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## The Organizational Socialization Experiences of First-Year Principals

Alicia M. Montgomery  
*Brandman University*, [aasara@mail.brandman.edu](mailto:aasara@mail.brandman.edu)

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The Organizational Socialization Experiences of First-Year Principals

A Dissertation by

Alicia Montgomery

Brandman University

Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

Committee in charge:

Patrick Ainsworth, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Wesley Smith, Ed.D.

Keith Larick, Ed.D.

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY

Chapman University System

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

The dissertation of Alicia Montgomery is approved.

Patrick Ainsworth

Patrick Ainsworth (Apr 22, 2020)

\_\_\_\_\_, Dissertation Chair

Patrick Ainsworth, Ed.D.

Keith Larick

Keith Larick (Apr 25, 2020)

\_\_\_\_\_, Committee Member

Keith Larick, Ed.D.

Wesley Smith

Wesley Smith (Apr 29, 2020)

\_\_\_\_\_, Committee Member

Wesley Smith, Ed.D.

Douglas P. DeBore

\_\_\_\_\_, Associate Dean

March 2020

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## ABSTRACT

### The Organizational Socialization Experiences of First-Year Principals

by Alicia Montgomery

**Purpose:** The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first-year principals perceive these processes are effective.

**Methodology:** This study identified and described district implementation of organizational socialization supporting first-year principals enrolled in the ACSA Clear Administrative Credentialing Program. The participants completed a survey and were interviewed, which provide the data analyzed.

**Findings:** There are several findings from this study. Only two thirds of participants experienced organizational socialization. New principals receive information around rules, laws, roles, and responsibilities the most from meetings and department leads. The special education department provided the most organizational socialization information. Information regarding the formal and informal norms was experienced the least. Most organizational socialization information came from district office leaders, school staff, and prior experience. And finally, for most organizational socialization processes are ineffective.

**Conclusions:** Several conclusions may be drawn from the literature and findings of this study. School districts seldom use purposeful organizational socialization processes with new principals. The lack of knowledge about district culture prevents principals from becoming insiders in districts. Lack of clarity and intentional use has resulted in

ineffective organizational socialization practices. District departments overseeing the implementation of state and federal laws are more likely to implement organizational socialization. New principals hired from within the district have a positive experience with organizational socialization. Lastly, organizational socialization is most effective when lead by when district administrators.

**Recommendations:** Several recommendations for further research came from this study: a Delphi study to identify content to be included in organizational socialization processes in districts, an ethnographic study to deeply examine organizational socialization in one school district, a mixed methods study on the ways new principals received information, a correlational study comparing the experience of new principals hired from within and those hired from outside the district, a study examining the exit of new principals, and lastly, a study of how the experience of principals of color should differ.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Learning the ropes, indoctrination, acculturation, and learning what is important in an organization are all a part of organizational socialization and thus are critical to the success of new employees (Bengtson, 2014). A myriad of issues facing schools today call for the implementation of strong organizational socialization practices focused specifically on the first-year principal. Organizational socialization will support new principals with learning the content and processes needed to adjust to their new role in school districts (Bengtson, 2014; Brody, Vissa, & Weathers, 2010; Daugherty, 2017; Joppy 2014). One issue calling for the implementation of strong organizational socialization practices is the evolving role of the principal, which now includes how to manage and lead instruction and implement change within the context and culture of the district in which the principal is employed (Kay & Greenhill, 2013; Wagner, 2012; (Woodley, 2018). Another issue calling for the use of organizational socialization is principal turnover occurring in schools every 3 to 4 years (Louis & Robinson, 2012). Lastly, the ability of principal preparation programs to provide candidates with the skills to maneuver the district political and cultural climate calls for the use of organizational socialization practices (Bridges, 2012; Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012). Socialization processes and components have been known to increase job satisfaction and productivity in new employees (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Brody et al., 2010). The critical need for the purposeful organizational socialization of new principals begins with examining how the role of the principal has changed.

Many changes in education have caused changes to occur in the role of the principal as well. While education is changing throughout the world, few places are

experiencing the level of change as in California. With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the implementation of a new funding system, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), and the accompanying new Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), the very policies and governance structures of the California education system have changed, resulting in whole system reform (Fullan, 2015). Through all of the change, leadership matters accounting for 25% of school improvement data resulted in increased student achievement (Dutta & Sahney, 2016; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Mette & Scribner, 2014; Versland, 2013). When a new principal takes over a school, progress toward school improvement often stops moving forward (Samuels, 2015).

According to a technical brief provided by the Regional Educational Lab at West Ed in California, there was a turnover of over 1,000 new administrators in 2010 (Fong & Makkonen, 2011). In the 2007-2008 school year, the average age of principals was 49 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). Today, those principals are getting closer to retirement and plans for hiring new principals are imminent (Cullen, Hanushek, Phelan, & Rivkin, 2016; Fiarman, 2015; NCES, 2015). Further, as demands of the job increase, the job becomes less desirable to those who might consider becoming principals, causing principal turnover leaving a large number of vacancies to become an ever-present problem districts must be prepared to solve (Burrows-McCabe, 2014; Harris, 2012; Turnbull, 2015). As they fill these vacancies, districts will need to establish processes to quickly transition their leaders into their new role (Joppy, 2014; Oleszewski, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012; Spillane & Anderson, 2014). The research points to the



socialization of principals, both professional and organizational, as a way to accomplish the task.

Professional socialization takes place in principal preparation programs usually within an institution of higher learning and also in partnership school districts wishing to grow their own leaders. Principal preparation programs in every state provide future principals with the requisite knowledge and skills to become licensed school administrators using the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC, 2007) standards as their programs' benchmarks. This is true in California where the new program standards outlined by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) name both content and performance standards, better known as the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs). In addition, the number of years of teaching required for credential candidates rose from 3 to 5 years (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing [CTC], 2007, 2017). These changes to preparation programs are meant to adequately prepare principal candidates for the new roles and responsibilities they will encounter to meet the ever-increasing needs of students (Briggs, Cheney, Davis, & Moll, 2013; Mendels, 2016). However, research suggests that once aspiring leaders complete principal preparation, district or state induction programs do not adequately provide the transition support necessary for success, leaving a significant amount of socialization to take place once hired during organizational socialization (Bengtson, 2014; Corell, 2010; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Wilson, 2016).

The process of moving from outsider to insider within an organization is complex and includes the experience of the newcomer in learning the culture, norms, and values in

the organization (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994). This process is called organizational socialization and has been the subject of many studies over the years both in business and in educational settings. When there has been evidence of a strong socialization process, the research shows that it has a positive impact on job performance and satisfaction (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015). These two outcomes are critical to school improvement and continuity in the change process.

## **Background**

### **Status of the Principal**

Understanding the status of the principal begins with understanding the current role of the principal, the way that position has evolved over time, and the need for new principals. The current high-stakes accountability era sparked by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act in the late 1990s created a focus on school reform and the leaders tasked with leading reforms (NCLB, 2001). These issues provide the backdrop for the need for new principals to receive purposeful and systematic organizational socialization, particularly as they transition into the new role.

**Role of school principals.** The primary purpose for schools from the time they began was to prepare students for jobs in church or government. As the responsibility of schools increased to include college and preparation for other careers, subject matter widened, and eventually the head teacher became the principal (Cubberley, 1922; Deal & Peterson, 1990; Tran, 2017). In the beginning, the duties of the principal included the role of building manager and role of the liaison between the school, the community, and the district office. Up until the 21st century, school leaders were primarily responsible

for operational duties concerned with the overall management of schools (Cubberley, 1922; Reese, 2005; Singer, 2015). Today, the entire education community is astutely aware of the important role school leaders play in developing high-performing schools. Since the implementation of the NCLB, and the recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), schools have had to change the way they look at success, and pay more attention to students who have been historically underserved. Thus, school reform, turnaround schools, and other names for school change have permeated research and educational practice, placing a historical emphasis on the importance of school leadership (Fullan, 2014; Leithwood & Strauss, 2009; Mette & Scribner, 2014; Schmoker, 2016). The principal is responsible for instructional leadership in addition to managing the school, and in most cases, implementing change that will improve the outcomes for students (Gothard, 2016; Lai, 2015; Stringer & Hourani, 2016).

Fullan (2014) asserted that the role of the principal has changed from being an instructional leader to being the lead learner. The current change dynamics brought on by the use of technology and the CCSS (2010) has created a more integral and powerful role for the principal, who must impact the school in a way that moves it forward in a positive direction. The understanding of change is essential for leaders, as they must respect the complexity of the change process in their role as lead change agent (Fullan, 2014). Leaders must foster intentional, focused interaction and be able to problem solve while improving relationships. Leaders must be committed to increasing knowledge both inside and outside of their school. Lastly, leaders must seek coherence in an otherwise chaotic process (Forman, Stosich, & Bocala, 2017; Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994; Normore, 2004). Coherence is especially problematic for

leaders who are new to a district, and socialization processes can provide a springboard for learning the organizational and cultural context of their school (Affeldt, 2015; Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Rigby, 2015; Spillane & Anderson, 2014).

**Need for new principals.** Over the years, the turnover rate and need for school principals has been the focus of many studies (Gates et al., 2006; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010; Pajak & McAfee, 1992). The need for new principals is compounded by an increase in retirements (Bush, 2016; Herman & Huberman, 2017; NCES, 2015). Moreover, school leaders leave their jobs for many other reasons including involuntary reassignment to teaching. Schools face many challenges in retaining and recruiting school leaders due to the complexity of the job compared to the salary as well as relational issues (Farley-Ripple, Raffel, & Welch, 2012). Principal turnover undermines reform efforts, reduces employee buy-in, creates unclear goals and expectations, and makes for a less stable school environment (Béteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012b). Principal turnover not only impacts district change initiatives, but also student achievement (Béteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012; Fuller, 2012).

Many schools experience a new principal every 3 to 4 years. The complexity of the role makes it difficult for districts to attract talented teacher leaders to the position (Hayashi & Fisher-Adams, 2015). The turnover of principals not only has an impact on the school but a fiscal impact on the school district. This impact has caused many districts to look at their recruitment and retention efforts (Strickland-Cohen, McIntosh, & Horner, 2014). While districts look to recruit and retain leaders, the problem of sustaining change initiatives threatens district and school improvement (Doyle & Locke, 2014; Lehman, Boyland, & Sriver, 2017; Tyre, 2016). Organizational socialization can

provide a solution by providing new principals, once hired, the support and information needed as they transition into the new role.

### **The Socialization of the Principal**

Bengtson (2014) described three stages of socialization: anticipatory—what the future leader does on his or her own to become familiar with the future job; professional socialization—pre-service preparation and licensure programs; and lastly organizational socialization—the process by which a new leader learns the ins and outs of the organization and by which they experience the onboarding process. During the anticipatory phase of socialization, the future principal learns about the role by watching school leaders around them. Once a future leader decides to take action to become a leader, they typically move on to professional socialization by way of an administrator preparation program.

**Professional socialization of the principal.** The professional socialization of principals begins as they participate in either a formal preparation program, a district leadership succession program tied to a formal preparation program, or their district's stand-alone leadership succession program (Bengtson, 2014; Joppy, 2014; Spillane & Anderson, 2014). Though the intent of principal preparation programs is to provide a firm foundation of pedagogy, policy, and laws to be successful before taking on the role, most programs fall short (Black, 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Dodman, 2014; Hayashi & Fisher-Adams, 2015). Therefore, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners are investing time and resources in one or more aspects of the professional socialization of principals (Bengtson, Zepeda, & Parylo, 2013; Gawlik, 2019; Hardie, 2015; G. M. Steyn, 2013).

Most principal preparation programs across the nation are based upon the ISLLC standards (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Hayashi & Fisher-Adams, 2015; Parylo & Zepeda, 2015). Four focus areas have been highlighted and repeated in much of the literature: (a) program design and coordination, (b) curriculum, (c) field experiences in the program, and (d) candidate competence and performance. Each state develops required program elements necessary for preparation programs to attain approval to operate within the state. For example, California administrator preparation programs need to follow the CAPE; CTC, 2017). These expectations describe what new administrators need to learn to acquire a California Administrative Services Credential. With formal preparation programs responding to the need for change, districts are beginning to understand the need to engage in leadership succession planning (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Gates et al., 2014; Kearney & Valadez, 2015).

Leadership succession planning is used to ensure that districts have pools of qualified individuals to take over leadership positions as they occur and supports a strong pipeline to the principalship (Carttar, Lindquist, & Markham, 2015; Hardie, 2015; Kuehn-Schettler, 2015). Many succession programs identify potential leaders either formally or informally. From there, these aspiring administrators are either mentored or provided professional learning to build their leadership experience (Griffith, 2015; Parylo & Zepeda, 2015; Russell & Sabina, 2014). A clear plan for leadership succession coupled with a formal principal preparation program is suggested to districts wishing to maintain a strong principal pipeline. Leadership succession programs should involve all departments in the school district (Carttar et al., 2015; Hardie, 2015; Russell & Sabina, 2014). Once the aspiring principal has been hired into the new role, organizational

socialization will begin (Bengtson et al., 2013; Daugherty, 2017; Spillane & Anderson, 2014).

**Organizational socialization.** Organizational socialization is the process a new leader experiences as he or she becomes acclimated to the culture, political climate, and community of the school and district (Bengtson, 2014; Joppy, 2014). While some research on district socialization practices show mixed results, most reveal a positive impact on the experience of new principals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Organizational socialization usually occurs through mentoring, or is largely led by the individual with little organization or planning done by the school district (Bengtson et al., 2013; Oleszewski et al., 2012; Spillane & Anderson, 2014). Socialization occurs whether there is a formal process in place or not. It occurs with each interaction with departments in the district, other site administrators, and stakeholders in the school and/or district (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; T. Steyn, 2013; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Departments within the school district with which the principal will be working, such as the human resources, fiscal services, curriculum and instruction, special education, student services, and facilities and maintenance, have a direct responsibility to be engaged throughout the socialization process supporting the new principal's transition.

The process used to teach, acclimate, and transition new hires to the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to function successfully within an organization's processes and culture is critical (A. M. Ellis et al., 2015; Thessin, Clayton, & Richardson, 2019). The terms *transition assistance* and *onboarding* are used in reference to and as a part of organizational socialization. These terms are used to describe the process a new employee experiences to move from being an outsider to

becoming a legitimate member of the organization. There are many frameworks for organizational socialization in the literature (A. M. Ellis et al., 2015; Snell, 2006; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Over the years, the literature has resulted in the development of frameworks involving a focus on tactics/process or content/components. These frameworks provide a structure from which organizations can build their own organizational socialization processes.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) built a framework for tactics/process covering how organizations socialize new employees: (a) individual vs. collective, (b) formal vs. informal, (c) serial vs. disjunctive, (d) sequential vs. random, (e) fixed vs. variable, and (f) divestiture vs. investiture. Bauer and Erdogan (2014) built a framework with similar components presented in phases of organizational socialization: (a) compliance, the lowest level, provides information and instruction in basic legal and policy related rules, regulations, and procedures; (b) clarification involves everything the new employee needs to understand the new job and the expectations that come with it; (c) culture provides the new employee with the information about formal and informal norms; and (d) connection refers to the vital relationships and networks the new employee must establish. Regardless of the framework, the research shows that the use of such processes with involvement from all departments in the organization has proven to be beneficial for organizations to develop leaders who are more successful and have greater job satisfaction (Bengtson et al., 2013; Joppy, 2014; H. J. Klein & Polin, 2012; Woodley, 2018). In most districts, there are several departments to support schools; most include human resources, fiscal services, curriculum and instruction, special education, student



services, and facilities and maintenance. All of these departments can play a critical role in the socialization and support of new principals as they transition into their new role.

**Support for new principals and induction.** Many principals sign their contracts and begin working at their schools with little or no transition support (Armstrong, 2012; Joppy, 2014; Spillane & Anderson, 2014). But states and districts alike have begun to develop a myriad of induction and/or new principal supports (Kingham, 2013; Lochmiller, 2014; Wilson, 2016). These supports can be as simple as a one-shot orientation to the district, or as extravagant as one-on-one coaching with specific identified outcomes related to the performance standards (Alvoid & Black, 2014; Lochmiller, 2014; Wise & Cavazos, 2017). Many states are adopting mentoring programs as a way of supporting new principals (Béteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2011; Childress, 2012; Gentilucci, Denti, & Guaglianone, 2013). These peer support systems provide some organizational socialization and lessen the feelings of isolation often felt by new principals (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson et al., 2013).

Research cites numerous benefits for all involved: the mentee, the mentor, and most of all, the organization (Bauer, Erdogan, & Taylor, 2012; Washington-Bass, 2013). Among these benefits is the support and alignment of practices. Mentoring can provide new school leaders with some support and, if done well, can help them be successful their first year and many years to come (Correll, 2010; Geraki, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013). In several states and districts, mentoring is one component of an elaborate induction program (Huang et al., 2012; Lochmiller, 2014; Wise & Cavazos, 2017). In Webster's dictionary the word induction is defined as the formal act or process of placing someone into a new job, position, government office, etc. or an initial experience ("Induction,"

n.d.). Organizational socialization practices with induction structures for principals in many ways can determine their success and longevity as a school leader.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

The role of the principal has changed over time, and now includes more responsibilities than just the supervision of teachers and building management (Bennett, Carpenter, & Hill, 2011; Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013; Ediger, 2014). Changes in accountability and a focus on school reform have brought school leadership to the forefront of educational research. Today's principals have responsibilities not only in the school building itself but in the community the school serves as well. The complexity of the job of the principal has made it difficult for new principals to arrive on campus ready to jump in, implement change, and improve student outcomes (Allen, Grigsby, & Peters, 2015; Dodman, 2014; Goldring et al., 2015). This has caused a problem for districts charged with implementing changes in accountability and widespread reform all while welcoming new leaders to several school sites (Fullan, 2015; T. Green et al., 2019; Stringer & Hourani, 2016; Wolf & Sands, 2016). Socialization, the experience a newcomer has while becoming a member of a specific group, can serve as a viable solution to the problem. Clear and purposeful organizational socialization processes can support the transition of first-year principals into the community and district, expediting their productivity and supporting their success (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson et al., 2013; Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Donmoyer, Yennie-Donmoyer, & Galloway, 2012).

The research on socialization has yielded a focus on the process/tactics or the content/components, or dimensions of socialization. Research reveals three basic phases of socialization: anticipatory, professional, and organizational (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014;

Bengtson et al., 2013; Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2011). Anticipatory socialization is the critical role individuals play in how they observe, learn, and interact within the field before taking on a specific role. Professional socialization takes place primarily in a formal program, usually at an institution of higher learning.

Organizational socialization occurs once the individual is hired and begins his or her new job (Bengtson, 2014; Glasspool, 2007; Wanberg, 2012). The important and positive impact of socialization on employee performance is well documented. Most research around the socialization of principals centers on the professional socialization of principals examining the impact of preparation programs on principal effectiveness (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Glasspool, 2007; Joppy, 2014). To understand the importance of the socialization process, it is important to understand the high need for new principals, their role in school achievement, how principals are prepared, and how districts support new principals.

