaged children in America. No other professional school is held similarly responsible.



NOTE: This module has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of the Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a scholarly contribution to the knowledge base in educational administration.

How did educational administration become the brunt of so much negative press, and why is it perceived to have failed so miserably in the eyes of so many? What is it that teachers, principals, and superintendents do not know and can not do in their professional role that fuels this ongoing debate about poorly run schools and weak leadership? How does one reconcile the positive view of education as an equalizing force in America and the cynical view of education as an institution out of step with present day needs? Are educational administration professors and graduate programs so out of touch with the P-12 schools that the training received through university programs is only marginally utilitarian to those who lead America's schools? The Levine (2005) quote above, and his basic report, illustrates that the quality of university-based

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administrator preparation programs are considered to be a primary weakness in the nation's educational systems. University-based programs in educational administration have been undergoing scrutiny and have been encouraged to improve even by essentially educational organizations such as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) and the related Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and various derivative groups. However, the questions remain: how did we get to the present; what knowledge base should the curriculum reflect and; what, in fact, does a good program look like, and how should our programs change?

The programs that will emerge over the next twenty-five years will not be exotic or be formulated by accreditation bodies or by university planners. They will emerge from the foundation of the profession which is well documented; grounded in practical, cultural, and educational experience; and from knowledge gained by observing successful schools.

The History

Three constructs in the history of educational administration have evolved during its formative development and each helps point to the possible future of the profession and to the programming that supports the training of educational leaders (see Culbertson, 1988; Murphy, 1992). These constructs are:

- 1. Educational administration evolved out of a need to operate schools under a set of practical and applied administrative skills.
- 2. The bureaucratization of educational organizations during the 19th and 20th centuries required specialized professional knowledge in order to become and to succeed as an educational leader.
- 3. The academic, scientific, and theory basis for educational administration provided educational leaders with advanced tools, conceptual frameworks, and contemporary and theoretical knowledge required to lead educational organizations.

The supervision and administration of education in the early 1800's was professionally unskilled; an extension of the men who governed within the local community. There was a job to be done and supervision of the local school fell to someone in the community. A description of the Agent for District #10 in Waterboro, Maine circa 1820 is provided by Knights and Waterhouse (2006) and offers a glimpse into the practical role of administrator:

- 1. In the beginning of the organized school system, each district had one officer called the School Agent. Each town had a Superintending School Committee composed of not less than 3 persons. Each county had one school officer. The county officers constituted the Board of Education of the State.
- 2. The district agents were elected annually by the voters in an open town meeting, or by the districts in their separate capacities.
- 3. It was the duty of the district Agent to: call district meetings, see that the school house was kept in repair, furnish fuel and utensils for the school, employ teachers, and return annually to the assessors in the town, a list of scholars in the town and district.
- 4. If there was not a suitable school in the district, or if the spring rains or the winter snow was too heavy to keep the school open, it was up to the agent to provide a room—usually in his own home, where school could be kept. For this he was paid \$50.00 a year. By 1891 wages for the Agent had increased to \$110.00 per year. The agent system remained in effect until about 1894. (p. 8)

Just as the one room school was an evolutionary step in the American system of education, the role of Agent evolved into the educational leader, and then into principal and finally superintendent. There was knowledge to be gained about running a school, information to be stored, and a collection of skills, behaviors, attitudes, and professional qualities that, when combined in the right mix, addressed the needs of a community, its children, and the slowly evolving and expanding educational organization.

There was no classically trained educational leader (like the classically trained teachers of Latin) to supervise the one room school. An interest in education and experience in practical matters were applied to the local school as community members emerged from their fields, stores, and factories to use native common sense to organize the school for learning. Prince (1901) identified a statute passed by Massachusetts in 1789 as "the first legal recognition of any function of supervision beyond the employment and examination of

teachers" when towns were granted the authority to employ "a special committee to look after the schools" (p. 150). It took another thirty-seven years to require some form of supervision by committee when a law passed in 1826 extended the provision from granting to requiring every community in Massachusetts to form a supervisory committee to handle the affairs of the local school (p. 150). Today's superintendent and principal are the evolutionary descendants of the agent and supervisor who volunteered to handle the duties of keeping the school running and functional.

