UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES FROM PLANNED CHANGE: A CHALLENGE FOR BEGINNING PRINCIPALS (SUMARIO EN ESPANOL)*

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Abstract
In part, because many planned organizational improvements fall short of their intended goal, educational leaders have not been able to promote sustained improvements. Many education leaders lack experience, skills, and knowledge associated with unintended outcomes; indeed, the culture within public education reinforces evaluation of planned outcomes, and, often, unintended outcomes are ignored. Unintended consequences have implications related to the success or failure of programs, and education leaders must address such outcomes appropriately. This article discusses issues related to unintended consequences of programs within public education, provides examples, and makes recommendations for principal preparation.

1 Sumario en español
En parte, porque muchas mejoras de organización previstas faltan sus líderes educativos previstos de la meta no han podido promover mejoras sostenidas. Muchos líderes de la educación carecen experiencia, habilidades, y el conocimiento asociado a resultados involuntarios; de hecho, la cultura dentro de la educación pública refuerza la evaluación de resultados previstos, y, los resultados involuntarios se no hacen caso a menudo. Las consecuencias involuntarias tienen implicaciones relacionadas con el éxito o la falta de programas, y los líderes de la educación deben tratar tales resultados apropiadamente. Este artículo discute las ediciones relacionadas con las consecuencias involuntarias de programas dentro de la educación pública, proporciona ejemplos, y hace las recomendaciones para la preparación principal.

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2 Introduction

Reform movements have illustrated some of the critical issues facing public education; central to effective school reform are highly capable principals. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has provided a legal basis and procedural requirements for planned improvements within schools and districts. Educational reformers have attempted to characterize needed changes as system level issues. Various movements have been attempts to address root causes of system failures—charter schools, Title I programs, categorical grants, and others. The intent is not to debate the merits of various programs, but to discuss potential root causes associated with the failure of such programs.

For the purposes of this discussion, the unforeseen or unpredicted outcomes logically linked to planned organizational changes serve to define unintended consequences. Unintended consequences, historically studied in business and organizational theory, also apply in educational contexts. Policies and procedures are commonly implemented to produce a desired outcome; however, employees can “game the system” to exploit the rules to produce an entirely different result. Unintended consequences may be foreseeable or unforeseeable. Likewise, unintended consequences may be positive or negative and examples are numerous. Prohibition promoted the interests of organized crime. Price controls lead to shortages. Government support of bio-fuels may have led to increased prices for food.

3 Importance of Unintended Consequences

“People are unaware of the occurrence of unintended consequences, and these then come back into social reality as unacknowledged conditions or, even, again as unintended consequences of future actions” (Baert, 1991, p. 209). Often, unintended consequences have negative impacts on desirable program outcomes or produce mutually exclusive alternatives to planned outcomes. For example, universities evaluate professors in part based on student feedback. In the most extreme cases, professors bribe students; for example, one professor had pizza delivered to class before evaluations were collected. When the system creates a high-stakes situation, the players will take purposeful action to promote favorable outcomes. The use of College Board exams for entrance into colleges has fostered the creation of test preparation courses. Likewise, the requirements of NCLB have resulted in a reduction of courses in arts and electives. This is especially true for low-achieving students.

Educators have become skilled at developing school improvement plans, and, in many cases, they implement such plans effectively. However, the careful implementation of plans does not insure that the plans will result in enhancements of teaching and learning. The unintended consequences, precipitated by implemented planned changes, can directly affect both short-term and long-term outcomes and, often, they prevent desired organizational improvements. However, “the failure to consider and understand the complex systems

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nature of a problem can result in problems of greater magnitude than the original problem of concern, often because of unforeseen and unintended consequences” (Simmons & Gregory, 2003, p. 3). Because schools must address the mandates of NCLB, unintended consequences result from the requirements of the law. If new principals lack the skills to identify such consequences, then such outcomes can become barriers to organizational change.

Cawthon (2007) stated, “an unintended consequence of NCLB is in how unevenly its components are applied to students with diverse backgrounds or who are served by a range of educational settings” (p. 481). Even with initiatives such as response to intervention (RTI), students with disabilities may not have full access to resources mandated under this legislation. No Child Left Behind has affected English language learners (ELLs) negatively as

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accountability that is principally based on test scores can have the unintended effect of creating incentives for schools to push out low performing students, which have traditionally included Latinos and ELLs, thereby exacerbating the already high dropout rate in these groups (National Council of La Raza, 2006, p. 6).