A review of the occupational outlook for the job of principal in California over the next few years reveals an increasing need for new principals (NCES, 2015). As new leaders are hired, their development is crucial to the success of the schools they lead (Russell & Sabina, 2014). New leaders will need to be ready to support the development and implementation of district local accountability plans focused on improving student outcomes (Crow, 2006; Dodman, 2014). The research indicates that principals impact school improvement in a variety of ways: student achievement and instructional quality to name two (Gothard, 2016; Thompson & France, 2015). Just as districts need continuity of student achievement improvement initiatives, individual schools need to be able to continue their growth as well. The negative lasting effects of principal turnover

on school improvement make principal retention a dire need for school districts (Samuels, 2015; Superville, 2014; Tran, 2017). High-stakes accountability and school reform push the education agenda, so it is vitally important that districts have a way of efficiently acclimating new leaders to the culture, rules, processes, and climate in which they are expected to work (Allen et al., 2015; Alvoid & Black, 2014; Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Where preparation programs focus on learning the professional components of the role of the principal, organizational socialization practices focus on the skills and information needed to be successful within the cultural context of the school and district (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014).

Principal preparation programs provide the learning of information and skills necessary for licensure and provide a base of professional socialization for principals (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012; Lauder, 2000). Though the content in principal preparation programs is critical for learning the job, these programs are unable to provide the context in which the knowledge and information will be put to use (Burrows-McCabe, 2014; Lynch, 2012; Versland, 2013). When principal preparation programs are a part of a district succession or leadership development program, professional socialization is contextualized at the district level. Yet, there remains a need for organizational socialization for the new principal within the context of the school assigned.

Though the development of strong school site leaders is important, Bengtson (2014) found the literature examining the socialization practices in educational settings to be somewhat limited. Normore (2004) discussed the importance of organizational socialization calling for districts and each of the departments within them to provide

leadership development, orientation, and socialization for new leaders. Moreover, research suggests that newly hired employees may not perform well leading to low productivity for the company because of a lack of purposeful and intentional socialization tactics (Heck, 1995; Scott & Myers, 2010; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Klein and Polin (2012) confirmed that there are few studies on the practice of socialization in general and specifically no recommended organizational socialization practices for school principals. Therefore, this study examined the organizational socialization experience of new principals and the perceived effectiveness of those practices.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals' transition into their new role. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first-year principals perceived these processes were effective.

### **Research Questions**

1. What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role?
2. To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role?
3. To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role?

## **Significance of the Problem**

The increasing need for new principals and the ever-changing role of the principal make the organizational socialization of new principals critical to sustain much-needed improvement initiatives in school districts (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson, 2014; Bengtson et al., 2013; Joppy, 2014). This study was designed to provide insight into the issues around the importance of organizational socialization to school districts' ability to sustain much-needed improvement initiatives. Sustainability has become difficult due to the sheer number of principal turnovers occurring each year for a variety of years (Samuels, 2015; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014; Tran, 2017). And despite research showing the positive impacts of organizational socialization on employee retention, job satisfaction, and performance there are limited findings of widespread use of the practice (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015; Korte, Brunhaver, & Sheppard, 2015; Spillane & Anderson, 2014). So, in addition to calling attention to this important issue, this study attempts to fill the gaps in the literature around the use of purposeful organizational socialization support provided to new principals as they transition into their new role by gathering this information firsthand from new principals.

The California Department of Education (CDE), administrator preparation programs, and current district leaders, especially superintendents and district department leads, can use the results and findings from this study to create strong organizational socialization processes with clear and purposeful transition support for new principals (Armstrong, 2012; Joppy, 2014). Using the findings of this research will result in several benefits for the stakeholders: Districts will know how to create a sense of belonging for new employees, they will experience increased effectiveness, employees will have

greater job satisfaction, and there will be lower turnover rates (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bengtson, 2014; Chao et al., 1994; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Principals newly hired in the future will receive these same benefits and enjoy long successful careers as administrators. In California, as leaders seek to implement changes incomparable to any other time, sustainability will be vital, and organizational socialization will serve as a stabilizer for continuous improvement (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bengtson, 2014; Haueter, Macan, & Winter, 2003; Joppy, 2014). Thus, the impact from this study will reverberate through time as districts add organizational socialization into their leadership support practices, and district and school improvement is finally sustainable.

## **Definitions**

### **Theoretical Definitions**

**Assimilation.** The process of moving from being an organizational outsider to being an organizational insider (Downey, March, & Berkman, 2001).

**Culture.** A social indoctrination of unwritten rules that people learn as they try to fit in a particular group (Schein, 2010).

**Leadership succession plan.** The process of identifying and developing new leaders to succeed current leaders (Russell & Sabina, 2014).

**Mentor.** An experienced individual who possesses important or critical information, skills, or past experiences and who agrees to engage in a personal and confident relationship with a novice individual who aims to provide professional development, growth, and varying degrees of personal support (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015).

**Onboarding.** Formal and informal practices, programs, and policies used by an organization to assist newcomers in adjusting to their new job (Klein & Polin, 2012).

**Orientation.** Orientation is the traditional means to familiarize staff with a new work environment, related expectations and policies, and to provide support (Acevedo & Yancey, 2011; Wanous & Reichers, 2001).

**Organizational socialization.** The experience a new employee has while learning content, and processes by which that employee adjusts to a specific role in an organization (Chao et al., 1994).

**Socialization.** How the new member learns the social norms and processes connected to a larger environment (G. M. Steyn, 2013).

**Transition assistance.** Formal and informal practices, programs, and policies used by an organization to assist newcomers in adjusting to their new job (Glasspool, 2007).

### **Operational Definitions**

**Compliance.** For the purpose of this paper, compliance refers to the lowest level of onboarding and involves teaching new staff the policy and basic legal rules, procedures, and regulations (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).

**Clarification.** For the purpose of this paper, clarification refers to making sure new employees know and understand their new job and what is expected of them in their new role (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).

**Culture.** For the purpose of this paper, culture is used as an overarching category that also refers to providing new employees with a sense of both informal and formal organizational norms (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).



**Connection.** For the purpose of this paper, connection refers to the new employee identifying and creating a connection to critical networks and relationships (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).

### **Delimitations**

The following delimitations were present in this mixed methods study:

1. The population was delimited to principals completing their first year in the ACSA California Administrator Credential Program in 2015 and 2016.
2. The population was delimited to only those principals holding only the title of principal and no other position such as superintendent/principal.
3. The population was delimited to only those principals with a district office to support the work in schools.

### **Organization of the Study**

The remainder of this study is organized into four chapters, a reference section, and appendices. Chapter II provides background and a review of literature regarding the need for new principals and their changing roles and preparation as well as leadership succession planning, support for new principals, and organizational socialization. Chapter III describes the design and methodology of the study, including the validity of the mixed methods data collection process, population and sample for this study, instrumentation used in the study, the data collection process, data analysis, and the limitations of the study. Chapter IV of this study provides the analysis and presentation of the data collected. Finally, Chapter V of this study describes the findings, both expected and unexpected, of the study, and the researcher's recommendations for further study of the subject.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The responsibilities of the principal have grown and transformed over the past 2 decades, and accordingly so has the role of the principal. In fact, the role of principal has become one of the most important positions in education reform (Barnes, 2012; Goldring et al., 2015; Leithwood et al., 1994; C. Ross, Herrmann, & Angus, 2015; Whitaker, 2003). The job of the principal now involves not just building management, but the entire educational program. This role includes taking on additional responsibilities—academic, programmatic, and socioemotional. Even with additional roles and responsibilities, the need to manage the organization is also very much a part of the job of the principal (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Mette & Scribner, 2014). Now, as in history, the job has changed to meet the needs of society and the students who are served by the educational programs led by principals (Alvoid & Black, 2014; Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014; Broin & New, 2015; Gates et al., 2014).

The changes in the role of the principal can be traced back through decades of school reform initiatives. School reform is necessary due to substandard performance on expectations set forth by laws as well as expectations of the public (Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Dodman, 2014; Mette & Scribner, 2014). Leading the pack in the push for school reform are the reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001), which continues to create a focus on student achievement (Klein, 2015). These changes have made the job of the principal so complex, causing many teachers to never consider becoming school administrators (Herman & Huberman, 2017; Lehman et al., 2017; Stone-Johnson, 2014). That reluctance, coupled with a record number of

principals leaving the profession, has led to a great increase in the need for new principals. Districts must not only be able to recruit new leaders but also retain the leaders they currently have at schools (Briggs et al., 2013; Fuller, 2012; Samuels, 2015; Winter & Morgenthal, 2002). Those changes and the need for new principals have prompted new interest by the education community to focus on improving the socialization of the principal.

Typically, principals begin their socialization as teachers or other certificated roles in schools. They begin to become familiar with the role of the principal by watching their own site leader(s). A teacher who makes the decision to become a principal often begins by enrolling in a principal preparation program for licensing (Bengtson, 2014; Crow, 2006; Heck, 1995; Joppy, 2014). Principal preparation programs are changing to meet new program requirements brought on by the changes in the principal's impact on school improvement, school climate, and teacher quality (Bengtson, 2014; Crow, 2006; Joppy, 2014; Marks, 2013). Principals receive their professional socialization from their preparation program. Once hired, the organizational socialization process begins. Traditionally the most important socialization process occurs in the preparation programs; recent literature focuses on the impact of organizational socialization for the success of new principals (Bengtson, 2014).

This review of the literature examines the historical perspective of the role of the principal and how it has changed over time, the leadership and management theories, and research impacting the kind of leader principals choose to become. This chapter is divided into two main sections: the status of the principal and the socialization of the principal. The status of the principal section reviews the literature on the role of the

principal and the need for new principals. The socialization of the principal section reviews the literature on two aspects of principal socialization: professional and organizational. These topics provide the reader with a full understanding of the issues and the landscape currently impacting the first-year principal and reveal the importance of organizational socialization in providing them with a greater chance for success and job satisfaction (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson et al., 2013; Bennett et al., 2011).

### **The Status of the Principalship**

Reviewing the literature on the role and job of the principal over time including the occupational outlook for the job of principal provides the backdrop to what has evolved into one of the most complex jobs today. With the introduction of the NCLB Act in the late 1990s, came a focus on school improvement giving way to even further study of the role of principals and their impact on schools in several areas (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Deal & Peterson, 1990; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). These areas include studies examining the impact of principals on student achievement, teacher retention, teacher quality, and school culture, making the principal pivotal in school improvement (Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Broin & New, 2015; Dodman, 2014; Goldring et al., 2015; Normore, 2010).

Leadership theories have resulted in list after list of leadership qualities and (Elmore, 2000) approaches. Early literature on school leadership describes the difference between qualities and characteristics of leaders that are different from those of their subordinates. Later, literature began to look at other variables and aspects of leadership and, most recently, examines leadership and change (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, & Dennison, 2003; Elmore, 2000; Greenfield, 1999; Shelley & Locke, 1991). The research

in leadership, and school leadership in particular, has evolved primarily as a result of the growing complexity of the job (Keough & Tobin, 2001; Rigby, 2015; Trujillo & Cooper, 2014). Researchers seek to find the qualities most desirable in those who will lead schools today. Decades into the research on impending principal shortages, the literature finds the need for new principals to be reaching a crisis state (Briggs et al., 2013; Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, & Ikemoto, 2012; Fuller, 2012; Stone-Johnson, 2014). The literature on the need for new principals discusses the number of principals needed, the reasons they leave the role, and, most importantly, strategies to retain and recruit new principals.

### **The Role of the Principal**

Over the years, the role of the principal has changed from building manager to instructional leader. With education reform and updates for the 21st-century learners taking the stage, today's principals need to know how to manage, lead instruction, and implement change within the context and culture of the district in which they are employed (Kay & Greenhill, 2013; Wagner, 2012). Examining the historical perspective and changes in the roles and responsibilities of principals highlights the importance of the principal as a leader. The impact of principals on school and student achievement is due to the leadership approach they take to implement improvement initiatives (Lai, 2015; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014). Understanding the importance and complexity of the role of the principal creates a complete picture of why ensuring the support of first-year principals is critical.

**Historical perspective.** Since their inception, the purpose of schools has always been to produce civic and economically responsible citizens, in the beginning only for

boys. In addition, colonial schools' focus was on moral and religious learning with success being marked by jobs in the church or government (Cubberley, 1922; Glasspool, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Smith & Piele, 1997). Until the 19th century, students were taught in one-room schoolhouses. The rooms were filled with children of mixed ages, abilities, and subjects, all taught by one teacher. With the introduction of the separation between church and state, a need to change the curriculum and organization of schools became necessary (L. W. Anderson & Van Dyke, 1972; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Semel & Sadovnik, 2008). There was now a need for boys to learn skills for work, trade, and college. This created a need for more subjects to be taught, including physical education and some vocational subject matter (Brunner, 1999; Cubberley, 1922; Glasspool, 2007). Over time, the position of head/principal teacher evolved, adding the responsibility of management and organization of the school, in addition to stakeholder communication.

When the term *principal* became separated from the term *teacher*, principals began to evaluate teachers, communicate to school boards, and be the liaison between the school and district office (L. W. Anderson & Van Dyke, 1972; Cubberley, 1922; Reese, 2005; Smith & Piele, 1997). The principal became a strong figure in the community requiring him (no women at that time) to attend community events and serve in several community-wide capacities (Jacobson, 1950). It was John Dewey, known for his education reform ideas, who began to shape American education, and who noted how education and learning are social and interactive processes (Cubberley, 1922; Deal & Peterson, 1990; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Murphy, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1994). Over time more school staff were added to schools including assistant principals. The

assistant principal worked directly under the principal with work focused on school management, sports programs, discipline, and any other non-instruction-related duties (L. W. Anderson & Van Dyke, 1972). Over the years until the 20th century, the principal's role was defined by the ability to provide operational leadership in the school building (Marzano et al., 2005; Sergiovanni, 2001). The reauthorization of the ESEA in 2001, what is known as the NCLB Act dramatically changed the expectations of school leaders. The school principal would from then on be responsible for analyzing and leading the instructional imperatives while still fulfilling the administrative duties of schools. The reauthorization of ESEA did not change these responsibilities (Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, Li, & Pierson, 2013); Marzano et al., 2005; Sergiovanni, 2001).

**Duties and responsibilities of the principal.** Since the one-room schoolhouse, the role of the principal has become vital to every aspect of the school. NCLB required educators to be accountable for student achievement. The law required the assessment of student learning of standards in all core subject areas: reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Schools were accountable for making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward 100% of their students being proficient in the assessed areas. In addition to increased accountability with test results, parents were given the freedom to choose a different school when their home school did not make AYP (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Fullan, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013; Wiley, 2001). With pressure to make AYP and keep students enrolled in their school, principals stood at the center of education reform. Principals and school staff were faced with reassignment and/or termination if their school continued to fail (NCLB, 2001; Fullan, 2014; Schmoker, 2000; Washington-Bass, 2014). Principals were leading a complex school

environment, which included implementing rigorous content standards, high student achievement goals, and mandates from all levels of government.

Under the ESSA (2015), states have more flexibility with determining indicators to measure how they identify schools performing at the bottom 5% of all schools in the state, and in what manner these schools will receive intensive support (A. Klein, 2015). Flexibility places the accountability squarely on the states, which in turn push local school districts to focus on improved quality of the education provided to students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016; A. Klein, 2015). States like California are developing new accountability systems, new teacher and administrator training programs, and ways to involve stakeholders in analyzing the needs of the students (Affeldt, 2015; Fullan, Rincón-Gallardo, & Hargreaves, 2015; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA], Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO]; Wolf & Sands, 2016). School leaders remain at the center of policy discussions around improving schools and outcomes for students.

Change in schools can come in many forms. For example, schools in California recently became subject to a new funding statute called the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) giving local control of budgets to districts allowing them to determine where to spend the money (Wolf & Sands, 2016). Now, districts must create plans with engagement from all stakeholders that address the eight priorities set forth by the state: (a) basic-teachers, instructional materials, and facilities; (b) state standards implementation; (c) parent and stakeholder engagement; (d) student achievement and engagement; (e) student engagement; (f) school climate issues; (g) access to a broad scope of courses; and (h) other areas of performance like Art and PE (EdSource, 2016;



Ed-Trust-West, 2017). The way funding is spent in districts should match the needs associated with the state priorities (Affeldt, 2015; Wolf & Sands, 2016). The LCFF not only impacted how districts and schools are funded but also changed the accountability system. The new accountability system required districts and schools to measure student performance on state and local indicators connected to the eight state priorities (Affeldt, 2015; Fullan, 2011; Wolf & Sands, 2016). At the center of these changes are school principals charged with implementing continuous improvement (Fullan, 2014, 2015).

No matter the change, accountability with the accompanying school reform efforts sparked a plethora of research into school leadership (Affeldt, 2015; Dodman, 2014; Mette & Scribner, 2014). California used the implementation of LCFF to reform school funding, school and district accountability, and the way stakeholders engage around improvement (Affeldt, 2015; Fullan, 2015; Wolf & Sands, 2016). School reform, turnaround schools, and other names for school change have permeated research and educational practice placing a historical emphasis on the importance of school leadership (Fullan, 2004; Herman & Huberman, 2017; Leithwood & Strauss, 2009; Mette & Scribner, 2014; Pope, 2015). Researchers have focused on the role of the school leaders in school reform (DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Fullan et al., 2015; Hargreaves, 2009; Reeves & Flach, 2011).

In 2004 and again in 2014, Fullan provided guidance on pursuing five components of change leadership: (a) have moral purpose, (b) understand change, (c) build relationships, (d) create and sharing knowledge, and (e) make coherence. The Wallace Foundation in a study on school leadership focused on five key responsibilities of the principal: (a) creating a shared vision of academic success; (b) creating a school

climate conducive to learning; (c) building capacity in others; (d) impacting the improvement of instruction; (e) managing people, data, and processes in a way that improves the overall outcomes at the school (Briggs et al., 2013). The themes in the Wallace study can also be found in the very standards upon which principal preparation programs are built. Since 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC, 2007) standards have served as the benchmarks for school administration programs. These six standards (to be covered in depth in the review of principal preparation program literature) have served as the basis for course content and expected outcomes in administrator preparation programs all across the nation.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) compiled research to create a document called “Leadership Matters” (Chester et al., 2010). In it, they explained that principals need to be able to create a vision, be leaders of curriculum and instruction, know how to use assessment to improve instruction, implement sound school-wide discipline practices, build strong community connections, be communication experts, be budget analysts, be managers of facilities, and administer special programs, all while adhering to legal and policy requirements.

No matter the study, it is clear the duties of the modern principal have vastly changed in comparison to those of principals in the early days of the profession. Principals are community leaders who ensure that the school is operating well in every area: instructionally, financially, academically, socially, and functionally (Cole, 2010; Herman & Huberman, 2017; Kay & Greenhill, 2013; Sergiovanni, 2001). Now principals operate through a lens of accountability and competition, pushing the research

community to study the impact they have on student achievement and instructional improvement.

**Impact of the principal.** To understand the importance of the role of the principal, one must first look to explore the principals' direct and indirect impact on the schools they lead. Principals connect to the entire school community from the assistant principal, to other school leaders, teachers, students, families, the school board, the district office, and even leaders in community organizations and businesses (Ikemoto, Taliaferro, Fenton, & Davis, 2014; Thompson & France, 2015; VanTuyle & Hunt, 2013). For decades, research has been conducted to determine the relationship between principals and student achievement (Fink & Rimmer, 2015; Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Marzano et al., 2005; Murphy, 2013). In 2005, Marzano et al. examined and analyzed 69 studies on the connection between school leadership and student achievement data. This study indicated a positive relationship between principal leadership skills and student achievement. Other studies over the years have examined the difference between the achievement of students in effective schools versus the achievement of those in ineffective schools (Clifford, Hansen, & Wraight, 2014; Hargreaves & Fink, 2012; Schmoker, 2016). Students attending effective schools led by effective principals performed 44% better than expected on their standardized tests (Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Donmoyer et al., 2012; Goldring et al., 2015; Owings, Kaplan, & Chappell, 2011). Principals impact student learning in a variety of ways.