The Past Begets the Future

At its outset, the field of educational administration focused on superintendent preparation (which encompassed the role of principal). The scope of the field was narrow because its mission was clear. Preparation programs evolved out of the need to manage schools and supervise teachers. It was still a nation of rural one room schools organized by the local community, and managed by a teacher who often wore the hats of teacher, superintendent, principal, janitor, counselor, and mentor to children. Again, Massachusetts saw the need for improved management of the local school district. In "1827 each district was authorized to be represented by a man—elected either by the town or district—who was endowed with authority to employ the teacher" (p. 150).

Prince (1901) noted that the evolution of a specialized role for school leadership culminated when Massachusetts authorized towns and city councils to require the school committee "to appoint a superintendent of public schools who under the direction and control of said committee, shall have the care and supervision of the schools" (p. 152). By 1879 the idea of a "full or nearly full time" superintendent with supervisory skills in education was commonplace in Massachusetts cities.

The need to train educational administrators for tasks that were unique to the educational enterprise only accelerated during the mid-1800's. Prince (1901) explained the Massachusetts experience in developing supervisory leadership as precedent setting and would spread to other states [which it did]. He further explained the evolution of supervision as having two periods in Massachusetts—"one in which the people in their fidelity to local self-government kept the immediate management of the schools in their own hands" and second, the realization by these same local communities that they needed to "give into the hands of educational experts the direction of that part of the work of the schools which required professional knowledge and skill" (p. 157). The recognition, one hundred and thirty years ago, on the part of these communities to separate professional from practical created the need for professional training.

As long as schools were locally controlled, small in size, and organizationally unsophisticated, the skill to run them resided with the men who ran the local businesses, the preachers who ministered to the community, and the teachers who wore the hat of teacher and administrator. There was, and continues to be even in modern organizations, the practical concerns of running schools efficiently, with common sense, and with skill. When schools began growing into educational bureaucracies, it required administrative skill beyond the ability of most individuals in the local community. The specialized role of educational administrator—superintendent and principal—became important to the success of the school district because it became clear that training and experience were necessary. Training and skill as an administrator and educational leader crystallized in the late 1800's with the first university-based class to train school administrators, developed at the University of Michigan in 1879.

The Professionalization of Educational Administration: Early Training

In 1879 William H. Payne accepted a professorship at the University of Michigan after having served as a superintendent of schools in nearby Adrian, Michigan. Payne (1886) designed a curriculum devoted to the training of teachers in a then newly approved program: The Science and the Art of Teaching. He pointed out that the program was "new not only to this University, but, in its scope and purpose, was new to the universities of this country" (p. 337). As a part of a program of study devoted to teaching, he developed the first course on the topic of educational administration. By 1884 a course entitled School Supervision was taught at the University of Michigan which was supplemented by Payne's own Chapters on School Supervision: a text he authored. Payne's course embraced "general school management; the art of grading and arranging courses of study; the conduct of institutes, etc. Recitations and lectures" (p. 343). The chapter headings of the text outlined reading topics which became instructor lectures. Note that more than a third of the book was devoted to explaining and defining the role and power of the superintendent:

Chapter I–The Nature and Value of Superintendence

Chapter II-The Superintendent's Powers defined and some of his General Duties discussed

Chapter III—The Superintendent's Powers defined and some of his General Duties discussed (continued)

Chapter IV –The Superintendent's Powers defined and some of his General Duties discussed (continued)

Chapter V-The Art of Grading Schools

Chapter VI-The Art of Grading Schools (concluded)

Chapter VII–Reports, Records, and Blanks

Chapter VIII –Examinations

The content of the book reflects the time in which it was written. Chapters on School Supervision was prescriptive in its approach to administration and dogmatic in its educational thinking. It was, however, a milestone for educational administration in that Payne acted upon an emerging need to train schoolmen for administrative roles. Payne can be credited for putting into the university curriculum a course of study that began the slow rise of educational administration to an academic, university-based discipline. As Payne (1886) wrote, "Graduates of the university are called to supervise the more important public schools of the state. Why should they not have the opportunity to learn the theory of school supervision?" (p. 336).

The need for supervisory leadership did not result in a rush to establish programs in educational administration during the last quarter of the 19th century. Woodrow Wilson (1886), an assistant professor and future president promoted, in The Study of Administration, the idea of administration as a science and field worthy of study. His essay is representative of the industrial as well as educational environment that identified the need for administrative training programs. He wrote that, "The object of administrative study is to rescue executive methods from the confusion and costliness of empirical experiment and set them upon foundations laid deep in stable principle" (p. 8). This was a canon for what Wilson envisioned as a university program of preparation. This essay spurred the effort to examine the skill required to administer a growing school bureaucracy. Yet, it was not until the early 1900's that educational administration became a truly established university-based program of study and achieved a recognized professional acceptance when Columbia University offered a doctoral degree with an emphasis in educational administration.