As a result, these groups of students may be encouraged, or at least enabled, to withdraw, drop out, or transfer.

States have implemented accountability systems designed to monitor progress at school, district, and state levels. Central to these accountability systems are high-stakes assessments including grade level-tests and high school proficiency examinations. The implementation of these systems often results in the unintended and unnecessary striation of the school population, of both students and staff, in addition to an over-emphasis on results—test scores—and lack of emphasis on inputs—teaching and learning.

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Though most of these findings are not surprising, particularly early in the implementation process, they raise important future policy questions about NCLB’s unintended consequences, including fragmentation of Title I improvement efforts and the efficacy of competition as a vehicle for increasing student achievement. (Cohn, 2005, p. 165)

The negative feelings associated with the implementation of accountability systems can overshadow the positive intended effects.

Unintended consequences are not necessarily negative. Morell (2005) stated, “unforeseen refers to situations where applicable analytical frameworks and experience were not considered when projecting what might happen when a program is implemented” (p. 446). For example, Goals 2000 and the Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA) mandated that disabled and English proficiency challenged students be included within education systems and corresponding accountability procedures. As a result, Cizek (2001) pointed out:

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Because these regulations apply to high-stakes tests, states across the United States are scurrying to adapt these tests for all students, report disaggregated results for subgroups, and implement accommodations so that tests more accurately reflect the learning of all students. The result has been a very positive diffusion of awareness. (p. 23)

In other words, unintended consequences of these initiatives have included a new focus on, and help for, students with special needs.

Various other unintended consequences are associated with the cultural reinvention of a focus on student testing coupled with legislation mandating equal implementation. For some time, educators have known the barriers to planned change; Corbett, Firestone, and Rossman (1987) pointed out that “research on planned changes and school improvement initiative have documented scores of failures” (p. 38). Today, the push towards testing has led to a general cultural shift towards collecting student achievement data. Principals
are crucial to changing a toxic school culture to a positive supportive school culture (Barth, 2002; Ericsson, 1987; Marks & Printy, 2003). Harris (2001) connected effective school improvement to the requirement to build capacity for change and growth of faculty. If beginning principals fail to understand the need to build the capacity of their respective staffs, then barriers can develop.

High-stakes testing has also given school administrators the proper tools for the creation of accountability systems that are reasonably measurable. Another very valuable unintended consequence of high-stakes testing stems from the opposition to implementation of such programs. Criticisms due to intense scrutiny over the years have allowed test makers to create assessments that are cost-efficient, reliable, unbiased, aligned with public goals, relevant, and age appropriate (Cizek, 2001).

Although many positive unintended consequences have resulted from the implementation of high-stakes testing, negative consequences are equally likely. Morrell (2007) pointed out:

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The high-stakes testing movement is, in many ways, an effort to apply a single, overriding outcome measure to the multidimensional educational system. Systems’ perspectives have much to say about the consequences of such efforts. They tell us that systems will divert resources, and change services, to meet performance criteria. They tell us that sometimes, the pursuit of a single objective is necessary, but such pursuit is only useful over a short period of time, or under extraordinary circumstances, as for instance when an organism is fighting for survival. They tell us that long run survival and growth usually require the joint optimization of a number of conflicting objectives. (p. 447)

No Child Left Behind has promoted many examples of negative impacts of high stakes testing within the educational environment. For example, high school teachers blame middle school teachers when students fail to achieve adequate yearly progress, educators use past achievement to teach to future tests, or schools encourage marginal students to enroll after the official date to avoid inclusion in the yearly accountability reports. In short, negative unintended consequences adversely affect the personnel within the respective organizations; unfortunately, within schools, these consequences negatively influence the students. Equally unfortunate is that many positive unintended consequences are not recognized nor celebrated.

Harris and Ogbonna (2002) established empirical evidence of types of unexpected outcomes when companies attempted to change the corporate culture. They suggested that unintended outcomes could be associated with organizational behaviors: ritualization of change, hijacked processes, cultural erosion, cultural reinvention, ivory tower change, inattention to symbolism, uncontrolled efforts, and behavioral compliance. Within education, the presence of similar unintended consequences exists and new principals must understand the implications of these unintended consequences of planned change.