Principals impact instruction through hiring and evaluating teachers. Most principals spend their days interacting with adults, mainly teachers. Fullan and Quinn (2015) proposed that principals need to spend their time developing their instructional

team and becoming lead learners. As principals lead teachers, they are responsible for determining the impact each adult is having on student learning (Hattie, 2015; Normore, 2004; Schmoker, 2016; Sun & Leithwood, 2012). Impacting teacher quality significantly influences student outcomes, and thus makes the principal-teacher relationship extremely important (Gross, Booker, & Goldhaber, 2009; Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Moller, 2009; Price, 2012). Studies on teacher turnover and job satisfaction have found principals with good interpersonal communication, an understanding of how to motivate others, and the ability to make teachers feel inspired and valued have higher teacher retention rates (Buchanan et al., 2013; Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014; Shaw & Newton, 2014). The ability to retain teachers is important for student achievement, especially in schools with underserved populations of students. This brings attention to the principal as an instructional leader.

Tschannen-Moran, Bankole, Mitchell, and Moore (2013) studied the effects of instructional leadership on academic press and student achievement. They found that school leadership is strongly related to the conditions that directly influence student academic performance. It is important that principals have the skills necessary to create climates with strong press for academics, such as monitoring teaching and learning, supporting teachers, being a part of professional development, using shared decision-making, and building the capacity of others (Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). The culture of school determines the amount of efficacy experienced by the entire community. Efficacy is one of the most important factors in determining the success a teacher will have in impacting student learning because it is the difference between what teachers believe they can accomplish and what they actually accomplish

(Bickman, Goldring, De Andrade, Breda, & Goff, 2012; Larsen & Derrington, 2012). A principal's ability to support and develop efficacy is a crucial component of leadership (Duyar, Gumus, & Bellibas, 2013; Nir & Hameiri, 2014; Sallee, 2015; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Studies have shown a relationship between principal leaders and the amount of job satisfaction and efficacy felt by the teacher. This impact of principal leadership has caused many to study the principal as an organizational leader.

**The principal as an organizational leader.** Since NCLB, there have been several approaches to school reform; many take into account the role of the principal and the principal's ability to impact the level and quality of instruction students receive (Ferguson, Munoz, Contreras, & Velasquez, 2011; Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Marzano et al., 2005; Schmoker, 2016; Sun & Leithwood, 2012). There were as many different views of leadership as there were characteristics that distinguish leaders from nonleaders. While most research today has shifted from traditional trait or personality-based theories to situational theories, which dictate that the situation determines the leadership skills employed by the leader (Avolio et al., 2009), all contemporary theories can fall under one of three perspectives: leadership as a process or relationship, leadership as a combination of traits or personality characteristics, or leadership as certain behaviors and/or skills. In the more dominant theories of leadership, there exists the notion that, at least to some degree, leadership is a process that involves influence with a group of people toward the realization of goals (Wolinski, 2010). Charry (2012) identified eight leadership theories across many qualities and characteristics depicted in Table 1.

Table 1

*Eight Leadership Theories by Charry*

Theory	Description
Great man	Leadership is innate; people are born with leadership abilities. Leaders in this theory are seen as heroes, and male.
Leadership traits	Leadership traits are natural to some people making them the best fit for leadership. These lists of qualities or traits lead to specific characteristics evident in many leaders.
Contingency	Leadership is dependent upon the environment and the situation. The degree of success is determined by several components: the subordinates, the style of leadership chosen, and the specific situation.
Situational	Leadership is focused on determining the style needed for a given situation. The leader's qualities and style need to fit the situation (e.g., authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-fair).
Participative	Leadership is focused on involving stakeholders in decision-making. In this theory leaders seek input so subordinates are on board with change.
Transactional/management	Leadership is focused on supervision, evaluation, and accountability. Leader communicates clear expectations and guidelines with rewards and consequences.
Transformational/relational	Leadership is focused on making connections with subordinates, which motivates them and gets them committed to the success of the organization.

*Note.* Adapted from Leadership Theories—8 Major Leadership Theories, by K. Charry, 2012 (<http://psychology.about.com/od/leadership/p/leadtheories.htm>).

Some research points to the notion that leaders can become effective through learning a bank of knowledge or skill set. Even those born with leadership traits can benefit from professional learning (Fullan, 2014; Goldring et al., 2015; Northouse, 2014). Theory after theory has sought to unveil the secret recipe of knowledge, skills, personality traits, and behaviors to make the most effective leader. And no matter the theory followed, new principals will need a repertoire of skills and styles to access. This is particularly difficult as an all-time high number of new principals is needed to hit the ground running as they take over schools across the nation.

## Need for New Principals

Echoes of despair regarding the shortage of educators ring throughout the nation (R. Ellis, 2015; Gutterman, 2007; Yaffe, 2016). The shortage of principals in particular is very real; in fact, it is common for many schools in large urban districts to begin the year with no permanent principal (Doyle & Locke, 2014). Principals leave the profession for a variety of reasons from retirement to involuntary transfers back to the classroom. Whatever the reason for leaving, turnover has lasting impacts on school performance (Doyle & Locke, 2014; Hardie, 2015; Samuels, 2015). This is particularly true for schools with large numbers of low-income students (Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014). When principal turnover occurs, any improvement initiatives are either halted or stalled until the new principal can gain enough authority to get them going again (Fuller, 2012). The complexity of the role not only makes it difficult to retain principals, but it also impacts recruitment (Farley-Ripple et al., 2012; Hardie, 2015; Versland, 2013). The issues surrounding the need for principals are important to understand as they convey the complexity of issues districts face as they try to find ways to recruit and retain site leaders.

**The current status.** There is a critical need to find qualified and equipped school leaders ready to take on the challenge of school reform and accountability. Research indicates that over the past 3 years roughly 26% of principals either have retired or left the profession (Burkhauser et al., 2012; NCES, 2015). Over the past 20 years, the literature on the need for principals has grown. Organizations such as the Educational Research Service (ERS), the NAESP, and the NASSP have confirmed and reaffirmed the principal shortage time and time again over the years. Studies all over the country have

been conducted in order to get a clear picture of the status of the principal shortage (NCES, 2015; Roza, 2003; Samuels, 2015; Stone-Johnson, 2014; Whitaker, 2003; Winter & Morgenthal, 2002).

Schools experience a new principal every 3 to 4 years with most schools averaging 2.8 principals in a 10-year period (Gutterman, 2007; Hervey, 2013; NCES, 2015; Roza, 2003). Some studies suggest that there is not a shortage of individuals having the appropriate credentials but rather a shortage of those possessing the qualities sought to lead schools (Bêteille et al., 2012; NCES, 2015; Turnbull, 2015; Tyre, 2016). Bêteille et al. (2012) found that the annual principal turnover rate in school districts across the country ranges between 15% and 30% each year, with the highest turnovers occurring in schools serving low-income, minority, and low-achieving students.

In California, leader organizations such as the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and the California County Superintendents Education Services Association (CCSESA) believe it is important to stay up to date on the need for school administrators (Fong & Makkonen, 2011). The Regional Education Lab at WestEd published a study on the effects of the projected retirement and student enrollment changes on the need for school administrators in California (Fong & Makkonen, 2011). The study broke the state into 11 different regions and found that from 2012 through 2015 California needed an average of 9% more school administrators due to retirement and enrollment changes. With the number of new principals needed reaching new heights, researchers have sought to understand why principals leave their jobs.

**Why principals leave.** The literature suggests that principals leave their jobs for a variety of reasons. Involuntary termination and principal choice are among the top



reasons for principals leaving low-performing schools (Bêteille et al., 2011; Tyre, 2016). Many principals do not plan to stay through retirement, seeking promotions or better schools (Bêteille et al., 2011; Turnbull, 2015; Tyre, 2016). Other reasons principals leave include requests from the superintendent, reassignment, and removal due to political conflict (Farley-Ripple et al., 2012). In addition, conflict with staff and/or parents can also be a reason a principal leaves a school.

While most experienced principals change schools within their district, less experienced principals move to new school districts (Bêteille et al., 2011; Cullen et al., 2016; Fong & Makkonen, 2011; Gutterman, 2007). Positive working conditions, strong district support, and relationships across all levels of the district and school community influence the principal's decision to stay (Fong & Makkoneh, 2011). It can therefore be inferred that the lack of district support, positive working conditions, and positive relationships can make principals less likely to stay. The issue of retaining and recruiting school leaders is at the core of the principal shortage.

The complexity of the principal's job makes the role unattractive to teachers. The pay and long hours add on to the reasons individuals holding the qualifying certificates do not seek to move into the principal role (Burkhauser et al., 2012; Samuels, 2015; Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011; Tyre, 2016). The job to outside observers can seem like an impossible endeavor. With the average principal making a similar salary to long-term teachers, pay is a major barrier to retention and recruitment (Fuller, 2012; Gutterman, 2007; Samuels, 2015; Superville, 2014). Over the years, the constant moving target of principal preparation requirements makes it difficult for new leaders to be ready to lead, leaving those considering the job believing it is too difficult.

Several studies determined that there is not a shortage of individuals with the right credentials and experience, but rather there is a lack of individuals with the leadership skills necessary and the willingness to take on the role of principal. The research points to the need for the human resource department's screening process to be aligned with the expectations for candidates held by the superintendent (Briggs et al., 2013; Burkhauser et al., 2012; Fuller, 2012; Gutterman, 2007). The complexity of the job keeps teachers from applying, even when asked by leaders to do so. Roza (2003) suggested research examining the barriers that keep aspiring principals from pursuing the role and seeking ways to clarify the connection between having the right qualifications and having the desired characteristics to be successful. There is an inherent difference between qualification and characteristics. A barrier exists for those who have the qualifications but do not possess the desired characteristics districts look for in new leaders.

Principals leave their jobs for a variety of reasons. Most leave schools because they are being transferred either to another school as a principal, or they have been reassigned back to the classroom. Some decide to leave simply because the job is too hard for them. But whether they leave because they have had a long satisfying career and are ready to retire, or because they have been fired, a turnover rate of 20% or more is having lasting effects on schools (Fuller, 2012). The literature on the impact of principal turnover shows that it is detrimental to school success.

**Impact of principal turnover.** No matter the reason for principal departure, it is clear that high turnover has a large and direct impact on schools. The research indicates that leadership changes can cause lower student achievement, school reform efforts to stop, and teacher morale to lower creating fertile ground for a culture resistant to change

(Farley-Ripple et al., 2012; Pope, 2015; Samuels, 2015; Winter & Morgenthal, 2002). In addition, turnover can make the connection between employees and leadership weak as well as create a lack of focus and instability in the workplace (Bêteille et al., 2011). Most importantly, principal turnover can cause teacher turnover. These various effects of principal turnover can impact schools for years (Burkhauser et al., 2012; Fuller, 2012; Samuels, 2015).

Various studies have shown that principals account for 25% of student achievement (Fullan, 2014; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Moreover, low-income students stand to be impacted the most. Research on schools with the most skillful administrators aligns with research on schools with the best teachers. Effective principals tend to move to less-complex schools with middle to upper class students and very little diversity (Meyer & Macmillan, 2011; Samuels, 2015; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014; Superville, 2014). As these principals leave low-performing, struggling schools, students in these schools lose the momentum of changes being made to increase their learning outcomes (Fullan, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2016; Samuels, 2015; Schmoker, 2016). It can take up to 5 years to regain the momentum lost when a principal leaves a school, during which time student achievement can dip or become stagnant.

School change requires consistent and persistent leadership over multiple years. When leaders stay at a school for a number of years, especially a school with many low-income students, whole school outcomes can increase (Fullan, 2014; Mette & Scribner, 2014). It takes about five years to implement a shared vision for improvement. Allowing time for the principal to learn and grow with the school and to create the coherence and alignment needed for sustainable change to take place is crucial (Allen et al., 2015;

Dodman, 2014; Leithwood et al., 1994; Mette & Scribner, 2014). Schools in need of improvement and experiencing principal turnover will likely not be able to sustain the changes responsible for any improvement in learning (Fuller, 2012). Not only does principal turnover impact school change initiatives, it is also costly.

“Churn,” a report provided by the School Leaders Network attempted to qualify and quantify the fiscal impact of principal turnover (Superville, 2014). According to this report, \$75,000 is the estimated cost to hire a new principal. With many large districts needing to hire around 25 new administrators a year, the number quickly rises to almost \$2,000,000 (Superville, 2014). Many districts can reduce these costs by hiring from within. This might reduce the cost to roughly \$6,000 per new hire. Across the nation, a loss of about 20% of school leaders a year makes the cost of turnover nationwide to be somewhere around \$36,000,000 in hiring costs alone (Superville, 2014). This does not include the cost of support many districts provide new principals, which may include mentors, professional development, and other support structures. The costs for turnover noted in the literature make it imperative for officials at the local, state, and national level to look for strategies to retain their principals (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2006; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014; Winter & Morgenthal, 2002). Thus, the research on the recruitment and retention of leaders indicates the necessity of a structured approach to solve the dilemma of the need for new principals.

**Recruiting and retaining principals.** Principals impact all aspects of school effectiveness, thus making the retention and recruitment of school site leaders vitally important to school systems (Bennett et al., 2011; Fuller, 2012; Hitt, Tucker, & Young, 2012; Mette & Scribner, 2014; Sutchter, Podolsky, & Espinoza, 2017). Authorities at the

local, state, and federal level are focused on developing policies and practices supporting the development and success of new leaders. Research throughout the world has uncovered a variety of issues connected to this issue (Hitt et al., 2012; Superville, 2014; Woody, 2014):

- Principal preparation is often insufficient to prepare new leaders adequately.
- Professional learning for principals is often hit or miss in its effectiveness in providing the learning needed for principals to be successful.
- Many barriers to career advancement and job satisfaction exist and have increased over the years.
- Educators are leaving the profession, creating exorbitant needs for teacher and principals.

Over the years, there has been concern over the lack of qualified people to lead in the identified district culture and environment (Bêteille et al., 2011; Briggs et al., 2013; Bush, 2016; Hervey, 2013; Lovie, 2018). These very aspects of district culture, political climate, values and norms impact the ability to recruit and retain principals. Some themes in the literature are important to take note of as policy and change in practice is developed (Fullan, 2014; Jackson, 2010; Pope, 2015; Superville, 2014):

- Leadership should be distributed.
- Leadership teams can support consistency in schools.
- Experienced principals can be used as lead learners for others.
- Schools need to be engrossed in research.

Any discussion on strategies, policies, and practices used to develop, recruit, and support principals most often leads to a discussion on the socialization of principals, either professionally and/or organizationally.

### **The Socialization of the Principal**

Examining the literature around the professional and organizational socialization process of principals can help create an understanding of how implementing a formal socialization process can be used to create effective leaders (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014; Woodley, 2018). The socialization process exists both as new leaders enter their new role and as they remain in the role across time. The literature review in this section defines socialization and examines the various forms of socialization practices utilized by organizations and specific programs designed to socialize principals.

In general, socialization is defined as how the new member learns the social norms and processes connected to a larger environment (G. M. Steyn, 2013). Principal socialization is defined as the experience of individuals as they experience and become acclimated to the role of principal through personal experience, principal preparation programs, and in the organization in which they begin their career (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Gawlik, 2019; Joppy, 2014; Spillane & Anderson, 2014; G. M. Steyn, 2013). Socialization is not a one-time experience but occurs over time and begins well before an individual enters the role of principal. It includes how and in what manner the individual makes sense of his or her new role, as well as how the hiring organization initiates the relationship between the new hire and the organization (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Washington-Bass, 2013; Woodley, 2018).

Not all new principals in an organization are new to the role of principal or new to the organization. To this end, the literature spends some time on leadership succession planning.

Bengtson et al.'s (2013) study on principal socialization discussed three types of socialization: anticipatory, professional (formal programs and job experience), and organizational. In the study, a visual representation of the three types of socialization was provided and is depicted in Figure 1.

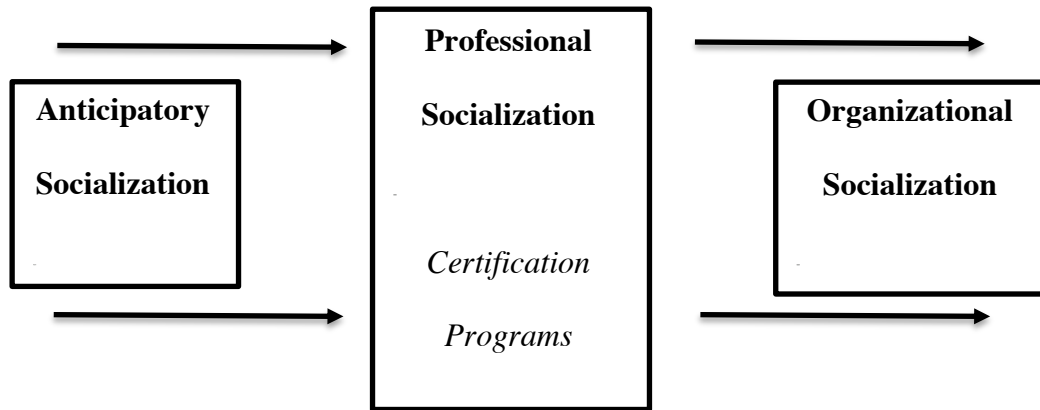


Figure 1. Three types of socialization. School systems' practices of Controlling Socialization During Principal Succession: Looking Through the Lens of an Organizational Socialization Theory, by E. Bengtson, S. J. Zepeda, & O. Parylo, 2013, *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 41(2), 143.

This model depicts what has been traditionally thought of as the progression of socialization, with the middle figure being the largest because of the role preparation programs have traditionally played in the preparation of principals. In this model, each type of socialization is viewed as being separate from the others. In this way, one could surmise that the lack of adequately qualified and/or prepared leaders directly corresponds to the size of the figures, placing the most responsibility on the preparation programs. However, organizations play a large role in the socialization of principals. Bengtson et

al. (2013) proposed that in reality organizational socialization has the greatest impact on the socialization of principals (Figure 2), though each type of socialization is important and plays a significant part in how new principals are assimilated and acculturated into the profession (Bengtson et al., 2013; Joppy, 2014). The review of literature in this section focuses on professional and organizational socialization.