The Preparation of Educational Administrators: A Profession

The topic of administration emerged at Columbia with a curriculum consisting of courses that would fit comfortably into an educational administration curriculum today. The Columbia University course catalog of 1903-1904 illustrates that a sequence of four courses—School Administration, Practicum, Seminar, and Practicum were offered. The first course in the sequence was School Administration. Its content looked at:

Forms of educational control, as national, state, municipal, and private; the growth of school supervision; functions of school boards, superintendent, principal; school buildings—construction, heating, ventilation, lighting, sanitation, and equipment; playgrounds; relation of supervising officers to school boards, principals, teachers, pupils, janitors, parents, and citizens; school management—grading, promotions, examinations, records, prizes, and other incentives; courses of study from the standpoint of the superintendent; the school as a social organization; libraries, museums, other culture forces, and community co-operation. Students will have the opportunity of studying the administration of the Teachers College schools and visiting schools in the vicinity. (p. 59)

The subsequent Seminar and Practicum courses addressed topics that included:

- 1. The organization and administration of the public school systems in the United States with special reference to city school systems.
 - 2. The present conditions in education at home and abroad.
- 3. Each student will be required to make an independent study of some state school system and to present to the class from time to time the results of his investigation. (Teachers College Bulletin, pp. 57-64)

Early training programs focused on the nature of schooling, the nature of education, and the work of administering an expanding educational enterprise. It is clear, however, that the technical core of educational administration was elevated by applying professional level knowledge to this increasingly complex educational system. The first doctorates in educational administration were conferred in 1905 at Teachers College Columbia University and significantly, Elwood Cubberley, one of the recipients, would help to advance the field of educational administration through his work and writing. Cubberley's book Public School

Administration (1916), would become one the most widely used training textbooks and championed school supervision as "a new profession, and one which in time will play a very important part in the development of American life" (p. 130).

Educational Administration as a University-Based Program

Educational administration programs took a common sense approach to the knowledge of supervision, educational leadership, administration and management. This could be viewed as an extension of local needs and the growing professional body of knowledge that emanated from the industrial bureaucratization of education. This was especially evident in cities as layers of bureaucracy and a system of education required professional oversight similar to that of a growing business.

During the early twentieth century business titans of the era held out the idealized success of their own corporations and leveraged local communities, states, and the nation to address perceived educational shortcomings by pressuring for specific educational outcomes: cheap education, practical knowledge (noted as less academic rigor), and scientific management. The twentieth century American K-12 curriculum reflected corporate America's needs for a trained and pliable workforce and the development of an educational structure that addressed teaching, learning, and administration as an extension of the industrial organization (see Callahan, 1962). The field of educational administration was now a university-based program of study that took up the challenge to train schoolmen for their professional roles with a corporate orientation to managing schools. The foundation for educational administration was finally in place. It reflected applied and practical solutions to the administration of schools by a growing number of professional men oriented to business solutions for education. It was not an academic, theory based, rarified ivory tower approach to administration.

According to Iannacone (1976) educational administration programs in the early twentieth century were "relatively centralized with the dominance of practice over preparation and research" (p. 5). It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that the field made a conscious and focused effort to alter the dominance of practice over academic and professional knowledge. The dominance of practice in the training of educational administration continued through the first half of the twentieth century which prompted Iannacone to further claim that, "The research produced during the twenty five year period [1925-1950] when educational administration was dominated by practitioner influence shaped by municipal reform was trivial, atheoretical and useless as a scientific base to guide practice, training or future research however useful it may have been in fostering certain administrative-political agendas" (p. 19).

The frustration of a profession that was dominated by practical and applied skill during the first half of the 20th century led to the reform of preparation programs during the 1950's. This reform extolled the importance of research, theory, and academically grounded preparation for educational leaders. This set the stage for the next important movement within the field of educational administration.