4 Ritualization of Change

Researchers have connected rituals to social change (Bernstein, Elvin, & Peters, 1966; Wyllie, 1968); however, Harris and Ogbonna (2002) described the unintended consequence of ritualization of the change effort in which an organizational ritual replaces the intended change. Change theory suggests that rituals play an import role within organizations and can assist in the promotion of change. However, when imposed, change can promote rituals that exhibit the defined desirable outcomes without meaningful change. For example, the nature of teacher evaluations—often pre-announced and based on a well-defined set of outcomes—can result in the development of ritualistic lessons that include all of the desired outcomes, but are not indicative of daily classroom instructional practices. In such cases, teachers perform differently during observations than they do during the balance of the school year. As a result, teaching and learning appear to change when, in fact, meaningful modifications are absent. Transformational principals “focus on the individual and collective understandings, skills, and commitments of teachers” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 376); pre-service principals need to become transformational leaders in addition to instructional leaders.
5 Hijacking the Change Process

Wallace (1998) discussed efforts of groups to subvert education reform; Harris and Ogbonna (2002) cautioned organizational leaders to be watchful for individuals or groups that would hijack change efforts. Change processes, implemented by principals with carefully planned improvements, are often subject to hijackers that redirect efforts to create unintended outcomes that personally benefit the hijackers. A textbook illustration of this process is a finance officer who reallocates funds under the auspices of budget cuts. Another example of the hijacking of the change process is the use of planned changes to consolidate authority and control. New principals lack experience within this area. Highly skilled hijackers can persuade them, albeit with false pretenses, that change cannot occur and that they should abort the process before it starts.

Under NCLB, principals need to develop databased decision-making skills, which include associated knowledge and skills. One option could be for the district to hire a highly skilled data analyst charged with the task of supporting principals and developing their skills; a more desirable option is for principal preparation programs to teach the needed skills. The desired outcome would be to create a building level, databased decision-making culture. However, the analyst might hijack the process by using the data and knowledge in order to control and consolidate power in the interest of establishing authority in a central office position.

6 Cultural Erosion

The dynamics of change and corresponding changes in culture are commonly associated with organizational change; however, Harris and Ogbonna (2002) suggested that the prudent leader is watchful for erosion of a positive organizational culture in connection to planned change. Specific actions of leadership, or events within the system, can erode the desired or stated culture of an organization. As illustration, short-term leadership behaviors can appear to support changes aligned with the espoused cultural change; however, the ensuing outcomes do not reinforce the desired or espoused positions. As a result, the teachers come to believe that desired culture has eroded. Such erosion appears linked to a lack of reinforcement of desired changes, non-alignment of behaviors, and amplification of inappropriate values (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002).

For example, districts commonly conduct workshops and professional development activities without consideration of program alignment with major goals; as a result, such activities fail to reinforce the school culture and in return waste resources. Furthermore, when the teachers return to the classroom, the principals fail to reinforce the use of “learned” skills and knowledge. Consequently, teachers can come to believe that professional development, especially activities not truly aligned with the mission of the school, is unimportant. This mindset can result in cultural erosion. The identification of such erosion can be difficult; pre-service principals need to develop appropriate skills to identify such erosion.

7 Cultural Reinvention

Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that cultural reinvention subverted many change efforts. They explained, “Cultural reinvention denotes instances when a culture change effort results in the espousal of attitudes and behaviors which, while appearing ‘new’, merely camouflage the continued adherence to the old culture under a veneer of the ‘new’” (p. 41). Educators have long known that the culture of a building affects student achievement, instruction, and learning. Changes in school culture can result from carefully planned organizational changes such as the implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs) or response to intervention (RTI). However, in many cases, planned organizational changes fail to address the root causes because implemented programs address the symptoms, not underlying causes. As a result, the changes can affect the surface culture, but the true culture remains the same—the “new” culture is only a camouflaged phenotype of the old culture.

An illustration of this unintended consequence is the repeated attempts of schools to drive change using student achievement data. Databased decision-making is difficult for a school to implement if the leadership of the building lacks basic skills in data collection, analysis, and feedback. A district could seek to establish a databased decision-making culture in schools, but fail to develop the appropriate skills within the building.
leadership. Currently, many building level leaders lack formal training in this area; in addition, their careers have not required them to make databased decisions to this point (Creighton, 2001; Holcomb, 1999). Even when the principal is proficient in the use of data, interpreting results of various assessments, and monitoring progress or lack thereof, teaching and learning may fail to change. A surface databased culture can develop without meaningful applications in the classrooms. Failure to cause change is possible even when leaders are proficient and dedicated; when not proficient, failure is eminent.