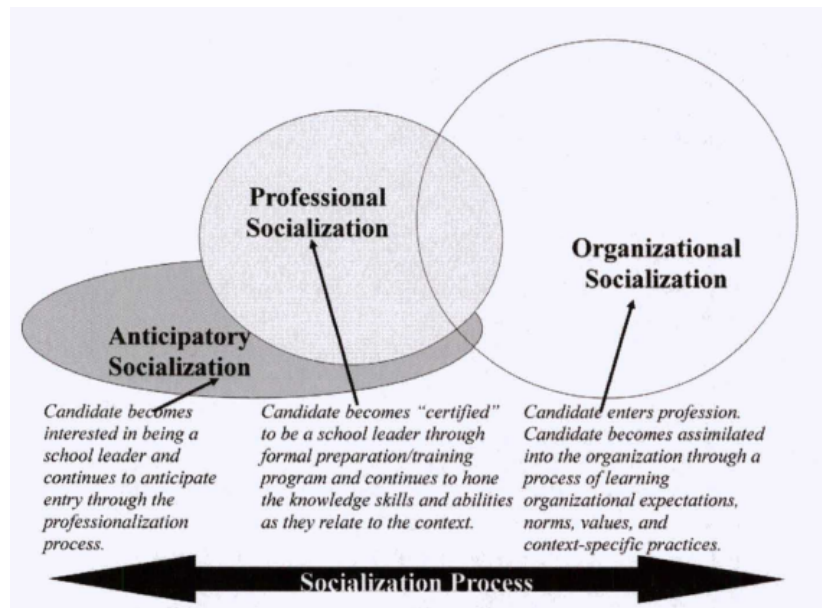


Figure 2. The realistic socialization process. From "Principals' Socialization," by E. D. Bengtson, 2014, *Journal of School Leadership*, 24(4), p. 734.

### Professional Socialization

Professional socialization occurs before the candidate takes on the new role in a formal preparation program. However, leadership succession planning can also prepare candidates for their new role (Bennett et al., 2011; Carttar et al., 2015). When it comes to the professional socialization of the principal, as stated before, principal preparation programs traditionally have taken the lion's share of the responsibility for this part of an aspiring principal's socialization. However, research on best practices (Darling-



Hammond et al., 2007; Hardie, 2015; Kuehn-Schettler, 2015; Mendels, 2016) reveals that the socialization of the principal is best done when preparation programs responsible for professional socialization partner with districts responsible for organizational socialization. This practice contextualizes the learning and solidifies the socialization process overall (Bengtson et al., 2013).

**Principal preparation programs.** According to Gill (2013), “Every district wants its schools to shine, and more are recognizing that in order to raise performance, they need well- trained principals who can shake up the status quo and create an environment where all students flourish” (p. 24). In order to do this, Fullan (2014) argued that school leaders need to be able to align their leadership within the context of the district. If having good leadership is a prerequisite for school success, then the importance of having good programs to prepare school leaders is paramount. Many different kinds of principal preparation programs exist based primarily on individual state standards and expectations of principal performance (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012; Donmoyer et al., 2012; Larsen & Derrington, 2012).

California recently underwent changes to its administrator preparation program. In the state’s Learning to Lead system, aspiring administrators begin with 5 years of experience as a credentialed educator and then continue through a realization of leadership growth, choosing and enrolling in a preparation program, and once hired, participating in an induction program during the first 2 years of employment as well as ongoing learning throughout their career as administrators (CTC, 2017). California administrator preparation programs must develop their programs to adhere to four different program areas with 14 standards in all. The four areas for program development

are (a) program design and coordination, (b) curriculum, (c) field experiences in the program, and (d) candidate competence and performance. The curriculum is designed to provide potential administrators with the necessary knowledge and experience they need to excel in the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPE; CTC, 2017). The CAPEs were developed out of the restructuring of the administrative services credentialing system describing the foundation of knowledge new leaders need, while the more complex California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL) would be used for ongoing and future learning (CTC, 2017). There are 20 CAPEs divided into six categories of knowledge for aspiring principals to learn depicted in Table 2.

No matter the state, there is a great need for quality principal preparation and licensure programs. In an article sponsored by The Wallace Foundation (Gill, 2013), five lessons for school leadership training were outlined:

1. Principal training programs need to be more selective. . . .
2. Aspiring principals need training that prepares them to lead improved instruction. . . .
3. Districts must exercise their “consumer power” to raise the quality of principal training so that new hires better meet their needs. . . .
4. States must use their authority to influence the quality of leadership training. . . .
5. Principals need high-quality mentoring and professional development once they are on the job. (pp. 26-27)

Table 2

*The CAPEs and Their Connected Categories*

Category	CAPE
Visionary Leadership	1. Developing and Articulating a Vision of Teaching and Learning for the School Consistent with the Local Education Agency’s Overall Vision and Goals
	2. Developing a Shared Commitment to the Vision Among All Members of the School Community
	3. Leading by Example to Promote Implementation of the Vision - Sharing Leadership with Others in the School Community
Instructional Leadership	4. Promoting Implementation of K-12 Standards, Pedagogical Skills, Effective Instructional Practices and Student Assessments for Content Instruction
	5. Evaluating, Analyzing, and Providing Feedback on the Effectiveness of Classroom Instruction to Promote Student Learning and Teacher Professional Growth
	6. Demonstrating Understanding of the School and Community Context, Including the Instructional Implications of Cultural/Linguistic, Socioeconomic, and Political Factors
	7. Communicating with the School Community about Schoolwide Outcomes Data and Improvement Goals
School Improvement Leadership	8. Working with Others to Identify Student and School Needs and Developing a Data-Based School Growth Plan
	9. Implementing Change Strategies Based on Current, Relevant Theories and Best Practices in School Improvement
	10. Identifying and Using Available Human, Fiscal, and Material Resources to Implement the School Growth Plan
	11. Instituting a Collaborative, Ongoing Process of Monitoring and Revising the Growth Plan Based on Student Outcomes
Professional Learning and Growth Leadership	12. Modeling Life-Long Learning and Job-Related Professional Growth
	13. Helping Teachers Improve Their Individual Professional Practice Through Professional Growth Activities
	14. Identifying and Facilitating a Variety of Professional and Personal Growth Opportunities for Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Other Members of the School Community in Support of the Educational Program
Organizational and Systems Leadership	15. Understanding and Managing the Complex Interaction of All of the School’s Systems to Promote Teaching and Learning
	16. Developing, Implementing, and Monitoring the School’s Budget
	17. Implementing California School Laws, Guidelines, and Other Relevant Federal, State, and Local Requirements and Regulations
Community Leadership	18. Representing and Promoting the School’s Accomplishments and Needs to the LEA and the Public
	19. Involving the Community in Helping Achieve the School’s Vision and Goals

*Note.* From Credentials FAQ—General Questions, by California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2007 (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/FAQ/faq-prof-growth.html>).

According to the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) (2012), a consortium of major stakeholders in educational leadership and policy, preparation programs must include three dimensions.

1. Awareness-acquiring concepts, information, definitions and procedures

2. Understanding-interpreting, integrating and using knowledge and skills
3. Application-apply knowledge and skills to new or specific opportunities or problems. (p. 8)

Several studies have been done to examine the features of exemplary principal leadership programs (Allen et al., 2015; Donmoyer et al., 2012; Hayashi & Fisher-Adams, 2015; Huang et al., 2012; Orr & Orphanos, 2011). As the president of Teachers College at Columbia, Levine (2005) conducted what would be known as the foundational study on administrator preparation programs. Levine outlined nine areas to be used to judge the quality of administrator preparation programs, depicted in Table 3:

Table 3

*Nine Areas Used to Evaluate Preparation Programs*

Area	Description
Purpose	A clear purpose focused on the development of school leaders and preparing them to face current challenges.
Content coherence	Content should align to overall purpose of the program's organization.
Content balance	A balance between theory and practice should be portrayed in the content.
Faculty	Comprised of both researchers and practitioners who hold credentials or degrees in the areas in which they are teaching.
Admissions	Criteria limits acceptance to only those candidates who have what it takes to become successful school leaders.
Degrees	Degrees given should be aligned with the profession.
Research	Based on previous literature, written on firm concepts, and statistically sound.
Finances	The program should be adequately funded.
Assessment	Assessment of the program is a part of a continuous improvement process.

*Note.* Adapted from *Educating School Leaders*, by A. Levine, 2005 (New York, NY: Education Schools Project).

At the time of Levine's (2005) study, he found the overall quality of education programs to be poor. Since then, literature has been focused on understanding the components necessary for an exemplary principal preparation program based on Levine's

original nine categories (Darling Hammond et al., 2007; Leithwood et al., 1994; Orr, 2006; Orr & Barber, 2007; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Wang et al., 2018). When it comes to purpose, well-defined content with a focus on leadership and improvement was noted as key to developing strong preparation programs. Programs should be staffed with knowledgeable faculty. Content should not only align to the institution but also to standards. Content should include instructional leadership, practical learning activities, support structures such as cohort membership, and internships. Admission quality should be magnified by targeted recruitment. The last four areas: degrees, research, finance, and program assessment were no different than what Levine (2005) uncovered and/or were not addressed by the other researchers.

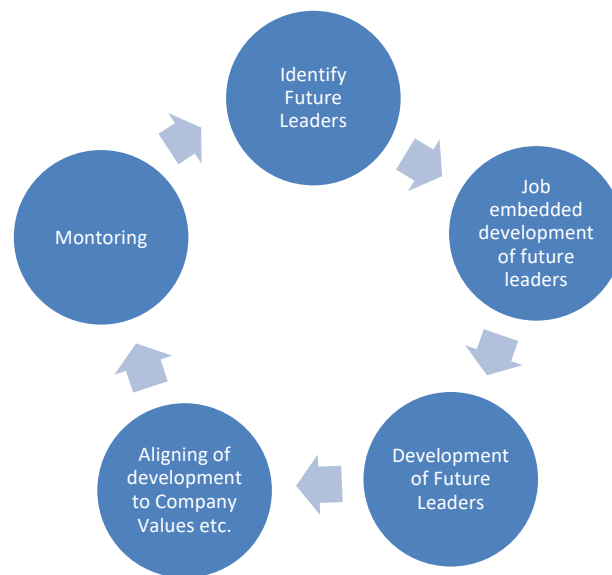
Many state standards for administrators are aligned with the standards published by the NPBEA, the ISLLC Standards. These standards have served as the basis for course content and expected outcomes in administrator preparation programs for many years and were recently updated in 2014. NPBEA published a white paper (Hitt et al., 2012) discussing the practice of creating pipelines to school leadership. In the white paper, Hitt et al. (2012) noted how the education profession's caliber of leaders in schools and school districts, and the conditions in which they work, may be the best form of recruitment. Establishing rigorous selection standards encourages candidates who have relevant and competitive skills to aspire to join the ranks of educational leadership, and involving stakeholders in the process affords an authentic and grounded process (Black, 2011; Dodman, 2014; Gates et al., 2014; Kearney & Valadez, 2015).

Preparation programs are more conducive to creating candidates, which districts expect and desire more when they are district-led leadership programs in which districts

build their own pipelines to becoming school administrators (Calareso, 2013; Hardie, 2015; Marks, 2013; Myung, Loeb, & Horng, 2011). NPBEA makes four recommendations for this work: (a) “develop district-university partnerships and encourage recruitment from within the district,” (b) “reduce the financial burden of leadership preparation,” (c) “recruit candidates who reflect the rich diversity of school communities,” and (d) “promote better working conditions for educational leaders” (Hitt et al., 2012, pp. 3-4). Just as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) call for more individualized instruction, so must these programs as they seek to meet the needs of the individual potential new leader and the districts seeking to employ them. But once they are employees, what supports their success? Districts are beginning to provide their new administrators with an induction program that in some cases include a mentor as well.

**Leadership succession planning.** When districts go about creating their own pipeline to becoming a site leader, they are beginning to conduct purposeful leader succession planning. Calareso (2013) defined succession planning as the process used to identify future leaders in an organization and to develop them so they are ready to move into leadership positions. Friedman (1986) provided some of the earliest research on leadership succession planning in organizations. He found that organizations need to have a controlled succession system that reflects the high priority succession planning should have in the organization. Though Friedman’s work focused on the business sector, the same has been said in the research on succession planning in the educational setting (Bennett et al., 2011; Calareso, 2013; Marks, 2013; Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011).

Succession research (Bengtson et al., 2013; Bennett et al., 2011; Hardie, 2015; Marks, 2013) points to some clear common findings on successful leadership succession planning. First, the literature suggests that succession planning begins with a focus on identifying a pool of highly skilled potential leaders (Bennett et al., 2011; Bower, 2007; Calareso, 2013; Yucedag-Ozcan & Metcalfe, 2018). Second, organizations should create a plan for developing the potential leaders with as much job-embedded work as possible (Bengtson et al., 2013; Bennett et al., 2011; Calareso, 2013; Hardie, 2015). Third, succession planning and development of potential leaders should be aligned with the vision, mission, goals, and culture of the organization (Bengtson et al., 2013; Calareso, 2013; Carttar et al., 2015). Each organization leader needs to take an active role in creating and implementing the succession plan. Finally, leadership succession planning programs should include a monitoring component. This process is depicted in Figure 3.



*Figure 3.* The leadership succession process.

The involvement of all school district departments is critical for succession planning. Russell and Sabina (2014) found that these leaders play a role not only in

identifying potential leaders but also in providing developmental experiences connected to each of the departments. Districts are made up of many different departments. These departments together create a nested system of support for new principals, and thus can provide great insight into the information and experiences needed to develop leaders (Bennett et al., 2011; Hardie, 2015). They also play a huge role not only in the new leader's socialization process but particularly in the transition assistance provided.

### **Organizational Socialization**

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) defined organizational socialization as the process an individual experiences to acquire the social knowledge and skills needed in order to take on a new role in an organization. Much of the research on organizational socialization begins with the work of Van Maanen and Schein, who offered an early perspective on the organizational socialization process. Organizational socialization refers to the broader and more extensive process a newcomer experiences in the first few years of employment (Armstrong, 2012; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011; Donmoyer et al., 2012). The practice of having formalized organizational socialization processes are well researched in the business sector (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; H. J. Klein & Polin, 2012; Korte et al., 2015; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). And in the past 20 years, research in school leader socialization has also surfaced (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Glasspool, 2007; Joppy, 2014).

Research on the socialization of principals calls out a need to focus on the approach used to socialize new principals (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Daugherty, 2017; Joppy, 2014; Lashway, 2003; G. M. Steyn, 2013). Leithwood et al.



(1994) found that while district effects on socialization experiences were strong, most of the leaders perceived the experiences as moderately helpful, and few viewed the experiences as negative. Outside of a formal mentoring program, principals are primarily socialized individually, informally, and with little intentionality (Bengtson, 2014; Bennett et al., 2011; G. M. Steyn, 2013; Woody, 2014). Each interaction a new employee has within the organization acts as a socializing agent and influences that employee's acclimation to the new role. The same would hold true for a new principal. The principal's regular interaction with department leaders, other site administrators, and other members of the school community all influence how he or she is socialized into the new role (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Gawlik, 2019; Spillane & Anderson, 2014; G. M. Steyn, 2013). Every time there is a change in leadership, socialization will either intentionally or unintentionally occur. An intentional practice to begin new employees on an intentional socialization experience includes support transitioning into the position when first hired, which continues over a period of time.

**Support transitioning into the new role.** In many cases when new principals are hired, they sign their contract and are given the keys to the school. It is critical districts pay particular attention to the process used to acclimate new principals to the new district and school. In other job sectors it is sometimes insufficiently called onboarding (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014; Benzinger, 2016; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Graybill, Carpenter, Offord, Piorun, & Shaffer, 2013). Bauer and Erdogan (2014) stated, "The faster new hires feel welcome and prepared for their jobs, the faster they will be able to successfully contribute to the firm's mission" (p. 1). Onboarding was a term originally used to differentiate between the kind of orientation done for executives versus

orientation done for other employees (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Graybill et al., 2013; H. J. Klein & Polin, 2012). Over time, the two terms have been used interchangeably.

Given the complexity and evolving role of the school principal, districts can decrease the amount of time new principals spend acclimating to the new job and save time and money on corrections by implementing a strong process for supporting the organizational socialization of new principals as they transition into their new role (Bengtson et al., 2013; Calareso, 2013; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2006; Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011). Once on the school campus, the new principal must begin to acclimate to the new role by beginning to develop relationships conducive to becoming the legitimate leader of the school (Armstrong, 2012; Bengtson, 2014; Spillane & Anderson, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013). In addition to the school site acclimation, new leaders must figure out how to be accepted into the work groups of other principals in order to impact the organization (Bengtson et al., 2013; Myung et al., 2011; G. M. Steyn, 2013; Thessin et al., 2019). A clear and concise process to quickly acclimate new leaders to both the school and district culture will allow them to have a greater impact in a short amount of time. The literature on principal turnover has highlighted the necessity to quickly impact and continue improvement strategies.

There are many frameworks for organizational socialization in the literature (Bauer et al., 2012; Chillakanti, 2013; Fursman, 2014; W. E. Ross, Huang, & Jones, 2014; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Bauer (2013) provided four clear areas of organizational socialization through four distinct levels: (a) “compliance,” the lowest level, provides information and instruction in basic legal and policy related rules, regulations and procedures; (b) “clarification” involves everything the new employee

needs to understand his or her new job and the expectations that come with it; (c) “culture” provides the new employee with the information about formal and informal norms; and (d) “connection” refers to the vital relationships and networks the new employee must establish (p. 4). The fourth and final level is indicating how new principals begin to have an impact on schools.

In their study, H. J. Klein and Polin (2012) defined what they call onboarding as a broad range of efforts used when attempting to acclimate an employee across the organization. Specifically, they stated, “Onboarding concerns exactly what is done—the practices, programs, and policies implemented by an organization or its agents and experienced by newcomers” (Klein & Polin, 2012, p. 269). Klein and Polin discussed the important role of socializing agents providing different information across the organization. Department leads play a critical role in the organizational socialization of new principals. In Figure 4, the typical organization of a school district is depicted. The leaders of each department depicted human resources, fiscal services, special education, student services, maintenance and operations, and curriculum and instruction as playing a pivotal role in the initial socialization or onboarding of new principals.

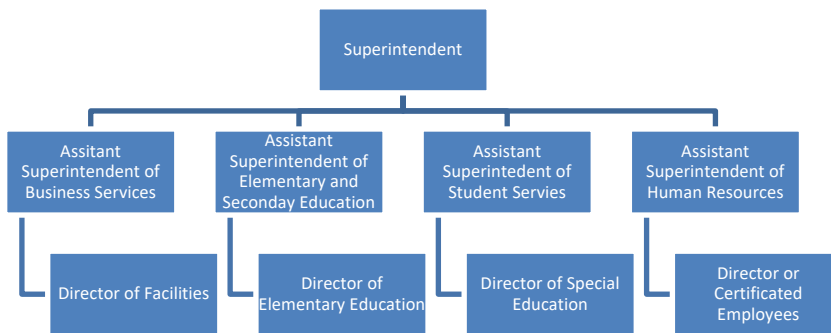


Figure 4. Typical district organizational chart.

**Support for new principals.** Many states and districts alike have developed a myriad of induction and/or new principal supports. These supports can be as simple as a one-shot orientation to the district or as extravagant as one-on-one coaching with specific identified outcomes related to the performance standards. Research on the first year of induction for new principals reveals that there are very few structured support programs in districts for new principals.

The word *induction* is defined as “the formal act or process of placing someone into a new job, position, government office, etc.” or an initial experience (“Induction,” n.d., English Language Learners Definition of Induction). Induction for principals in many ways can determine their success and longevity as a school leader (Bengtson, 2014; Bush, 2016; Russell & Sabina, 2014). Many districts and some states implemented formal induction programs. As mentioned before, California requires a 2-year induction program with several hours of one-on-one coaching as the center of experience (CTC, 2017). The dramatic changes in the role of the principals over the years have impacted the desire for people to become principals or experienced principals to stay in the role (Doyle & Locke, 2014; Russell & Sabina, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013). Principals need support to ease the stress of the job and make it more attractive to stay or enter into the profession.