The Behavioral, Scientific, and Theory Basis for Educational Administration

During the late 1940's and early 1950's the field, in its attempt to become more theory driven, embraced a rational scientific method that was an extension of its environment—the university. The belief and expectation grew that every school administrator should be grounded in the science of administration and the theory of administration. "With the emergence of theory based research influenced by the social and behavioral sciences in the 1950s programs required change" (Iannacone, 1976, p. 22). This put pressure on programs of preparation to change from being primarily focused on the applied to being more scholarly and academic. By 1960 the field began a shift that emphasized a more academic preparation which, in turn, "increased the conflict between the practice and research as we in the United States move deeper into the political revolution in education" (p. 29).

The field began the twentieth century with a focus on applied knowledge, increased emphasis on the development of professional knowledge throughout the first half of the century and then embraced academic training at mid-century. The training of educational administrators was now, conceptually, a three way framework of practice, professional knowledge, and academic scholarship. The problem for the profession was in attaining a balance that served both those in practice and those in the professoriate, including the professional organizations associated with each. The debate over balance in preparation programs intensified. The last fifty years has seen one long conversation circling around relevance, knowledge base, research,

relevance, theory development, scholarly activity, and relevance.

Culbertson (1964) wrote in the National Society for the Study of Education's publication Behavioral Science and Educational Administration, "During this century, growth in preparatory programs for administrators has been matched by the development of significant foundations for a science of administration" (p. 329). Haskew, in a later chapter of the same text addressed the scientific and theory based field of educational administration that was then emerging as "clearly distinguishable from mere extension of precedent patterns" that characterized the profession through the first decades of its existence as a university program of study (p. 333). He outlined the basic frame of future programs where:

The ideational core of response is the conscious application of intelligence and inquiry to administration as a specialized function of institutionalized education. Collateral with the core is strong support of the method of science as the method of inquiry and for the creation of a theory-based discipline to undergird the art-science of professional practice of the school administrator. (p. 334)

Culbertson's (1964) summary of change in the profession during the mid 1950's is instructive as to how educational administration would be reoriented around the behavioral sciences.

More recently, the 'new science' of administration has contributed significantly to a research orientation in preparatory programs by clearly distinguishing between values and facts, by developing more adequate theories to encompass the complex variables in administration, and by recognizing the major significance of a multidisciplinary approach to the study of administration. (p. 310)

The Future of Educational Administration: What Educational Leaders Should Know and Do

Today the field of educational administration is fragmented by its own fractured approach to educational administration program improvement. The field is now in the spotlight, with the rest of education, because of the central role it plays in adjusting to the future. It appears that educational administration programs, our universities, and K-12 educators will remain in this spotlight due to the critical role education plays in the social and economic well being of this, and every other, nation. There is great pressure from universities to show value added student outcomes given these programs are an extension of the state. It is clear in the first decade of the twenty-first century that government has come to expect measurable outcomes and improved student achievement from teachers and educational administrators. A practical orientation to training can only carry the school administrator to a limited level of knowledge, skill, and understanding. Most would agree it is not enough to lead education into the future.

In 2006 educational administration struggles to find a balance between an academic program of study and a practitioner oriented program of study. "For survival in the university, academic legitimacy is needed by the program, especially its faculty" (p. 23). Yet, the demands of the future and the practitioner world pressure educational administrator preparation programs to adapt and change as never before.

The die was cast when educational administration became a university-based program of study within the university culture of scholarship. The cleavage between practitioner and scholar began when educational administration became a university-based program of study in the early 1900's and persists to the present day. The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) became the home organization for professors who saw their roles as more academic while the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) became the home for those professors who saw their roles as more practitioner oriented. In fact, educational administration encompasses both practice and scholarship and every professor of educational administration knows and understands this aspect of the business. Yet, there continues to be a drift to one program preparation viewpoint or to another. There is no practical reason for perpetuating this divide within the university-based field of educational administration.

Levine is the most recent critic of educational administration. In his study Educating School Leaders (2005), the field of educational administration is excoriated for its weak curriculum and lack of rigor. "This study found the overall quality of educational administration programs in the United States to be poor: The majority of programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the countries leading universities" (p. 32). He further makes the point that states have sought alternative routes for administrator training:

Because the programs have failed to establish quality controls, states have developed alternative routes for people to enter school leadership careers, and major school systems have embraced them. Because traditional educational administration programs have not prepared school leaders for their jobs, new providers have

sprung up to compete with them. Because they have failed to embrace practice and practitioners, their standing has fallen, and school systems have created their own leadership programs. All of these changes are likely to accelerate (p. 68)