For example, a district we worked with implemented a procedure to collect data during brief visits to classrooms—walk-throughs. Walk-throughs are brief, non-evaluative classroom visitations by principals designed to change school culture (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004). During these walk-throughs, a practice becoming ubiquitous among administrators, the principal failed to actually collect or summarize the specified data. Consequently, the principal discussed the walk-throughs, but teaching and learning were unaffected, and the actual culture of the building did not change. Pre-service programs can help future principals understand the significance relationships between organizational culture and effective change.

8 Ivory Tower Change

Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that some planners of organizational change were not aware of diverse views of stakeholders; thus, change efforts were “either divorced from organizational reality or incapable of meaningful implementation” (p. 42). Within public schools, central office policies characterize this type of change; often, implemented policies address a specific central office issue. For the most part, leaders in central offices have experience at the building level; however, many principals believe that central office personnel do not understand building level problems.

A common problem for larger school districts is the practice of withholding approval to hire new teachers until the district approves teachers’ requests for transfers. Often, the transfer timeline closes in mid- to late summer. Consequently, the teaching candidates available when principals can recommend personnel for hire are not the “best” or the most sought after, as those applicants have already accepted jobs.

An unintended consequence of central office policy, a form of Ivory Tower Change, is the practice of hiring less desirable teachers to work in schools that fail to make AYP. Often traditional hiring practices hinder the acquisition of high quality personnel with the capacity to implement change in the schools with the greatest need—the brightest and best are hired first, and quality teachers tend to transfer to higher achieving schools.

9 Inattention to Symbolism

Harris and Ogbonna (2002) defined inattention to symbolism as an unintended consequence that fails to consider what effects organizational symbolic icons or myths may have on planned changes. Hofstede (1998) stated, “Culture is a characteristic of the organization, not of individuals, but is manifested in and measured from the verbal and/or nonverbal behavior of individuals—a aggregated to the level of their organizational unit” (p. 470). Significant indicators of the culture of an organization include symbols, rituals, routines, stories, and myths (Deal & Peterson, 1999). These indicators establish the values and norms for the organization; in addition, they reinforce the desired organizational culture. The failure of leadership to consider an organization’s icons can prevent expected changes from occurring.

The prevention of expected changes can occur when new principals assume the leadership role and they fail to realize the implications of the existing building culture. For example, we work with a high school that has well established culture that supports positive academic achievement, positive behavior, and school spirit. The school cultural components include an inlaid mascot at the main entrance, the annual opening celebration ceremony of school in the fall, and earned student privileges. If a new principal fails to consider icons, rituals, and/or symbols, this individual can expect negative impacts on planned changes.

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10 Uncoordinated efforts

Unintended consequences can result from lack of control and coordination of planned change activities. Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that 8 out of 10 change efforts lacked coordination or control from a central group. A prevalent illustration of uncoordinated efforts occurs when the central office attempts to implement a directive without appropriate support or involvement of building level principals. Within many districts, the lack of coordination is commonplace and a great source of frustration for building level administrators.

Assume that top management (board or central office) decides to implement a requirement that all students take algebra as eighth graders—an emerging trend in several locations nationwide. The decision stems from the strong relationship between students who take algebra and student success in college. At the same time as this top-down initiative is occurring, schools are working to increase graduation and decrease dropout rates. Some basic issues that relate to both efforts are available algebra teachers for middle schools, high schools with too many sections of algebra, eighth grade students without necessary skills, and the lack of “upper level” math courses at the high school. As the resulting symptoms migrate to the high schools, entering freshmen have limited math skills but have a credit in algebra.

A common solution developed by high schools has been to create sections of Algebra I A, Algebra I B, Algebra II A, and Algebra II B. Thus, students take four math courses, but cover the content in traditional Algebra I and Algebra II. The unintended consequences of these uncoordinated efforts have been that, although students meet the mandate for early algebra experiences, they do not complete geometry or other advanced math classes in high school, and the school does not comply with the intent of the mandate.