Studies (Bush, 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Tyre, 2016) have found that new principals are often not prepared for their new role, especially when it comes to instructional leadership and implementing school improvement initiatives. The new principal needs the desire to do the work and be successful at it. Induction programs should be built on a clear vision with a coherent focus on career development and the

skills and abilities needed to move forward (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Lochmiller, 2014; Wilson, 2016). Lochmiller (2014) identified four common traits among induction programs: recruitment, focus on new principals, intense work on improvement in the areas of instruction and transformational leadership, and a clear set of standards.

Districts working to build strong, effective principals need to have induction programs that focus on school performance and accountability within their improvement initiatives (Mitgang & Gill, 2012). In most cases, district created induction program contain a mentoring or coaching component.

There are several studies on mentoring of new principals (Corell, 2010; Mitgang, 2007; Thessin et al., 2019; Versland, 2013; Washington-Bass, 2013). The Wallace Foundation, known for research in education leadership, conducted a study of mentoring programs in two districts in New York City (Mitgang, 2007). They did so after recognizing that in the year 2000, over half of the nation's states had adopted mentoring programs as a component of administrator support. This trend supports the idea that ongoing training and support are necessary components to maintaining highly skilled school leaders. However, they found many of the programs that exist are not living up to their potential, and the same holds true in the literature today (Augustine-Shaw, 2015; Jackson, 2010; Kingham, 2013; Mitgang, 2007; Russo, 2013). Mentor programs today consist of checklists and buddy associations not built to truly support new principals in the complexities of learning they encounter in the first year. The literature shows the following to be true for many existing mentoring programs:

1. Vague or unclear goals.
2. Insufficient focus on instructional leadership and/or overemphasis on managerial role.

3. Weak or nonexistent training for mentors.
4. Insufficient mentoring time or duration to provide enough sustained support to prepare new school leaders for their multifaceted job challenges.
5. Lack of meaningful data to assess benefits or build a credible case for sustained support.
6. Underfunding that contributes to all of these shortcomings (Hood, 2015; Taylor, Pelletier, Trimble, & Ruiz, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013).

Studies reveal benefits for all involved when mentor programs are done well: the mentee, the organization, and the mentor. The most notable of all benefits is the support and alignment of practices. Mentoring can provide new school leaders with strong support and, if done well, can help them be successful in their first year and many years to come (Augustine-Shaw, 2015; Hood, 2015; Mitgang, 2007). In several states and districts, mentoring is one component of the formal induction program.

Corell (2010) conducted a review of data from the 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey Principal Questionnaire. It was found that participation in both mentoring and networks as a means of induction was correlated with job satisfaction and that it impacts how the principal felt about the district. In fact, Corell found that principals participating in networks were 40% more likely to enjoy working in their district. Principals who participate in mentoring and networks have someone they have connected to professionally. This serves as a foundation of support as they journey through their first years as a school administrator. Some states have gone even further in their induction programs by offering new administrators the experience of coaching.

An article titled, “Support Principals, Transform Schools” (Aguilar, Goldwasser, & Tank-Crestetto, 2011), described the coaching program in Oakland Unified School District in Northern California. The coaches in this program sought to build trust with the client by creating a plan focused on of the following areas: “instructional leadership, professional learning communities and shared leadership, quality teaching and learning, and community and family engagement” (p. 71). They worked with the principal to develop a comprehensive plan of action for their work together.

Programs like Oakland’s developed across the nation. Bickman et al. (2012) found that participation in a comprehensive coaching program enhanced the teachers’ perception of the principal’s instructional leadership and trust. This study coupled the coaching with feedback from surveys given to staff. The participant was then coached on ways to respond (Bickman et al., 2012). Coaching programs similar to Oakland go a long way in succession planning and in the process used to acclimate the new principal to his or her new role. Whether districts are using mentoring, buddies, or a formal structured induction program, they realize that new principals need support well into their first few years of experience as a principal. States are also realizing this important opportunity as a way to improve the quality of leaders while making the role of principal a more attractive career move for teachers.

### **Synthesis Matrix**

A detailed synthesis matrix was developed by the researcher to assist in the organization of the literature presented in this chapter, emphasizing the areas of significant existing research and highlighting the research gaps (see Appendix A). The information was used in developing the research questions and data collection tools for

this study. There were two matrices developed from the research for this study. The first matrix is an overview of the literature for the study with the following sections:

(a) Changing Role of the Principal, (b) Impact of Principals on School Achievement, (c) Increased Need for New Principals, (d) Supports for New Principals, (e) Stages and Components of Socialization, (f) Principal Succession Planning, (g) Principal Preparation Programs, (h) Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Domains, (i) Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success, (j) Organizational Socialization Defined, and (k) Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization. The second matrix synthesizes the literature around organizational socialization. Table 4 shows the analysis of the second matrix resulting in five categories for domains with aligned content and explanations, which provides the conceptual framework for this study.

Table 4

*Analysis Organizational Socialization Components and Content*

Component	Content	Explanation
Compliance	Performance, task socialization	Basic legal and policy related rules and regulations
Clarification	Language, performance, task socialization	Understanding of the new job and related tasks and expectations
Culture	Politics, history, organizational socialization, organizational goals and values	Informal and formal organizational norms related communication, processes, and social rules
Connections	People, group socialization	Group socialization opportunities, connections to important people in the district
Role of organization leaders	People, group socialization, history, organizational goals and values.	Leaders across the organization's role in socializing new leaders.

### Conclusion

Since the role of the principal began, principals have supervised teachers and worked as building managers. Over the past two centuries, the roles and responsibilities



of the principal have been shaped and reshaped to meet the demands and expectations of local, state, and federal guidelines. Today's school leaders are consumed with the improvement of every aspect of the school and student community (Carter, Armenakis, Feild, & Mossholder, 2013; Dodman, 2014; Normore, 2004). Thus, researchers and school improvement/reform zealots have hailed the principal as the most central component to increased learning outcomes for students. The literature has had many different focuses on the principal: instructional leadership, leadership qualities and characteristics, turn around school leadership, and countless others (Broin & New, 2015; Dodman, 2014). The literature has not only uncovered what it takes to be an effective and successful school leader but also how to build capacity in others, communicate and act on a clear vision, collaborate with stakeholders, and serve as the lead learner in their schools (Alvoid & Black, 2014; Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Corcoran et al., 2013). This is no easy task, and the shortage of candidates to take on the role compounds the leadership problem facing many states and local districts.

The need for principals is caused mostly by school administrators leaving the field each year (Béteille et al., 2012; Superville, 2014; Washington-Bass, 2013). Principals are leaving for a variety of reasons, but lack of support and complexity of the job ranks at the top (Fuller, 2012). Other reasons include retirement, finding a better placement, and involuntary transfers. In response, the literature has sought best practices in retaining and recruiting school leaders. Usually recruitment occurs at beginning of the socialization of the principal when he or she is a teacher.

Socialization begins with the teacher learning what it means to be a principal from his or her own site leaders and then moves to two other stages: professional and

organizational socialization (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014). Professional socialization includes the learning from principal preparation programs and/or district leadership succession programs and then moves to organizational socialization. Leadership retention occurs where there are strong socialization practices. The degree to which a new leader is socialized and acclimated determines the job satisfaction felt by the leader and influences his or her productivity and desire to stay.

Principal preparation has been a focus of research for decades. Formal principal preparation programs have gone through changes to meet the demands of standards demanded for new leaders (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Hayashi & Fisher-Adams, 2015). Most programs are aligned to the ISLLC standards and many states require specific program components to be included. Informal principal preparation programs exist both in addition to formal preparation programs and as standalone district leadership succession programs. Leadership succession planning and programs ensure that districts can identify those with the necessary leadership qualities, even before they enter a formal preparation program (Bennett et al., 2011; Carttar et al., 2015; Hardie, 2015). Socialization does not stop with the preparation program. It continues into the aspiring principal's first job as a principal.

Once hired, the new principal is socialized as they transition into their new role. Some districts have structured supports to help with socialization from day one and into the first year. Others have less formal supports such as assigning a buddy principal to help familiarize the new leader to the district (Alvoid & Black, 2014; Augustine-Shaw, 2015; Azah, 2015). Most organizational socialization processes are a part of a larger

induction program provided by the district. In California, induction is a required component of a new leader's pursuit of a Clear Administrative Services Credential. Induction programs provide new leaders with support through a variety of components: mentors or coaches, professional learning, and sometimes cohort or group membership (Burrows-McCabe, 2014; Dodman, 2014; Gates et al., 2014). Whatever the strategy or program, the research is clear: The complexity of the role the principal, together with the need to recruit and retain principals, make the organizational socialization of the new principal vital.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### **Overview**

This chapter reviews the purpose statement of this study and the research questions to be answered as introduced in Chapter I. In addition, this chapter includes the procedures and methods used to examine the organizational socialization processes and components implemented by districts and their various departments to support the transition of first-year principals. It also includes a description of the degree to which the first-year principals reported these processes to be effective. After a comprehensive review of a variety of research methods, a mixed methods approach was selected to conduct research on the experiences of first-year principals. A justification for the mixed methods model used is included as well as a discussion of other models considered. The population and sampling, participant selection procedures, and instrumentation used to conduct the study are also explained. Finally, this chapter discusses the data collection and an analysis procedure used and presents this study's limitations.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals' transition into their new role. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first-year principals perceived these processes were effective.

### **Research Questions**

1. What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role?

2. To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role?
3. To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role?

### **Research Design**

The complex nature of organizational socialization attending to both process and content in addition to the variability of the experience first-year principals have prior to acquiring their position is best explored using a mixed methods research design. This design allowed the researcher to capture the content, the process, and the degree of the perceived effectiveness of components in the organizational socialization practices used in districts. Mixed methods research designs can systematically integrate qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). C. A. Green et al. (2015) said it best, “Mixed methods designs address the limited generalizability that results in most qualitative approaches and the limited depth of understanding of findings typically provided in quantitative approaches” (p. 509).

Three types of mixed methods designs were considered for this study. The sequential explanatory mixed methods design employs the quantitative method as the base method and is then followed up by qualitative data collection to provide explanations of the quantitative data. The sequential exploratory mixed methods design uses qualitative methods as the base to generate information used to conduct the quantitative data collection. Lastly, the concurrent mixed methods approach allows for both sets of data to be collected either at the same time or in close proximity and allows for the confirmation, cross-validation, or corroboration of findings (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2010). The sequential explanatory mixed methods approach was chosen for this study using the quantitative data as the base of the data and qualitative data to provide a more in-depth picture of the quantitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; C. A. Green et al., 2015). The research also hoped the use of the sequential method would overcome any weaknesses in either the qualitative or quantitative data. Therefore, the quantitative phase of this study was quickly followed by the qualitative phase allowing for a comprehensive examination of the organizational socialization practices used in school districts and determine the perceived effectiveness from first-year principals.

One of the most effective ways to conduct a mixed methods study is the use of surveys. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), surveys are used to identify what, how often, and to what extent something happens to a specific population. Thus, surveys aligned with the purpose of this study to examine the use of organizational socialization process and components in school districts in California. The use of surveys is particularly popular in education because of their versatility, efficiency, and generalizability (Creswell, 2013). Survey research can be done either through the use of surveys or through interviews.

In this study, both a survey and interviews were used to collect data. Quantitative data were collected via electronic survey. The quantitative data provided the base of the data around the use of organizational socialization practices in districts. Qualitative data were collected via interviews. Data collected from the interviews were used to examine the lived experiences and meaning making of first-year principals of the organizational socialization practices used in school districts (Creswell, 2012). This method or

orientation was selected because it provided the in-depth lens necessary to examine the system of organizational socialization inside school districts. The data collected from both methods were compared and combined to create an in-depth understanding of the use of organizational socialization processes and components.

### **Population**

The population of a study is defined as the individuals having the specific characteristics the study is intended to represent (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Ironically, these data are only collected when the state of California participates in research focused on the need for principals (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Bridges, 2012; Béteille et al., 2012). However, the California Department of Education’s (2019) Fingertip Facts on Education in California webpage provides a myriad of education-related facts including the number of schools. Table 5 depicts the information from the webpage with the accompanying estimates of principals in California.

Table 5

*Estimate of the Total Number of New Principals in California*

Number of CA schools	Approximate number of principals	Approximate number of new principals each year (20%)	Approximate number of new principals 2016 and 2017
10,393	10,393	2,079	4,158

*Note.* From Fingertip Facts on Education – CalEdFacts, by California Department of Education, 2019 (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/ceffingertipfacts.asp>).

As Table 5 shows, the estimates are based on the fact that there are 10,393 schools in the state of California and assume that each school has a principal leading the school. Research on the need for new principals has revealed that an average of 20% of principals leave their job each year and the vacant positions are subsequently filled

(Doyle & Locke, 2014; Fong & Makkonen, 2011; Samuels, 2015; Turnbull, 2015).

Therefore, the researcher estimates that California schools need approximately 2,079 new principals each year, which identifies the population for this study.

The new Clear Induction Standards and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)-approved programs that align with them went into full effect July 1, 2015 as the only way to earn a clear Administrative Services Credential. As part of the new standards, all new administrators must enroll in a CTC-approved clear induction program within 120 days of their first day on the job. The large number of new principals (2,079) each year and the lack of contact information made surveying all new principals virtually impossible. Hence, the number of new principals was narrowed down by identifying a target population. A target population is a group of individuals who meet a specific set of criteria to which the researcher intends to generalize results from the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). The target population for this study is the number of new principals enrolled in the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Clear Administrative Credential Program (CACP) who began as a principal during the 2015-2016 or 2016-2017 school years. Of the 485 participants in the CACP program, 181 were first-year principals and this group served as the target population or sampling frame for this study.

In the ACSA CACP program, targeted coaching and timely ongoing professional development are used to build the capacity of new leaders to develop positive and collaborative school cultures. The program is designed to support and accelerate school leader practice to positively impact student learning. This program was chosen for several reasons. First, the ACSA CACP program (Appendix B) is the longest running



coaching-based Clear Administrative Services Credential program in the state supporting newly hired administrators. Second, the program includes participation from 124 local education agencies (school district, charter school, or county office) throughout California. Third, of the 44 active clear administrative services programs in the state, five are conducted by California State Universities, two are offered by University of California campuses, 11 are operated by private institutions, and 25 are managed by individual local education agencies, with ACSA being the only “other.” Even as the only other, the ACSA CACP program is one of the top five largest programs in the state. Lastly, as ACSA staff, the researcher had the authorization to access the population for this study.

### **Sample**

The group of study participants is referred to as the sample (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher used convenience sampling in quantitative component of this mixed methods study. In convenience sampling, subjects are chosen on the basis of accessibility or expediency. In convenience sampling, findings are more difficult to generalize, so it is necessary to provide great detail in the description of how the characteristics of subjects match those of the population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Figure 5 depicts the sample funnel for this study. The entire population is the approximate number of new principals for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 is approximately 4,158. The ACSA CACP program has 181 first-year principals enrolled in the clear credential program. These principals are the target population for this study. The sample size for quantitative research is calculated with both the confidence level and confidence

interval in mind. For this study, a confidence interval of 5 and a confidence level of 95% resulted in calculated sample size of 123 respondents. This meant that with 50% of the sample responding to the questions, the researcher was 95% certain that between 45% and 55% of the entire population would answer in the same way.

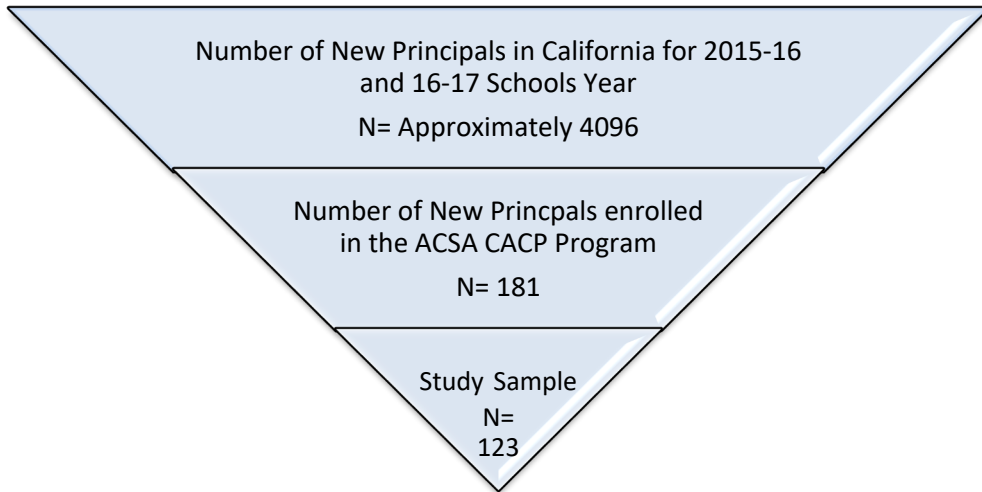


Figure 5. Graphical representation of the population and sample funnel.

There are differing opinions among researchers in determining the sample size in qualitative research ranging from five to 25 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Morse, 1994; Patton, 1990). The researcher assigned each participant a number, and then used Random.org (Haahr, n.d.) to generate a random list of 20 numbers. The researcher then called the participants assigned to the first 10 randomly drawn numbers, and used the remaining 10 as back up in case a participant refused to be interviewed. This stratified random sample provided rich insights into the organizational socialization experiences of first-year principals enrolled in the ACSA CACP program.

## **Instrumentation**

Instrumentation for this study reflects the complex nature of the information gathered. Organizational socialization research has not yielded an instrument suitable for this study as previous researchers used quantitative methods to either examine secondary outcomes such as job satisfaction or direct outcomes such as the degree to which the newcomer felt included (Chao et al., 1994; Haueter et al., 2003). Chao et al. (1994) developed an instrument that measured six dimensions of organizational socialization: (a) performance, (b) people, (c) politics, (e) language, (e) organization goal and values, and (f) history. Haueter et al. (2003) created an instrument that focused on three areas of new comer learning: (a) organization socialization, (b) group socialization, and (c) task socialization. Neither the research of Chao et al. (1994) nor Haueter et al. (2003) created an instrument sufficient to answer the research questions in this study. Frameworks for organizational socialization are shown in Table 6. As shown in the table, research on organizational socialization resulted in five main areas of content: laws, rules, and processes; understanding how to carry out the job related to the rules, etc.; informal and formal norms and culture of the organization; connections and important relationships to establish; and lastly, the role of organizational leaders. The work of Bauer (2014) provided a succinct way to describe these areas so the researcher created an instrument for the quantitative phase of this study addressing the following content.

Included in the survey were a few demographic questions about gender, number of years in education, and other school leadership experience. This information was collected to add context to the research, in particular to provide a better understanding of the perceptions of the respondents. After the demographic section, the survey (Appendix

C) contained three basic sections: (a) district interactions, (b) department practices, and (c) overall socialization experience, which when complete, would provide insight into the answers to Research Questions 1 and 2 of the study. The survey was developed by the researcher with binary yes or no answer choices for each item, and where appropriate, some were followed by a 5-point Likert scale for the participants to answer.