The field of educational administration has trained many administrators over the past one hundred years but failed to gain credibility for what it does and how it does it. In understanding the criticism of educational administration and the preparation of school leaders, it must be understood that the field itself is under attack because of weak preparation in a number of areas. It is not any one component that twists in the wind for reform; it is all of the parts of educational administration programming that remain entrenched in the university-based preparation program model. The criticism of educational administration over a 50 year period is laden with admonishments to improve the quality of preparation in the areas of student admission, faculty expertise and knowledge, appropriate curriculum, university and college financial support of the program, student and faculty research, assessment of progress through the program, kinds of degrees and the purpose of the program and the orientation toward training a practitioner or a researcher (see for example Levine, 2005, Murphy, 1992, Achilles, 2005, Farquhar & Piele 1972).

Highly skilled and able administrators are crucial if educational success is to be attained no matter who trains or where training occurs. The issue of training is no the question. The issue in question is how to train highly skilled and able administrators given present conditions and our professional will to address problems of practice. If university-based preparation is inadequate, then we should support efforts to open the market and create competition, provided that the competition is as effective as what now exists. Generally, our harshest critics follow criticism with statements admonishing schools of education and educational administration programs to take the lead in improving leadership training. It is a criticism that is old, frequently repeated, and tiresome. The programs now in existence are the best we have and Universities are not keeping the good students from applying. It is time to take the best we have and design in the quality that is demanded.

Educational Administration: The Next Iteration

What professors of educational administration should consider in program development is a curriculum based on the conditions which now exist in schools and those that will exist in the future. Achilles (2005) describes the known problems in preparation programs, problems that date back fifty years, and suggests that one can be assured that future programs will be an extension of the past. This is an acknowledgement that educational administration has built a deep foundation around its own theory of preparation which is clear and evident in every discussion about preparation.

The strongest contemporary call for a re-examination of the field began with the publication of Leaders for America's Schools, a Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (1987). The report outlined a number of recommendations that were made with the stated desire to restructure "the national understanding of the requirements for educational leadership of the future" (p. xvii). What has been called for by many who are critical of leadership preparation is some combination of a rethinking of the interrelated components that make up a program of study? Generally, these components were outlined by Murphy (1992) as issues in need of new perspectives:

- 1. Recruitment and Selection
- 2. Program Content
- 3. Delivery System
- 4. Standards of Performance
- 5. Certification and Employment (p. 79-108)

Haller, Brent and McNamara (1997) claimed that educational leadership pre-service training "had little or no influence on the attributes that characterize effective schools" (p. 222). Further, they spurred a debate, and then a response, to the challenge that confronted educational administration programs. "We believe the burden of proof now rests with those who would claim that existing pre-service programs have the effects they presumed to have or that tinkering with delivery systems is all that is required to ensure those effects are forthcoming" (p. 227).

Murphy (1992) wrote that preparation programs during the first half of the twentieth century focused on teaching a discrete knowledge base which "consisted of rough-hewn principles of practice couched in terms of prescriptions" and that the second half of the century saw a focus on applying the knowledge of social science to the applied world of educational administration (p. 140). Murphy claimed that the focus on discrete knowledge acquisition around a defined knowledge base did not, and does not, represent what practitioners needed to know and be able to do in order to be successful as practicing educational leaders. It is in developing a theory of educational administration preparation that some theory building and parameters are outlined for all educational administration preparation programs.

Hamel and Prahalad (1994) described the greatest challenge to every organization as having the ability to identify and transcend the boundaries of current knowledge. As they say, "The well-worn aphorism—what you do not know can hurt you—is entirely apropos" (p. 56). What professors of educational administration know is that the past informs but does not clarify how knowledge can improve the present or the future. The development and transformation of programs in educational administration begins with an honest appraisal of a theory that is grounded in practice and is informed by professional and scholarly knowledge.

A Theory of Program Preparation

Most educational administration preparation programs in the United States have a similar history. To-day's programs are more alike than different, regardless of university Carnegie classification, type of student, or variations in curriculum. The approximately 500 programs in the United States generally have a similar goal: provide quality pre-service leadership preparation.

While some disagreement exists relative to details, the elements of quality program preparation are fairly straightforward. Identifying these elements and explaining how they can be improved has not provided sufficient motivation to universally elevate preparation programs to a level of performance that satisfies accrediting bodies, deans, professional associations, and the external public. As professors of educational administration we are in a position to address the concerns.