Independent of the school-level efforts, top-down directives receive little to no attention because the resources are unavailable, the responsibilities for implementation are unclear, and accountability structures are lacking. Often, when two efforts compete for limited resources, they unsuccessfully and unintentionally discount each other due to the uncoordinated actions of participating systems. Careful planning would identify the predictable unintended consequences and provide structures for the unpredicted unintended consequences.

Decisions made and implemented without proper support often have similar results. Examples include efforts to implement PLCs, discipline policies, and year-round schools. Each of the programs has merit, but the execution of the implementation can result in ineffective change efforts. Morrell (2005) stated that, “unforeseen consequences emerge from weak application of analytical frameworks and from failure to capture the experience of past research” (p.445).

11 Behavioral Compliance

Leaders can fail to detect behavioral compliance because teachers meet the established assessment criteria. Harris and Ogbonna (2002) explained that while behavioral compliance is a well-accepted concept, practitioners often fail to understand its potential impacts on planned organizational change. Surface changes can occur, which appear to reflect new and desired changes in organizational culture, but reveal their superficiality upon further examination.

For example, the walk-through process can be an illustration of this type of ineffective change. The intent of the process is to provide a snapshot of teaching and learning within a building. In a study of a large urban district with a central office directive to implement walkthroughs, Evans (2010) found that “1) participants (principals) held unshared mental models with regard to walkthroughs; 2) participants held highly individualized mental models of the construct walkthroughs; and 3) these mental models inhibited the emergence of leadership with regard to this change effort” (pp. 121-122). Principals in the study exhibited behavioral compliance; however, their understanding of the purpose and role of walkthroughs varied greatly.

At the classroom level, if only behavioral compliance has occurred, then the teachers put on a show, feigning effective instruction, when the evaluators drop into the classroom. For example, teachers could review the learning objectives when the evaluation drops in, but they could continue teaching as usual during the balance of the day. The contention is that instructional adherence to programs like Teach for
Success (T4S) throughout the school year is the responsibility of the principal, but that implies and assumes that the principal “buys-in” to the program, has the necessary skills, and has sufficient time. These may not always be the present in a demanding school environment. Such behavioral compliance, a surface-level change, has little impact on the teaching and learning process. In order to be successful, a much stronger level of commitment is necessary.

12 Discussion

Fink (2003) identified unintended consequences associated with top-down reform. They included adoption of curriculum inappropriate for many students, undermined collegiality among teachers, high stakes testing increasing dropout rates, and a decrease in administrative support. The implementation and maintenance of NCLB legislation requires more work and capital; yet, funding is inadequate to meet these needs. The design of NCLB is fashioned in a manner that is not conducive to improved learning and actually may provide disincentives for learning. Darling-Hammond (2007) provided a clear illustration of this when she stated:

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Even if NCLB funding were to increase, its framework does not allow for important structural changes—for example, a system of teacher preparation and professional development that would routinely produce high-quality teaching; curriculums and assessments that encourage critical thinking and performance skills; high-quality preschool education, libraries and learning materials; and healthcare for poor children. Instead, the law wastes scarce resources on the complicated test score game that appears to be narrowing the curriculum, uprooting successful programs, and pushing low-achieving students out of many schools. (p. 13)

Fullan (2000) proposed, “Principals are the key actors in instructional improvement” (p. 9). In addition to leadership skills, effective principals need the ability to implement programs, while unmasking and ferreting out unintended outcomes. In part, unintended consequences occur because leaders fail to plan and address commonly reoccurring issues in social organizations. Morell (2005) argued that the common reasons that unintended consequences occur include the following:

- Multiple interacting processes or programs are at work in schools
- Functions in social organizations are nonlinear
- Feedback loops take longer than expected
- Planned outcomes are often dependent on initial conditions
- Leaders cannot define all relevant conditions
- Programs and staff adapt to environmental conditions
- Decisions are made on incomplete information
- Leaders fail to detect early relevant changes

Principals must artfully address unintended consequences. Unfortunately, by the time unintended consequences reveal themselves, the principal has committed significant resources, personal credibility, and time. Recovery from negative unintended consequences, or making adjustments to avoid them, may be impossible, especially if they occur late in the implementation process. Principal preparation programs must equip new principals to plan for and evaluate unintended consequences as they occur, or suffer the ramifications.

Effective principals must understand the interconnected relationships among organizational change, intended outcomes, unintended consequences, and effective leadership. Effective leadership is related positively to organizational change and correspondingly transformation of schools (Fullan, 2006; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Spillane, 2006). Most educational leadership programs include leadership development as an integral strand across multiple courses.