Table 6

*Synthesis of Research to Create Research Instrument*

Organizational socialization components from the research		Content description	Survey question #
Compliance	Performance, task socialization	Basic legal and policy related rules and regulation	4, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25
Clarification	Language, performance, task socialization.	Understanding of the new job and related tasks and expectations	4, 6, 6a, 10, 10a, 14, 14a, 18, 18a, 22, 22a, 26, 26a, 31
Culture	Politics, history, organizational socialization, organizational goals and values	Informal and formal organizational norms related communication, processes, and social rules	1, 2, 4, 7, 7a, 11, 11a, 15, 15a, 19, 19a, 23, 23a, 27, 27a, 30
Connections	People, group socialization	Group socialization opportunities, connections to important people in the district	3, 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28
Role of organization leaders	People, group socialization, history, organizational goals and values.	Leaders across the organization's role in socializing new leaders.	1, 2, 4, 5-30

SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>), a web-based survey software, was used to collect the quantitative data from participants. The survey began with three questions pertaining to the overall district process of organizational socialization, and the remaining questions asked about the information shared or explained within six different district departments (human resources, fiscal services, curriculum and instruction, special

education, student services, and facilities and maintenance). Table 6 shows the connection of each question to the research examined for the study.

To collect the qualitative data, the researcher used an interview script (Appendix D). The research questions served as the guide to develop the interview script to go deeper into the areas the survey covered. Interview guides such as the script developed provide a framework within which the questions were developed (Patton, 2002). The interview was divided into three parts:

- Part 1 contains three questions about personal information including the participants name, position, school district name, educational background, and general information regarding the school district;
- Part 2 contains 27 questions posed and organized by the researcher to respond to research questions in this study. These questions were derived from the survey questions used in the quantitative phase of data collection. For example, Question 1 from the survey: “Did the district provide you with opportunities to interact with other district employees to experience the culture of the district”; was reworded for the interview: “What was your experience with the district culture and opportunities you had to interact with other district employees?”
- Part 3 contains two questions that pertain primarily to the third research question for this study. The participants were asked to provide any additional insight into the support they received from the school district to transition into their new role. The last question simply asked them if there anything they wanted to add, or was missed regarding their experience with organizational socialization in their school district.

## **Validity and Reliability**

Checks for validity ensure that the research instruments measure what they are intended to measure and that the results are accurate. Checks for reliability ensure that results gathered from the research can be repeated and accurately represent the study population. In quantitative research, researchers first look to examine reliability in terms of whether the results are reliable. Then the researcher must examine validity in terms of whether the instruments measure what they are intended to measure. In qualitative research, researchers are concerned with whether the identified themes are the same themes other researchers would find. Qualitative researchers focus on the precision, credibility, and transferability for validity. Since this study is a mixed methods study, the researcher checked for reliability and validity in both methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

### **Quantitative**

Several measures were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument used to gather quantitative research for this study:

- The instrument was examined by an expert panel consisting of a senior researcher at the Learning Policy Institute, a CACP coach with extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative research, and a former principal coach with similar experience to confirm validity and alignment of purpose and research questions. The panel was asked to compare the questions in the survey to the identified purpose and research questions for the study. The panel also completed a survey critique to provide feedback (Appendix E). The panel provided input regarding the wording of questions

to determine if the responses would satisfy both the purpose and research questions of the study.

- The researcher used components of organizational socialization identified in the synthesis matrix to develop the survey as depicted in Table 6 and also in the Synthesis Matrix in Appendix A.
- The researcher contacted five veteran administrators to ask their assistance in conducting a field test of the survey. These administrators provided feedback regarding their overall experience with the survey including the consent form, introduction, and overall directions. They also provided feedback regarding their understanding of the questions as worded, whether the rating scales made sense, and to see if anything was missing. In addition, the researcher analyzed these data to ensure that the answers provided the expected insight into organizational socialization.
- The researcher was careful in selecting the sample population—first-year principals who have experienced organizational socialization formally or informally.
- The researcher used multiple methods of descriptive statistics to identify the variability of the data.

### **Qualitative**

For this study, the researcher safeguarded against threats to validity and reliability for the qualitative portion of this study in two ways:

- By utilizing NVivo to aid with data analysis, the researcher limited threats to reliability and validity because it increases the accuracy of coding and allows for clarity around identified themes (Vallance, Madang, & Lee, 2006).

- The interview protocol was field-tested with an expert panel consisting of a senior researcher at the Learning Policy Institute, a CACP coach with extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative research, and a former principal coach with similar experience to confirm validity and alignment of the purpose and research questions by providing feedback to the researcher to improve the interview questions, interview delivery, and overall interview experience. After each field-test interview, each expert was asked Field-Test Participant Feedback Questions (Appendix E).
- An experienced qualitative researcher analyzed the responses of the first two or 10% of the interview questions, which were reviewed and coded to check for accuracy of the identified themes.

### **Background of the Researcher**

In qualitative research, the researcher is the equivalent of the research instrument. Through the researcher, common themes from the data are interpreted and analyzed (Patton, 2002). The researcher's experience as a principal, and now provider and developer of administrator professional learning, qualified her to conduct the research and be viewed as a research instrument. It also gave her the lens through which she experienced becoming a principal laden with a lack of support and a clear path to becoming an insider in a new school district. The researcher conducting this study had over 30 years of experience in education. After serving over 15 years as a teacher, mentor teacher, teacher trainer, and coach, she became a site administrator. She had served as a principal at elementary and middle level schools as well as in leadership at the district level for 15 years. Her background and years in leadership also exposed her to several school leaders who had left the profession due to lack of support and



connectedness in school districts. Her leadership led to her recognition as administrator of the year as well as earned her leadership roles within ACSA. Her regional leadership led to her position at the association. ACSA has afforded her the opportunity to create and provide professional learning for all levels of administrators across their career span. This work has also resulted in extensive knowledge regarding new principal support systems and their professional development needs. This work can also lead to bias in the study, which the researcher has been careful to avoid in data collection and analysis, adhering to strong validity practices described in this chapter.

### **Data Collection**

Data for this mixed methods study were collected from the quantitative survey and qualitative interview components. The researcher's role as staff at ACSA provided her access to all information regarding participants of the ACSA CACP program. ACSA's interest in the outcomes and recommendations from this study allowed the researcher to act in full support of the organization as described in the letter of support in Appendix G. This was particularly important as the researcher entered the data collection phase of this study; obtaining the list for survey distribution was paramount to the success of the study.

#### **Quantitative Data Collection**

- The researcher obtained the list of principals whose first year began in either the 2015-2016 or 2016-2017 school years.
- In mid-May, the list was used by the ACSA Marketing and Communications Department to send an e-mail containing the abstract of the research proposal and an explanation of the background of the study along with an invitation (Appendix H) to

participate in the study. The survey link was inside the e-mail and sent participants directly to <https://www.surveymonkey.com> to take the survey (Appendix C). It is important to note the ACSA marketing and communications department's sole role was to send the initial e-mail.

- The survey included the informed consent form (Appendix I) fields to gather demographic information.
- Five, 10, and 15 days after the survey link was sent, the researcher sent thank-you e-cards to respondents and a reminder to those who had not yet taken the survey.
- On day 16, phone calls were made to the remaining participants on the list who had not taken the survey.
  - If contact was made and the respondent had time, the survey was completed over the phone.
  - If the participant did not have the time to take the survey by phone or no contact was made, a message was left with the respondent encouraging him or her to complete the survey or call the researcher so that she may complete it for him or her over the phone. The researcher entered the data directly into the online survey as questions were answered.
- Data were downloaded from SurveyMonkey into an Excel spreadsheet to allow for uploading to the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) and kept in a secure file by the researcher.

## **Qualitative Data Collection**

- The participant list utilized for survey dissemination was used by the researcher to assign each participant a number. The researcher then used the Random.org website (Haahr, n.d.) to generate a random list of 20 numbers.
- The researcher then called the participants assigned to the first 10 numbers drawn, and used the remaining 10 as backup in case a participant refused to be interviewed. The call served three purposes: (a) for an introduction to the researcher, (b) to schedule interviews and determine interview logistics, and (c) to remind the participant to take the survey if they had not already done so.
- After the initial conversation, the researcher sent a follow-up e-mail (Appendix J) summarizing the conversation and confirming the appointment time.
- Using the interview script, the researcher conducted the interviews at the agreed-upon time and place, either by phone, WebEx, or in person at a location agreed upon by both the researcher and the participant. All interviews were recorded for accuracy.
- Issues raised by respondents that are not within the framework of the guide were not raised with other respondents. Interview participants were chosen in order to gain insight into a range of district practices.
- Participant numbers assigned during the qualitative sample selection process were used as an identifier for each participant to ensure confidentiality.
- The researcher uploaded the audio recording of each interview into transcription software called Dragon Dictation, then transcribed and summarized the data.
- The researcher stored the both raw data entered into NVivo and coded data in a secure file.

Prior to the collection of any of these data, the researcher submitted this proposal to the Brandman University Institution Review Board to ensure the protection of all participants and remove any ethical issues related to this study. Once both the quantitative and qualitative data were collected, the researcher prepared the data for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Both the survey and the interview protocol were aligned in order to ensure that the research questions were answered. Since the respondents in the survey were a subset of the participants interviewed, the chance of variability was greatly decreased increasing the ability to generalize the results. The researcher conducted both the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

### **Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data were collected via SurveyMonkey, an online survey development cloud-based software program. Once the data were received, the raw data were imported into Excel to be uploaded into SPSS, a statistical analysis software program. In addition to some demographic questions, the survey has three basic sections: (a) district interactions, (b) department practices, and (c) overall socialization experience. The framework in Table 6 (p. 71) was the basis for the survey with Likert-like questions. The five-point Likert-like questions asked to what degree the participant agreed a specific component was provided, and for several of those, asked a follow-up question. The follow-up questions indicated the perceived effectiveness of the information shared. Finally, there were two questions on the end—one asking about the organizational

process overall and one asking about its impact on the respondent's perceived preparedness.

All data were exported to an Excel spreadsheet and then loaded into SPSS for analysis using descriptive statistics of mean, median, and mode. Using all three measures of central tendency allowed the researcher to determine whether the distribution was normal or skewed. In addition to central tendency measures, SPSS was also used to calculate the standard deviation, which provided the average variability of the scores. A measure of variability tells the researcher about the difference between the scores and the distribution (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Together, the measures of central tendency and variability provided a full picture of the quantitative data.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis begins with preparing and organizing the data, then condensing the data into manageable themes for coding so data can be presented in figures or tables or in other ways (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). To prepare the data from the interviews for analysis, the researcher read the transcripts while annotating ideas for categories in the margins. According to Patton (2002), this is the first step in the analysis of qualitative data. Creating good codes begins with reviewing the data gathered and determining what is important and/or significant (Patton, 2002). When it comes to interviews and artifacts, the researcher should first start with a focus on the research questions. The researcher used the research questions and the notes on the transcript with the initial notes for category ideas as a reference for coding as the data were uploaded into NVivo 10 software.

NVivo 10 software supports qualitative research methods by providing the researcher with a means to organize content from interviews and check for interrater reliability. Qualitative software provided means to store, code, retrieve, compare, and link data, while the human does the analysis (Patton, 2002). Once data were uploaded to NVivo 10, the researcher searched for major themes using frequency counts. The themes or codes most frequently found in the data provided insight into the experience of new principals as they related to the research questions. A second researcher also coded 10% of the interview questions to help ensure the consistency and accuracy of the identified themes.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study begin with the focus of gathering the perceptions of only new principals in California participating in the ACSA CACP. The following are additional limitations of this study:

1. This study was limited to only the solicited principals who chose to join the study and thus limits the generalizability of the outcomes.
2. This study was limited by the accuracy of the responses and opinions of those participating in the study. Opinions may be skewed by experiences and other factors that are not accounted for in the survey questions and interviews.
3. This study was conducted using an instrument that did not give numerical values. Therefore, a mean was not calculated to determine the degree referred to in the purpose statement. Rather, the analysis was restricted to using frequencies and percentages to describe the degree to which first-year principals perceived the organizational socialization processes were effective.

4. This study was limited to the perceptions of new principals with limited experience of knowledge of organizational socialization or what it means to be a successful principal.

### **Summary**

Chapter III included a review of the purpose of the study and research questions. The methodology was presented, including the population and sample, instrumentation, and field test used to validate instruments. Information regarding the data collection process, explanation of how the data have been analyzed, and the limitations of the study were provided.

## CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

### Overview

Leadership matters. Over time, the role of the principal has evolved from that of being a liaison between the community and the school to becoming the lead learner implementing transformational change. The role of the principal has become increasingly complex causing high turnover and a shortage of leaders with the knowledge and expertise needed to lead today's schools. With numerous new principals starting each school year, school districts need to find a way to quickly get new leaders to be fully included and accepted into the culture, norms, and educational programs of school districts (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014). Many organizations utilize the processes and structure found in organizational socialization to do exactly what school districts need to do in order to quickly get their principals to become the high performers needed to turnaround the lowest performing schools (Bower, 2007; Church, 2014).

Principals are usually socialized as teachers or during their first position employed within schools. At some point, they make the decision to become a principal and enroll into a principal preparation program. This is where they receive their professional socialization and learn all of the rules and laws regarding the principal position (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; Bengtson et al., 2013). These rules and laws are given a local context once the principal is hired in a school district. Once, hired a new principal begins to be socialized into the organization either formally or informally. This study examines how new principals experience organizational socialization.

In Chapter IV, qualitative and quantitative data from this mixed methods study are presented regarding the experience of new principals with organizational socialization



in school districts and departments. It begins with the statement of the purpose of the study and research questions; a summary of the research process including the population and sample are also presented. This chapter then presents an analysis of the data collected and ends with a summary highlighting the broad findings from the data analysis.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals' transition into their new role. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first-year principals perceived these processes were effective.

### **Research Questions**

1. What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role?
2. To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role?
3. To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role?

### **Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures**

In order to capture the complex nature of first-year principals' experiences with organizational socialization a mixed methods approach to research was used. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data provides greater insight into the answers to research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Both a survey and interviews

were used to collect data. Quantitative data were collected via electronic survey using SurveyMonkey. The quantitative data provided the base of the data around the use of organizational socialization practices in districts. Qualitative data were collected via interviews. The data collected from interviews helped to further examine the lived experience and meaning making of first-year principals of organizational socialization processes and practices used by school districts.

### **Population**

The population for this study was intended to be new principals in California. There are approximately 10,393 school principals in the state (California Department of Education, 2019). With research revealing an average of 20% of principals leaving their job each year, the approximate number of new principals and population for this study would be 2,079 each year (Burrows-McCabe, 2014). To narrow the population down, the researcher chose the targeted population of the number of new principals enrolled in the ACSA Clear Administrative Credential Program (CACP), who began as principals during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. Of the 485 participants in the CACP program, 181 were first-year principals. This group served as the target population or the sampling frame for this research.

The ACSA CACP program provides the required coaching and support needed for administrators who, once employed in administrative position, need to obtain their Clear California Administrative Services Credential. This program was chosen because of its longevity and its participation in socialization practices to examine the social system of organizational socialization in school districts. The data collected from both

methods were compared and combined to create a complete picture of the experience of new principals with organizational socialization.

### **Sample**

The researcher used convenience sampling in the quantitative portion of this study. In convenience sampling, subjects are chosen on the basis of how accessible they are or how quickly they can be contacted. The findings from convenience sampling are difficult to generalize, so researchers need to provide in-depth descriptions of how the characteristics match those of the population.

There were approximately 4,158 new principals for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years (Béteille et al., 2012; Clifford, Behrstock-Sherratt, & Fetters, 2012). The ACSA CACP program has 181 first-year principals enrolled who served as the target population for this study. Both the confidence level and the confidence interval level are considered when calculating the sample size for quantitative research. In particular, for this study, a confidence interval level of 5 and a confidence level of 95% resulted in calculated sample size of 123 respondents. However, during data collection, only 75 participants responded. With this number of respondents, it was difficult to generalize the results across the rest of the population. Therefore, the findings in this study were limited to the participants in the ACSA CACP program.

There are differing opinions among researchers in determining the sample size in qualitative research ranging from five to 25 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Morse, 1994; Patton, 1990). The researcher used a stratified random sampling method for selection of participants for the qualitative portion of this study. Using this method, 10 participants were interviewed.

## Demographic Data

The participants in this study were asked to provide demographic information in the electronic survey which asked the following: (a) gender, (b) years in education, and (c) education leadership experiences prior to principalship. Participants were advised that all of their information would be used only to provide context for the results of the dissertation and for statistical purposes.

Table 7 shows that of the 75 respondents, 49 were female and 26 were male. Table 8 shows the number of years each participant had been in education in spans of 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, and 16 or more years. The respondents in this study represent a wide range of educational experience with 14.7% of respondents with 1-5 years of experience, 52% with 6-10 years of experience, 17.3% with 11-15 years of experience, and 16% with more than 16 years of experience. It should be noted, the majority of the respondents in this study have only 6-10 years of experience. With the aforementioned need for principals, the trajectory of years of experience seem to be going downward. Lastly, Table 9 shows that before becoming a principal, 36.5% of the respondents were assistant or vice principals, 36.5% of respondents were in “other” leadership roles, 8.2% of the respondents were teachers in charge, and 18.9% were teacher leaders.

Table 7

### *Gender of Participants*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	49	66.2
Male	26	33.8
Total	75	100.0

Table 8

*Years in Education*

Years in education	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Years	11	14.7
6-10 Years	39	52.0
11-15 Years	13	17.3
16 or more years	12	16.0
Total	75	100.0

Table 9

*Educational Leadership Experiences*

Role before principal	Frequency	Percentage
Assistant principal	27	36.5
Other leadership role	27	36.5
Teacher in charge	6	8.2
Teacher leader	14	18.9
Total	75	100.0

### **Presentation and Analysis of Data Introduction**

The quantitative data for this study were collected via electronic survey using SurveyMonkey. Every ACSA CACP participant who was a new principal received an invitation to participate in the survey. Seventy-five of the participants solicited to participate subsequently responded to the survey. This section presents the findings for the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. There is no single way to report the findings of a dissertation as it depends on the research design. The general rule is to report the data by research question. Data analysis, whether quantitative or qualitative, is intended to summarize a mass of information to answer the research questions, test the hypotheses, examine the foreshadowed problems, and explore the conjectures.

As a theoretical framework regarding the organizational socialization of new principals, the researcher used a synthesis of the research to frame the questions in both

data collection tools. The frame includes four specific domains of the organizational socialization process: compliance, clarification, culture, and connections, and includes the engagement of leadership in each domain. Leaders in each district usually head each of the departments highlighted in this research; therefore, the data in this chapter are organized and reported by the following departments: human resources, business services, student services, education services, special education, and maintenance and operations. The quantitative data from this study were analyzed by organizational socialization domain and by research question, providing the percentage of responses for each department corresponding to the levels of the Likert scale. Qualitative data were analyzed by domain and then by research question, reporting the frequency of themes that emerged during the interviews and including themes that were mentioned more than five times during the interviews. At the end of the analysis for each of the four domains, findings were combined and summarized corresponding to the research questions for each department. The following presentation of data is divided into two sections, the first providing data by domain, the second providing data by research question.

## **Part I: Findings by Domain**

### **Major Findings for the Compliance Domain**

Organizational socialization under the domain of compliance refers to the basic legal and policy-related rules and regulations of the job in question (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014). For educators, in addition to case law, it includes the California Education Code (Affeldt, 2015; E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Beadie, 2016). Administrators typically have a course in their credential program to learn about the compliance-related rules and regulation laws they must follow (Darling-

Hammond et al., 2007; Goldring et al., 2015). However, each school district implements these laws differently and may have specific procedures to follow. The analysis of the data for the domain of compliance is presented in this section.