First, there is no accepted theory of program preparation in educational administration. It does exist, informally, in the debate between providing a curriculum that emphasizes training as a practitioner or a curriculum affording the education background of a scholar. As noted, the NCPEA and the UCEA are symbolic of this fragmentation. NCPEA historically has had strong representation from practitioner oriented professors (and institutions): an orientation that still exists, but with greater and growing attention to scholarship. One of the reasons for the founding of UCEA in the 1950's was to elevate the scholarly and academic profile of the profession and the practitioner. Neither approach has elevated the academic standing of the profession. While variations in curriculum should be encouraged, an archetypical milieu should be recognized that encompasses all quality programs and focuses on quality preparation that blends practical, professional, and academic knowledge.

Conceptually, one can suggest that three general domains shape educational administration preparation. These are illustrated in Figure 1 with associated constructs: practical, professional, and academic knowledge.

Figure 1

A Theory of educational administration preparation curriculum domains.

Practical Knowledge	Professional Knowledge	Academic Knowledge		
Each domain represents a body of knowledge within the educational administration curriculum.				
Educational administration preparation programs have struggled to determine the appropriate balance between each knowledge domain.				
The National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) membership is oriented toward more practical and professional knowledge preparation.				
The University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) membership is				

oriented toward more professional and academic knowledge preparation

Practical knowledge is the general knowledge that one brings to educational leadership through a lifetime of learning, experience in another professional setting, general training, or general common sense ability. Skills that one might be able to transfer from one setting to another might include, for example, consensus and teambuilding ability, management of personnel, collective negotiation skills, or financial acumen. A person may have skill in developing and maintaining relationships, or understand aspects of educational leadership in the area of law, finance, or community issues because of interest or professional training. Whatever common practical knowledge one brings to the job of educational leader can be found in the training of many professions. This is the kind of knowledge that school boards might find attractive in a leader from another professional setting. One might think that leadership is leadership and that those individuals who can transfer these skills from one setting to another will find success in educational administration. It is the reason school boards look to retired military leaders as superintendents. The belief is that many leadership skills can be transferred to the educational setting.

Professional knowledge is the accumulation of information an educational leader acquires, for example, about education law, state and federal policies, school board procedures, state funding formulas, how to conduct teacher evaluations, handling discipline procedures for suspension, working with state department officials on revising the state testing program and the like. Knowledge for doing one's administrative job has become more complex under the weight of mandates, societal expectations, parent demands, and student needs. Knowing the professional role, and having the professional knowledge to perform in that role, is the gateway into administration. It is the value added ability one brings to an educational position. It is the craft knowledge that is acquired during one's career and is not easily transferable.

Murphy (2005) described the post World War II orientation of educational administration toward the behavioral sciences as a "clamoring for more scientifically based underpinnings for the profession" (p. 157). This clamoring for a more scientific and academic program reinforced and established the third domain

of the Theory of Educational Administration Preparation. The academic domain altered the profession of educational administration at the university level as professors not only established the academic domain as a critical component of the curriculum, but saw their own role, as a professor in the academic community, shifting to emphasize research and scholarship as a professional expectation and requirement. Moore (1964) described the professor of educational administration as:

a new breed of leader in school administration. Typically, he is on the faculty of a multipurpose university which prepares school administrators, he is a student of the behavioral sciences, and he is an interpreter of research applied to educational processes and institutions. (p. 23)

This is an apt description of a professor of educational administration in 1964 and in 2006.

These three domains, then, in very broad terms and over the course of the 20th century, influenced professional preparation through the development of a curriculum that reflected courses taught by professors oriented to one, some, or all of these domains. However, this predominantly umbrella orientation, or as Donmoyer (1999) described it—the big tent—did not provide an adequate depth to inform the profession about what educational leaders should know and be able to do.

The lack of a recognized knowledge base spanning all three areas troubled both professors and practitioners. A perceived and actual dearth of information about critical knowledge in each domain led to what became the 50 year dialog about the lack of a knowledge base and the weak underpinnings for standards by which to guide programs preparing principals and superintendents. The standards problem has a history going back to 1950 when the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (CPEA) was formed. During its existence between 1950 and 1960, CPEA struggled for a purpose as UCEA and NCPEA emerged as the primary professional organizations in the field. However, one can trace early conversations about improving administrator training programs to this short lived organization.