However, “assessing the roles of strong interventions for failing schools is quite complicated, even in the narrow sense, because the combination of intended and unintended consequences is difficult to sort out” (Fullan, 2005, p. 174). As a result, principal preparation programs should specifically address both
planned outcomes and unintended consequences. For beginning principals, indeed all principals, unintended consequences can interfere with planned organizational change; thus, skills, knowledge, and understanding related to unplanned outcomes are important.

Principal preparation programs should take the necessary steps to develop appropriate skills and knowledge. These competencies are teachable and many programs are working to develop needed competencies and teach the following:

- **Change theories:** Candidates need an understanding of effective models for program improvements.
- **Team development:** Effective building-level teams provide a better basis for decision-making. However, many principals lack the basic skills necessary to develop, facilitate, and maintain effective teams.
- **Feedback loops:** If allowed to follow a natural course, feedback loops are too long for appropriate adjustments. Short-term and intermediate term outcomes should be evaluated routinely.
- **Data-based decision-making:** In the NCLB culture of current public education, data-based decision making is a commonly discussed competency; however, few practicing principals or principal candidates have the needed skills and knowledge to move effectively from data to information to knowledge to application. In addition, even fewer have the competency or capacity to enable and empower their staffs to effectively use data to drive teaching and learning.
- **Research skills:** Principals need skills to develop sound research skills. Principals often purchase programs, developed with little or no research by their developers, and implement them just to discover they have little to no impact at all. They must be able to learn from the work of others, including the ability to sort the effective research-based programs from unmeritorious programs that may be packaged and presented nicely, but in reality are nothing more than companies’ attempts to capitalize (or prey upon) an untapped revenue stream.

Although unintended consequences are impossible to avoid in their entirety, they “are not by definition unknown to the actor who initiated the action” (Baert, 1991, p. 201). These skills enable principals to anticipate unintended consequences and develop procedures to assess both intended and unintended outcomes. Ideally, the exposure of principal candidates to a wide scope of applications required for these competencies, will allow future leaders to generalize, plan appropriately, and apply their skills and knowledge to new situations.

Current and future principals must face the unintended outcomes of NCLB and future mandates similar in nature. The ability to anticipate such outcomes are invaluable. Commonly used information systems are not designed or capable of detecting unintended outcomes. The observation and capture of potential negative impacts requires the development of analytical frameworks with requisite subject specificity.

Many of the ideas discussed above reflect common experiences of seasoned educational leaders; as such, accomplished administrators have developed skills and knowledge to address unintended consequences. However, principal candidates lack these experiences and often any exposure to issues associated with unplanned outcomes. Unintended consequences will develop within social organizations. To the fullest extent possible, candidates for the complex role of principal should be prepared to address them. Principals need a toolbox of appropriate strategies and tactics for dealing with unforeseen consequences; in addition, they need appropriate skills to identify knowable unintended consequences.

The skills and knowledge necessary for effective change are much more important within today’s educational environment—highly effective instructional leaders are necessary to lead required change within public schools. As a result, principal preparation programs must change accordingly. Finally, because principals must promote continuous improvement of schools, they must be able to plan for unforeseen outcomes; otherwise, some outcomes will be random, root causes unknown, and effective change will not occur.

Based on a review of research, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) identified seven strong claims related to successful school leadership. These include: (a) successful leaders have a core of basic practices, (b) methods of application of practices are critical, (c) leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly through influence, and (d) leadership should be distributed widely. They claim that “school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning” (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008, p. 27).

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Unintended consequences have been an ongoing concern for leaders engaged in organization change. Tyack and Cuban (1995) provide an illustration of unintended consequences as “people with problems looking for solutions; people with solutions looking for problems; but implementation does not follow smoothly from the pairing of problems and solutions” (p. 55). The education profession has an abundance of both groups of people. Fullan (2006) maintained that sustainability is a key factor for future change leaders.

Fullan (2006) contended, “Existing knowledge base has not yet pushed far enough into action” (p. 113). He proposed the development of a new kind of leaders for schools—“systems thinkers in action” (Fullan, 2006, p. 114). Organizational change, leadership, and unintended consequences are overlapping, interdependent concepts; as a result, principal preparation program must facilitate skill and knowledge development within each area.

13 References


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