**Quantitative findings.** A question in the survey regarding compliance was included for each department. Table 10 shows the frequency and percentage of respondent answers for each of the school district departments related to compliance in the question, “To what degree do you agree that the departments provided you with the rules, processes and procedures you needed to complete your human resource related responsibilities?”

Table 10

*Quantitative Compliance Domain Data by Department*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	18	24%	31	42%	4	5%	20	27%	1	2%
Business services	17	23%	35	47%	3	4%	17	23%	2	3%
Student services	15	21%	41	56%	1	1%	13	18%	4	4%
Education services	21	28%	37	50%	1	1%	13	18%	2	3%
Maintenance and operations	10	14%	41	55%	3	4%	19	26%	1	1%
Special education	15	21%	49	66%	5	7%	3	4%	1	2%
Average	16	22%	39	53%	3	4%	14	19%	2	2%

Note. F = frequency.

The combined averages for the *strongly agree* and *agree* columns in Table 10 across all of the district departments totaled 75% of all the responses for the domain of compliance. The special education department rated the highest, with 87% of respondents indicating *strongly agree* and *agree* that they were provided the information about the rules, processes, and procedures they needed to complete their maintenance-and-operations-related responsibilities. Seventy-nine percent of the education services

department participants indicated *strongly agree* and *agree* that they were provided compliance information, and 77% of the students services department respondents *strongly agreed* and *agreed* that they also received compliance information. while on the other end of the scale, there was a range of 6% to 29% of the respondents who were not provided with compliance domain information. A relatively small percentage of respondents, 1% to 7%, were undecided as to whether they were provided compliance domain-related information. The qualitative data provided further insight as to the compliance domain-related survey response data.

**Qualitative findings.** The interview protocol contained one question for each department related to the domain of compliance. Table 11 shows the themes (identified by the number describing the theme) and the frequency of each theme was referenced by respondents in each department to the interview question: “What was your experience in learning about (insert department) related rules, processes, and procedures in your district?” Eight themes from the data occurred more than five times. These were connected to how new principals experienced the compliance domain of organizational socialization: (a) Information came from the department leader or staff (dept.); (b) participant had prior experience with compliance domain (prior exp.); (c) information came from school staff (school staff); (d) information came from a buddy principal (buddy principal); (d) no formal process was used to provide the information (no process); (e) information came from a printed resource (print resource); (f) information came from district meetings and/or professional learning convenings (meetings); and (g) only law or regulation information was shared with the participant by district office staff (only laws).



Table 11

*Qualitative Compliance Domain Data by Department*

Department	Dept. lead	Prior exp.	School staff	Buddy principal	No process	Print resource	Meetings	Only laws
Human resources	4	0	0	1	1	0	5	5
Business services	3	0	3	3	5	3	5	0
Student services	3	3	3	2	4	0	4	3
Education services	1	7	1	1	7	0	8	0
Maintenance & operations	4	0	2	1	7	1	0	0
Special education	2	2	0	1	7	4	1	1
Totals	17	12	8	9	31	8	23	9

**No formal process.** There was no formal process used for socialization in the compliance domain was the most referenced theme with 31 occurrences throughout the interviews. Across all of the departments, no formal process used was mentioned between four and seven times, except for the human resources department for which it was only mentioned one time. Seven of the 10 participants believed that there had been information shared with them in this domain, but there was no formal process in place to provide the information. For example, one participant stated, “I have a friend who helped me with fiscal questions, but no one from the district gave me any information.” Another participant shared, “My school custodian shared information about maintenance and operations district rules, processes, and procedures, but there was no formal process the district followed.” Three participants just responded with “nothing was provided to me.”

**Meetings.** Information came from district meetings and/or professional development was the second most frequent occurring theme. This theme was referenced 23 times indicating that districts use planned meetings and professional learning as a way of providing principals with compliance-related information. Three participants stated that they received information from a new principals’ meeting strictly related to

evaluation and supervision rules, processes, and procedures. Seven of the 10 participants reported receiving information regarding education services compliance domain information through professional development for teachers. For example, one participant shared, “There was no information provided specifically around the rules, processes, and procedures for teaching and learning. But principals were required to attend the beginning of the year PD for the new math curriculum.” Another principal was discussing the process used by the business services department, “There was one budget meeting a year for all principals reviewing any changes in the process.”

***Department lead.*** The third most frequently occurring theme (17 times) was information regarding the compliance theme came from the department leader or staff in the department. This theme occurred three to four times in the human resources, business services, student services, and maintenance and operations department responses, while only occurring one to two times in the education services and special education departments. One principal shared, “The Assistant Superintendent of HR reviewed the timeline.” There were cases where the principal received two sources of information such as this principal who stated, “I was provided a handbook for evaluation, and I met with the Director of Human Resources who reviewed it with me.”

***Prior experience.*** The sample in this study had a wide range of experiences prior to becoming a principal; all of them had been teachers, some had even been vice principals. Though the other themes are all relatively similar in their occurrences, the role of prior experience in this domain was notable with 12 occurrences. Seven of the 12 occurrences of this theme related to the education services department. Participants referenced their teaching experience as a key contributor to what they knew about the

education services. One principal stated, “I used what I already knew about teaching and learning to help me with supporting the educational program at my school.” The other two departments with references to prior experience were special education and student services with two and three occurrences respectively. One of the principals spoke of their experience as a special education teacher, “Since I was a special education teacher in this district, so I know the rules and procedures to follow.”

***Buddy principal.*** Assigning the new principal a buddy principal as a strategy of support is well documented in the literature (Burkhauser et al., 2012; Garcia, 2011; Lochmiller, 2014). Business and student services departments each had two and three occurrences respectively referring to a buddy principal providing the compliance-related information related to school finance. One principal shared, “I have a buddy principal who helped me with learning what would happen in regards to the district processes and procedures for our budgets.” Participants referred to the remaining departments only once each in relation to compliance domain information coming from a buddy principal.

***School staff.*** Various school staff such as vice principals, secretaries, teachers, and custodians were mentioned to have been reported to provide compliance domain information to new principals. Participants referred to school staff providing information related to the compliance domain in the business and student services departments three times for each while twice participants referred to school staff providing compliance domain information for the maintenance and operations department, and only once for education services information. It should be noted, there was no mention of the school staff providing information about the human resources or special education compliance domain information. One principal explained, “I did not get very much help from the

business services department in learning about the specific rules and procedures, but my school secretary has been very helpful in helping with things.”

***Print resources.*** A variety of compliance-related information was gained through print resources such as handbooks, union agreements, and school site documents. Participants referred to print resources providing special education information in the compliance domain four times. Three times print resources were mentioned providing compliance domain information related to the business services department, and only once for the maintenance and operations department. One principal stated, “We were given a handbook for evaluation and I also met with the human resources director to review the process.”

**Compliance summary.** This section analyzed the data collected in this study related to the compliance domain. Compliance provides the new principal with the rules, processes, and procedures to follow in each of the given department areas (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015). Though many administrators learn most of the compliance-related rules and regulations to follow while in the role of principal, each district implements these laws differently in relation to ensuring that new principals learn them.

One question in the survey regarding compliance was included for each department: “To what degree do you agree that the departments provided you with the rules, processes and procedures you needed to complete your human resource related responsibilities?” Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under the domain of compliance occurred for an average of 75% of all respondents. The departments reported to provide information related to the compliance domain to the

most participants were the special education (87%), education services (79%), and student services (77%) departments. Yet, across the departments a range of 6% to 29% of respondents were not provided with any compliance domain information and from 1% to 7% of the respondents were undecided as to whether they were provided compliance domain-related information. The qualitative data provided further insight into the compliance domain related survey response data.

The interview protocol contained one question for each department related to the domain of compliance: “What was your experience in learning about (insert department) related rules, processes, and procedures in your district?” Eight themes emerged from the qualitative data collected. The most frequent theme (occurred 31 times) of all eight was that no formal process was used to provide new principals with compliance domain information. The second most frequent theme was meetings and professional development was the way new principals received their information regarding rules, processes, and procedures connected to their work across all departments. The theme of information being obtained from department leads and staff occurred 17 times. Prior experience was mentioned 23 times throughout the responses to the questions regarding compliance domain information. The last three themes occurred eight to nine times indicating that information was received from school staff (secretaries, custodians, vice principals, etc.), print resources (handbooks, union agreements, etc.), and lastly, from the theme of laws and regulations only.

The compliance domain in organizational socialization pertains to the rules, processes, and procedures involved with the newcomers’ job. Once new principals complete their preparation program, they must learn the compliance domain duties in the

way their district implements them. The data indicate that while there is compliance domain-related information shared, it was not commonly done in a formal manner among the participants' districts in this study. The special education department was reported in the quantitative data to be the department most frequently providing compliance domain information to new principals. This echoes the literature regarding organizational socialization, which reported that the compliance domain is the most prevalent in areas where there are laws and regulations governing the work (Bengtson, 2014; Joppy, 2014; Korte et al., 2015).

### **Major Finding for the Clarification Domain**

The clarification domain in organizational socialization refers to how the newcomer's roles and responsibilities are made clear by the organization. For educators, in particular, in education the roles and the responsibilities of the principal have evolved over time. Though new principals gain much of their knowledge around roles and responsibilities in their preparation program, each district is different in how they assign roles and responsibilities. The following is a presentation of the data collected in relation to the domain of clarification in organizational socialization.

**Quantitative findings.** A question in the survey regarding the clarification domain was included for each department. Table 12 shows the frequency and percentage of respondent answers for each of the school district departments related to the clarification domain in the question, "To what degree do you agree that the departments provided you information regarding your specific roles and responsibilities as they relate to the department?"

Table 12

*Quantitative Clarification Domain by Department*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	19	26%	30	41%	1	1%	23	31%	1	1%
Business services	13	18%	42	57%	1	1%	16	22%	2	3%
Student services	15	20%	36	49%	1	1%	18	24%	4	5%
Education services	20	27%	44	60%	1	1%	8	11%	1	1%
Maintenance and operations	11	15%	40	54%	4	5%	18	24%	1	1%
Special education	19	26%	48	65%	1	1%	2	3%	1	2%
Average	16	22%	40	54%	2	2%	14	19%	2	2%

Note. F = frequency.

The combined average of the participants who *strongly agreed* and *agreed* that they experienced the clarification domain of organizational socialization was 76% of all respondents. The special education department rated the highest, with 91% of respondents indicating that they were provided the information about their roles and responsibilities as they relate to special education duties. Other responses from combining *agree* and *strongly agree* columns included education services = 87% and business services = 75% while on the other end of the scale, there was a range of 5% to 32% of the respondents who were not provided with clarification domain information. A relatively small percentage of respondents, 1% to 5%, were undecided as to whether they were provided clarification domain-related information. The qualitative data provided further insight into the clarification domain related survey response data.

**Qualitative findings.** The interview protocol contained one question for each department related to the domain of clarification. Table 13 shows the themes (identified by the number describing the theme), and the frequency each theme was referenced by respondents in each department to the interview question, “What was your experience in

learning about (insert department) related rules, processes, and procedures in your district?” There were six themes from the data. Data were considered a theme if it occurred more than five times connected to how new principals experienced the clarification domain of organizational socialization: (a) Information came from the department leader or staff (dept.); (b) information came from school staff (school staff); (c) information came from a buddy principal (buddy principal); (d) no formal process was used to provide the information (no process); (e) information came from a printed resource (print resource); and (e) information came from district meetings and/or professional learning convenings (meetings).

Table 13

*Qualitative Clarification Domain Data Frequency*

Department	Dept. lead	School staff	Buddy principal	No process	Print resource	Meetings
Human resources	5	1	2	2	2	2
Business services	2	4	4	2	1	1
Student services	1	3	2	5	2	1
Education services	1	3	1	3	2	3
Maintenance & operations	2	5	0	10	1	0
Special education	5	8	0	3	1	1
Totals	16	24	9	25	9	8

***No formal process.*** The most frequent theme in the qualitative data for the clarification domain was that there was no formal process used for organizational socialization. Across all of the departments, no formal process used was mentioned between two and 10 times, with the maintenance and operations department data referencing this theme the highest number of times. One participant shared, “No, there was a file in my office which outlined who was supposed to be evaluated.” Another shared, “I learned my role in the special education process by fire.”



***School staff.*** Many different school staff members like vice principals, secretaries, teachers, and custodians were mentioned to have provided clarification domain information to new principals. This theme appeared 24 times in the qualitative data with the special education department being the most frequent with eight mentions as the provider of clarification information. Maintenance and operations was mentioned five times, while business services was mentioned four times as sources of clarification information. Participants referred to school staff providing information related to the clarification domain in the education and student services departments three times for each while only once participants referred to school staff providing clarification domain information for the maintenance and operations department and only once for human services information. One principal explained, “I learned my role around special education at my site from the RSP teacher and the school psychologist.”

***Department lead.*** The third most frequently occurring theme (16 times) was the clarification information came from the department leader or staff in the department. This theme occurred two times in both the human resources and special education department responses, while only occurring two times in the business services and maintenance and operations departments. Only once did this theme appear in the student and education services department data regarding the clarification domain. One principal shared, “The director of maintenance and operations came to my school and did a tour describing some of the upcoming projects at my school.” Another principal described how he or she received information from both the department lead and school staff, “The special education director came to see me and review my role in the IEP process, and my RSP teacher also helped me.”

***Buddy principal.*** Many new principals are assigned a buddy principal as a strategy of support. The practice is well documented in the literature (Burkhauser et al., 2012; Garcia, 2011; Lochmiller, 2014). The business services department was most frequently mentioned (four times) for buddy principals to provide clarification domain information. This was shared by one principal, “Whenever I had a question about budget or fiscal related issues, I called my buddy principal and she was very helpful.” Two times each respondents mentioned buddy principals receiving information from the human resources and student services departments. One principal shared, “I learned what I was supposed to around student services related issues like suspension, attendance, and behavior from my buddy principal.” Respondents only referred to buddy principals providing clarification-related information once, while not at all when responding to the questions regarding the maintenance and operations and special education departments.

***Print resources.*** Clarification information was obtained by new principals in various forms of print resources such as handbooks, union agreements, and school site documents. Participants referred to print resources providing special education information in the clarification domain nine times. New principals mentioned print resources being a source of clarification domain information across all of the district departments. The human resources, student services, and education services departments were all mentioned two times each as providing print resources to new principals for clarification domain information. A principal who referred to his district as small shared, “I was told the union agreements were my guide to supervision and evaluation of both certificate and classified employees.” Another principal shared, “We had curriculum

acing guides we were told to use to guide our work by the education services department.”

**Meetings.** Information came from district meetings and/or professional development was the sixth most frequently occurring theme. This theme was referenced eight times, with a frequency of three times mentioned in relation to the education department. Principals referred to these meetings as being professional development for teachers in relation to curriculum implementation. For example, one principal shared, “We had a professional development meeting at the beginning of the year to support the implementation of the new science curriculum.” Principals mentioned meetings being where they obtained information regarding the human resources department with a frequency of two times. New principals indicated a frequency once for the business services, student services, and special education departments, while no meetings provided information regarding the maintenance and operations department. One principal shared, “The district was making some changes in the special education department, and we had a meeting outlining the new processes.”

**Clarification summary.** Clarification provides new principals with clarification about specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations related to the work in each of the given department areas (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015). While it is true that some of this information is gained in principal preparation programs, districts split responsibilities and roles differently among staff members. This section analyzed the data collected in this study related to the clarification domain.

A clarification question was included for each department in the quantitative data collection survey: “To what degree do participants agree that the department explained

your roles and responsibilities as they relate to human resource issues?” Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under the domain of clarification occurred for an average of 76% of all respondents. The departments reported to provide information related to the clarification domain to the most participants was the special education (91%), education services (87%), and both the student services and maintenance and operations departments with 69% of respondents each. Yet, across the departments a range of 2% to 19% of the respondents were not provided with any clarification domain information. Lastly, an average of 2% of the respondents were undecided as to whether they were provided clarification domain-related information. The qualitative data provided further insight into the clarification domain-related survey response data.

A question for each department related to the domain of clarification was included in the interview protocol used for this study: “What was your experience in learning your specific roles and expectations in relation to the department?” Six themes emerged from the qualitative data collected. The most frequent (occurred 25 times) of all six was that no formal process was used to provide new principals with compliance domain information. The second most frequent theme was school staff (secretaries, vice principals, and others) as the way new principals received their information regarding their specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations connected to their work across all departments. The theme of information being obtained from department leads and staff occurred 16 times. Buddy principals and print resources were both mentioned nine times each throughout the responses to the questions regarding the clarification domain information. Lastly, the meetings and professional development occurred eight times as a

means through which new principals learned clarification information across all district departments.

The clarification domain in organizational socialization pertains to the specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the newcomer's job. After completing professional socialization in an administrative credentialing program in which they learn the typical roles and responsibilities they will be expected to complete as a new leaders, new principals must then learn how these will be carried out in their district. The data indicate that while there is clarification domain-related information provided to new principals, it is not a part of a formal organizational socialization process. Leaders shared that districts share information such as timelines and new processes (to everyone—not specifically to new leaders). The literature regarding organizational socialization reports that this is common for organizations to focus on the roles and responsibilities that are linear work (Bengtson, 2014; Joppy, 2014; Korte et al., 2015). The data gathered for the culture domain are reviewed in the next section.

### **Major Findings for the Culture Domain**

The culture domain of organizational socialization relates to the newcomers' learning of the formal and informal norms of the organization. When it comes to school districts, culture exists both at the district level and at the school level. New principals on the journey to transition from outsider to insider need to learn about the culture of both their school and the district (Bengtson, 2014; Gothard, 2016; Joppy, 2014; G. M. Steyn, 2013). This section presents the data collected in relation to the domain of culture in organizational socialization.

**Quantitative findings.** A culture question was included for each department in the quantitative data collection survey: “To what degree do you agree that the department explained the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the department?” Table 14 depicts the data collected regarding the culture domain of organizational socialization experienced by new principals with school district departments.

Table 14

*Quantitative Culture Domain Data by Department*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	13	18%	20	27%	9	12%	31	42%	1	1%
Business services	10	14%	33	45%	1	1%	23	31%	7	10%
Student services	14	19%	23	31%	1	1%	33	45%	3	4%
Education services	11	15%	29	39%	3	4%	28	38%	3	4%
Maintenance and operations	9	12%	22	30%	8	11%	32	43%	3	4%
Special education	13	18%	29	39%	1	1%	24	32%	7	10%
Average	12	16%	26	35%	4	5%	28	39%	4	5%

*Note.* F = frequency.

Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under the domain of culture occurred for a combined average of *strongly agree* and *agree* responses of 49% of all respondents. The departments with the highest combined average of participants who *strongly agreed* and *agreed* that they were provided information related to the culture domain to the most participants was the business services (59%), special education (57%), and student services (50%) departments. The departments almost equally were reported to not provide culture domain-related information to new principals being most frequently mentioned in the student services (49%), maintenance and operations (47%), and human resources (43%) departments.

Across the departments, a range of 2% to 19% of the respondents were not provided with any clarification domain information and an average of 2% of the respondents were undecided. The qualitative data provided further insight into the culture domain-related survey response data.

**Qualitative findings.** There was one question for each department related to the culture domain of organizational socialization. Table 15 shows the themes (identified by the number describing the theme) and the frequency with which each theme was referenced by respondents in each department to the interview question: “What was your experience in learning about department formal and informal norms in your district?” There were four themes from the data occurring more than five times connected to how new principals experienced the culture domain of organizational socialization:

(a) Information came from the department leader or staff (dept.); (b) participant had prior experience with compliance domain (prior exp.); (c) information came from school staff (school staff); and (d) no formal process was used to provide the information (no process).