It was at this time that the NCATE approached CPEA with a proposal to study what would become "criteria for the accreditation of graduate programs of study which prepare school administrators" (Moore, 1964, p. 27). As Moore (1964) described the work of this group he noted that, "Perhaps the most significant work of the Committee revolved around the establishment (through political/professional sanctions) of standards for the preparation of school administrators" (p. 27). It is noteworthy as well, to recognize the founding of the UCEA as an outgrowth of the CPEA. The Kellogg Foundation, which had supported CPEA's founding as a consortium of eight elite universities, agreed to extend funding to include an original group of thirty-three universities with the purpose "to improve the training of school administrators, stimulate and coordinate research, and distribute materials resulting from research and training activities" (Campbell, Fleming, Newell, Bennion, 1987, p. 14).

Although one might consider the development of the ISLLC standards a framework and starting point for educational administration curriculum development it was, in actuality, a logical extension of work, and thought, that had gone on for more than thirty years within the field. The overall effect of the ISLLC standards focused on program development and the articulation of what principals should know and be able to do. They also brought some national uniformity to the standards movement. On the whole, the standards addressed preparation at the pre-service level. They were minimal expectations/requirements that established a framework that informed university programs preparing educational leaders at the Master's degree level. Figure 2 reflects these factors.

Figure 2
Educational administration preparation to guide curriculum development

Practical Knowledge	Professional Knowledge	Academic Knowledge		
Educational Administration Standards: Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium				
	(ISLL C)			
Standards to guide the content of the educational administration preparation program to				
focus the curriculum circa 2006 until revised per contemporary thinking and practice.				
Knowledge Base in Educational Administration				
The Knowledge Base in educational administration is the accumulated practical				
professional, and academic knowledge relevant to the preparation of educational leaders.				
	rly from behavioral science (i.e., p			
psychology, anthropology,	, history, and economics) and busin	iess management.		

One must keep in mind that the ISLLC standards are a snap-shot of an era and must continue to be revised to reflect contemporary thinking as school, society, and education evolve and change. They are limited in their scope to reflect and not define the complete knowledge base of educational administration. They address what the profession considers to be entry level skills, abilities, and knowledge. They do not encompass the entire knowledge base and do not address, in depth, areas that one expects to find in a specialist or doctoral degree.

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards moved educational administration preparation to consider contemporary ideas about leadership and learning. As Murphy (2005) stated, "(T)he objective of the ISLLC has been to yoke the Standards to important leverage points for change. The goal has been to generate the critical support necessary to move school administration out of its 100-year orbit and then to reposition the profession around leadership for learning" (p. 180). These standards are applied (enforced some would say) on preparation programs through state and national accreditation programs.

The ISLLC standards focused educational administration preparation at the master's degree level and gave programs a lens to view the curriculum for pre-service content. The other side of the argument is that they dumbed down the curriculum and reduced the educational administration program to a narrow interpretation of the knowledge base. More damning to English (2005) is that the ISLLC standards have no grounding in research to validate what they guide principals to know and do. One must take the view that having these standards was the culmination of a long march by the field to better frame what principals should know and be able to do. Although many might disagree over which standards are more or less important, it is clear that standards helped provide clarity for professors of educational administration as they planned programs and individual lessons.

The lack of a knowledge base in educational administration has created consternation for fifty years. The development of ISLLC standards and subsequent dissemination through accreditation by NCATE quieted the knowledge base discussion but did not displace the question of need or the importance of accessing knowledge within the field. As Creighton and Young (2005) stated, "The problem is not so much an absence of a KB, but more that it is incomplete and unorganized, existing in a hodgepodge of textbooks and education journals, and of limited access. What is needed now is the assembly of the KB in one central location, authored by and representative of all professors and practitioners (and other educators), and freely accessible in several languages to all in the world" (p. 136).

Summary

The preparation of school leaders has had a long history: a history entwined, unfortunately, with sharp criticism. Over time, preparation programs have been called upon to answer this criticism and restructure in ways that capture more than one perspective in program delivery. Three perspectives seem to have emerged from the historical background: Practical Knowledge from our earliest beginnings, Professional Knowledge as the field emerged, and Academic Knowledge reflective of university scholarship demands in more recent time. These are all legitimate concerns and should be addressed in a curriculum that is adequate for students by addressing general topics, but topics that have specific content substance. Even the standards movement is reflective of the need to integrate these three perspectives in our programs. We must become more proactive in improving our individual preparation programs and responding to criticism. We are the professionals and the programs we deliver should reflect our understanding of the knowledge base. We only have to have the will. Does our profession have the will?

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