Table 15

*Qualitative Culture Domain Data by Department*

Department	Dept. lead	Prior exp	Staff at school	No information
Human resources	2	4	0	7
Business services	1	1	2	9
Student services	1	1	2	7
Education services	1	2	2	8
Maintenance & operations	2	1	2	11
Special education	1	2	2	9
Totals	8	11	10	51

***No formal process.*** For the culture domain of organizational socialization, the theme of no formal process occurred 51 times throughout the interviews. Across all of the departments, no formal process used was mentioned between seven and 11 times. The highest mention of this theme was in relation to the maintenance and operations department to which new principals referred 11 times as providing no culture domain information. One principal stated, “My custodian helped me when I needed it, but there wasn’t anything formally provided to me.” The next most frequently occurring themes were special education and business services with nine occurrences each: “I learned everything I learned from our special ed staff, there was no formal process for new principals to learn anything related to the culture in the special education department.” The education services department was mentioned eight times as a department that did not provide any culture domain information. Lastly, the human resources and student services departments each occurred seven times in this theme for the domain of culture. One principal shared, “We only talked about formal or informal norms in the human resource department; I was only given rules and procedures.”

***Prior experience.*** Prior experience was the second most frequently (11 times) mentioned way in which new principals experienced the culture domain of organizational socialization. While this theme was only mentioned one to two times in relation to this theme in all of the departments, except when talking about their experience with the human resource department, in which this theme occurred four times. “I already had an idea of the culture of the human resource department because I was a teacher in the district,” said one principal. When responding to the questions about the education services and special education services departments, the theme of prior experience as a



source of culture domain information occurred two times in each. Another principal shared, “I don’t recall learning any norms—formal or informal, but I used what I already knew about curriculum and instruction in this area to help me.” This theme occurred one time each when discussing organization socialization related to the culture domain in the student services, maintenance and operations, and business services departments.

***School staff.*** The third most frequently occurring theme in the questions regarding the domain of culture was information was obtained from school site staff (secretaries, vice principals, teachers, etc.). This theme occurred evenly across all of the themes (two times in each) except human resources, in which the discussions did not produce this them at all. One principal shared, “I really just needed to understand the process and what things need to be in place to support students. . . . I learned most of that information from the school psychologist as well as our RSP teacher.”

***Department lead or staff.*** The last theme that frequently (eight times) occurred in the qualitative data pertaining to the culture domain was information came from the department leader or staff in the department. This theme occurred two times each in responses pertaining to the human resources and maintenance and operations departments. This theme occurred once in the responses regarding all of the other departments. One principal shared, “I already knew the special education director. He and I did our students teaching together and so we discussed informal norms often.” Another principal shared, “My supervisor director told me about some of the norms around implementing the instructional program that the district just adopted.”

**Culture domain summary.** This section analyzed the data collected in this study related to the culture domain. The domain of culture in organizational socialization

provides the new principal with information regarding the formal and informal norms of each of the departments in the district (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015). This is an area principal preparation programs are not designed to provide to new principals.

The survey included one culture question for each department in the quantitative data collection: “To what degree do you agree you were provided the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the department?” Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under the domain of culture occurred for an average of 49% of all respondents. The departments reported to provide information related to the culture domain to the most participants were business services (59%), special education (57%), and the student services (50%). When it comes to the culture domain, the amount of participants who were not provided with information was 45%, just 4% less than those who agreed. Lastly, an average of 5% of the respondents were undecided as to whether they were provided culture domain-related information. Further insight into the culture domain of organizational socialization is provided by the qualitative data.

The domain of culture was explored by one question included in the interview protocol used for this study: “What was your experience in learning your specific roles and expectations in relation to the department?” Four themes emerged from the qualitative data collected. The most frequent theme of no formal process used occurred 51 times, suggesting that many of those interviewed received no information regarding the formal and informal norms related to any department. With a frequency of 11 occurrences, new principals interviewed received culture domain information from their

prior experience. The third most frequent theme occurred 11 times, and was new principals interviewed received culture domain information from school staff (secretaries, vice principals, and others). Lastly, the theme of information being obtained from department leads and staff occurred eight times.

The culture domain in organizational socialization pertains to the informal and formal norms existing in each of the district departments. In the professional socialization of principals, formal and informal norms are not covered as a part of the standards covered in credentialing programs (E. Anderson & Reynolds, 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). The data indicate that while some new principals receive information for the culture domain, it is not provided on a wide scale, and is not a part of a formal organizational socialization process. The data gathered for the connection domain of organizational socialization are reviewed in the next section.

### **Major Findings for the Connection Domain**

The domain of connection pertains to those individuals in an organization with whom new principals should establish a relationship. These relationships are typically encouraged to be developed with the keepers of history, the power brokers (not always named leaders), and those who are seen as the matriarch or patriarch in the organization. These people can be a tremendous resource to the new principals and can help them traverse the other domains of the organizational socialization. This section reviews the analyzed data for the domain of connection in organizational socialization.

**Quantitative findings.** A connection domain question was included for each department in the quantitative data collection survey: “To what degree do you agree that the department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you

should establish a relationship?” Table 16 depicts the data collected regarding the connection domain of organizational socialization experienced by new principals with school district departments.

Table 16

*Connection Domain Quantitative Data*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	18	24%	45	61%	3	4%	7	10%	1	1%
Business services	14	19%	29	39%	1	1%	21	28%	4	5%
Student services	19	26%	46	62%	4	5%	4	5%	1	1%
Education services	17	23%	46	62%	5	7%	5	7%	1	1%
Maintenance and operations	11	15%	34	46%	6	8%	22	30%	1	1%
Special education	16	22%	40	54%	4	5%	12	16%	2	2%
Average	16	22%	40	54%	4	5%	12	16%	2	2%

*Note.* F = frequency.

Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under the domain of connection occurred for an average of 70% of all respondents. The departments reported to provide information related to the culture domain to the most participants were the student services (88%), human resources and education services (85%), and special education (76%) departments. An average of 29% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that departments shared information regarding individuals within the department with whom they should establish a relationship. The maintenance and operations department was reported by 31% of the respondents not to have shared information regarding the domain of connections. Then the business services and human resources departments followed with 35% and 33% of the respondents reporting that the departments do not share any connection domain information with new principals. The next department with 18% reported to not provide

connection domain information to new principals was the special education department. The student services and education services departments each had 6% to 8% of new principals reporting to not have experienced connection domain information. The qualitative data provided further insight into the connection domain-related survey response data.

**Qualitative findings.** There was one question for each domain related to the connection domain of organizational socialization. Table 17 shows the themes (identified by the number describing the theme) and the frequency with which each theme was referenced by respondents in each department to the interview question: “What was your experience in learning about people with whom to make a connection with in the department?” There were five themes from the data occurring more than five times connected to how new principals experienced the culture domain of organizational socialization: (a) Information came from the department leader or staff (dept. lead); (b) participant had prior experience with compliance domain (prior exp.); (c) information came from school staff (school staff); (d) no formal process was used to provide the information (no process); and (e) information came from a buddy principal.

Table 17

*Qualitative Connection Domain Data Frequency.*

Department	Dept. lead	Prior exp	Staff at school	No information	Buddy principal
Human resources	6	2	1	6	1
Business services	6	0	1	5	2
Student services	3	6	0	5	3
Education services	5	4	0	3	1
Maintenance & operations	1	3	6	7	0
Special education	2	4	1	7	2
Totals	23	19	9	33	9

*No formal process.* For the connection domain of organizational socialization, the theme of no formal process occurred 33 times throughout the interviews. Across all of the departments, no formal process used was mentioned between three and seven times. The highest mention of this theme was in relation to maintenance and operations and special education to which new principals referred nine times as providing no connection domain information. One principal stated, “The director of maintenance and operations was the person I got to know, but there was no formal information provided.” The next highest mention of this theme occurred in relation to the human resources department with six occurrences: “I wasn’t given any names of other people that would be helpful in the human resources department besides the director. But there was nothing shared formally.” The business and student services departments were both mentioned five times as departments that did not provide any connection domain information. Lastly, the education services department occurred three times in this theme for the domain of connection. Three of the 10 respondents shared that there was no one else they were encouraged to connect with outside of their direct supervisor in education services.

*Department lead or staff.* The second (23 times) most frequent way new principals received connection domain information was from the department lead or staff. This theme occurred six times each in responses pertaining to the human resources and business services departments. This theme occurred five times in the responses regarding the education services department. Information coming from the department leadership theme also occurred in relation to the student services department (three times), the special education department (two times), and the maintenance and operations

department (once). One principal shared, “I think the director assigned to my school helped me know who to go to for information more than anyone else.” Another principal shared, “Besides the chief business officer providing me with the names of people to call for specific information when I needed it, no one else in the business services suggested I connect with anyone else.”

***Prior experience.*** Prior experience was the third most frequently (19 times) mentioned way in which new principals experienced the connection domain of organizational socialization. This theme was mentioned most frequently (six times) in relation to answers about the student services department. The other two department answers mentioning this theme the most were education services and special education with four mentions each. The human resources and maintenance and operations department answers each had three and two mentions of this theme respectively while the business services answers had no reference to this theme at all. “The relationships I have, I already had since I worked in the district. For example, my instructional coach and I were coaches together,” said one principal. Another principal shared, “I already had relationships with people in the human resources department, and the director is a good friend of mine. We started teaching together.”

***School staff.*** The fourth most frequently occurring theme in the questions regarding the domain of connection was information was obtained from school site staff (secretaries, vice principals, teachers, etc.). This theme occurred six times in relation to answers regarding the maintenance and operations department, which was the most of all connection domain-related questions. The theme occurred evenly (once each) across the human resources, business services, and special education department questions. Lastly,

there was no mention of this theme at all in relation to responses regarding the student services and education services departments. One principal shared, “My secretary knew people in the maintenance and operations department and knew exactly who I should connect with.”

***Buddy principal.*** That many new principals are assigned a buddy principal as a strategy of support is well documented in the literature (Burkhauser et al., 2012; Garcia, 2011; Lochmiller, 2014). The department questions mentioned this theme between one and three times respectively, with the maintenance and operations department answers having no occurrence of this theme at all. The student services responses yielded three responses; for example, this was shared by one principal, “It was my buddy principal who told me who to call if I needed some help with any student services related issues.”

**Connection summary.** This section analyzed the data collected in this study related to the connection domain. Connection provides the new principal with information on the key interpersonal relationships, support mechanisms, and information networks that new employees need to establish upon entering a new organization. Research has established that new employees who feel connected and accepted by their new colleagues have less initial anxiety upon entering the new organization (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015). Connection for new principals is vital to their feeling of inclusion and acceptance.

A connection question was included for each department in the quantitative data collection survey: “To what degree do participants agree that the department introduced you to individuals or networks within the department with whom you should establish a relationship?” Across all of the district departments, organizational socialization under



the domain of connection occurred for an average of 64% of all respondents. The departments reported to provide information related to the connection domain to the most participants was the student services (88%), human resources (85%), and education services with 63% of respondents. Across the departments, a range of 8% to 47% of the respondents were provided with little to no connection domain information. Lastly, an average of 2% of the respondents were undecided as to whether they were provided connection domain-related information. The qualitative data provided further insight into the connection domain-related survey response data.

A question for each department related to the domain of connection was included in the interview protocol used for this study: “What was your experience in learning with whom to establish relationships?” Five themes emerged from the qualitative data collected. The most frequent (occurred 33 times) of all five was the theme of no formal process was used to provide new principals with connection domain information. The second most frequent theme was the department lead or staff as the way new principals received their information regarding with whom they should establish a relationship across all departments. The theme of information being obtained from prior experience occurred 19 times. Information acquired from school staff (secretaries, vice principals, and others) and buddy principals was mentioned nine times each in the responses to the questions regarding the connection domain.

The connection domain in organizational socialization pertains to the specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the newcomer’s job. When new employees feel like an insider, they take more risks, allow themselves to be open to vulnerability by asking questions, and admit they do not know things, thus being more open to learning

(Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015; H. J. Klein & Polin, 2012). The data indicate that while there is connection domain-related information provided to new principals, it is not a part of a formal organizational socialization process. The literature related to organizational socialization reports that employers typically provide a mentor or buddy as a part of the connection domain (Bengtson, 2014; Joppy, 2014; Korte et al., 2015). This research also states that connection can be the foundation upon which effective organizational socialization is built.

## **Part II: Findings by Research Question**

In order to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals' transition into their new role, this study asked three questions: (a) What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role, (b) To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role, and (c) To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role? The data collection tools provided both quantitative data and qualitative data for the implementation of the four key components of organizational socialization: compliance, clarification, culture, and connection. This section provides the findings of the data reported for each of the research questions in this study.

### **Major Findings for Research Question 1**

The first research question asked, "What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role?"

The socialization process exists both as new leaders enter into their new role and as they remain in the role across time. In general, socialization is defined as how the new member learns the social norms and processes connected to a larger environment (G. M. Steyn, 2013). Principal socialization is defined as the experience of individuals as they experience and become acclimated to the role of principal through personal experience, principal preparation programs, and in the organization in which they begin their career (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Joppy, 2014; Spillane & Anderson, 2014; G. M. Steyn, 2013). Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to seek the answer to this question.

**Quantitative data for Research Question 1.** The survey used to collect the quantitative data asked one question for each domain and for each department; these data were shared in the previous sections on each domain. Table 18 shows the data from the questions related to new principals experiencing each domain in each of the district departments. The three columns depict a combination of *strongly agree and agree*, *undecided*, and the combination of *strongly disagree and disagree* responses. This indicates new principals did indeed experience organizational socialization in the domain.

Table 18

*Research Question 1 Quantitative Data*

Domain	Strongly agree & agree		Undecided		Strongly disagree & disagree	
	AF	AP	AF	AP	AF	AP
Compliance	55	75%	3	4%	16	21%
Clarification	56	76%	2	2%	16	21%
Culture	36	49%	4	5%	33	45%
Connection	48	64%	2	3%	24	32%
Average	49	66%	3	4%	22	30%

*Note.* AF = average frequency; AP = average percentage,

As shown in Table 18, an average of 66% of the respondents experienced organizational socialization across all domains, while an average of 30% of the respondents experienced little to no organizational socialization. This mirrors the turnover rate of principals, which occurs at a rate of between 15% and 30% each year, thus increasing the need for new principals (Fuller, 2012; School Leaders Network, 2014; Superville, 2014). This finding is important as it aligns with the research literature indicating that organizational socialization decreases turnover, increases job performance, and increases job satisfaction (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; Chao et al., 1994; W. E. Ross et al., 2014). The data in Table 18 also show that new principals had more experience with the compliance and clarification domains than culture and connection of organizational socialization. The latter two domains—culture and connection—have been reported to be the key to newcomers transitioning to becoming an insider (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; Bengtson, 2014; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). In addition to the domain and department questions, there were questions asked regarding the orientation and the general experience with organizational socialization.

Research regarding organizational socialization content includes information that should be provided during the employee orientation. This orientation usually has nothing to do with the specific job of the employee but only with general company information (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015; H. J. Klein, Polin, & Leigh Sutton, 2015). The question regarding information provided during the new principal's orientation was as follows: "Did the district provide you with an orientation that included any or all of the following: the values of the district; the objectives of the district; the mission/vision of the district; or none of the above." The data in Table 19 show that a

reported 38% of the respondents learned about the values of the district during the orientation process; 57% of the respondents learned about the objectives of the district; and 46% learned about the mission and vision. In addition, 43% of the respondents did not learn any of the information listed.

Table 19

*Orientation Content Data*

Orientation content	Frequency	Percentage
Values of the district	28	37.8
Objectives of the district	42	56.8
Mission/vision of the district	34	45.9
None of the above	32	43.2
Total	74	100.0

In order to garner the general experience of socialization, respondents were asked to what degree do they agree the district or any of the departments shared any information or resources for compliance, clarification, culture, or connections. Table 20 shows that roughly 59% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their district provided any of the organizational socialization domains to them, while 36% of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that they were not provided any of the domain information. In addition, 4% of respondents were undecided as to whether their district provided any organizational socialization domain information.

Table 20

*Experience Organizational Socialization*

Likert rating	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	26	35.0
Agree	18	24.4
Undecided	3	4.1
Disagree	22	29.7
Strongly disagree	5	6.8
Total	74	100.0

**Qualitative data for Research Question 1.** The interview protocol used to collect qualitative data asked one question for each domain for each district department; these data were shared in the previous section of this chapter on each domain. Table 21 shows the theme of no process used at all, which came up 140 times across all four domains. The theme of no process used showed up the most (51 times) when referring to the domain of culture. One principal shared, “We had many meetings I attended and I guess I was able to observe the culture, but there was nothing done to intentionally teach me about the culture as new principal.” The theme of organizational socialization coming from the department lead occurred 64 times across all domains with connections being the domain in which this theme was most mentioned. Another principal shared, “The human resource department leaders helped to understand the supervision and evaluation process,” while yet another shared, “The student services director came to visit me and explained the district focus on restorative justice.” Other themes most frequently mentioned across all domains were school staff (51 times), prior experience (42 times), and meetings (31 times). The domains most experienced across multiple formats (all seven themes) were compliance and clarification. These domains are related to rules and procedures that should be followed in the course of the principal’s job and responsibilities.

Table 21

*Qualitative Question 1: Themes by Domain*

	No process	Dept. lead	Prior exp.	School staff	Buddy principal	Print resource	Meetings	Only laws
Compliance	31	17	12	8	9	8	23	9
Clarification	25	16	0	24	9	9	8	0
Culture	51	8	11	10	0	0	0	0
Connections	33	23	19	9	9	0	0	0
Total	140	64	42	51	27	17	31	9

In addition to the questions specifically asked regarding each of the district departments, there were three other questions asked regarding the experience of new principals with organizational socialization: (a) What was your experience with the district culture and opportunities to interact with other district employees; (b) What was your experience with getting to know and understand the mission and vision and/or objectives of the district; and (c) What was your experience with having a district provided buddy or colleague to assist you with questions you had about district norms, processes, and procedures? The data derived from these questions connected with the themes from the other questions. The theme of meetings as a way to engage in the district culture and to learn the mission, vision, and/or objectives was mentioned 12 times, while previous experience was mentioned five times. All participants mentioned that there was no intentional effort to expose the new leaders to district culture. The only other theme mentioned once was obtaining some information from written documents. As to the question regarding having a buddy or colleague assigned to support new principals, six of the 10 participants interviewed stated that they had an assigned buddy to support them.

### **Major Findings for Research Question 2**

The second research question asked, “To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role?” This question provides insight into whether organizational socialization practices were purposely implemented in the school districts. The literature on organizational socialization reported that regardless of the organization intent, socialization will occur (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al.,

2015; Korte et al., 2015). The purposeful implementation of organizational socialization processes and supports is critical in getting new principals quickly incorporated into the district culture and ensuring high performance (Bauer et al., 2012; Bengtson, 2014; H. J. Klein et al., 2015). This section presents both the qualitative and quantitative data collected to respond to the question of implementation of organizational socialization.

**Quantitative data for Research Question 2.** The survey used to collect the quantitative data asked one question for each domain and for each department; these data were shared in the previous sections on each domain. Table 22 shows the data from the questions related to the implementation of organizational socialization practices in the districts represented by each participant. The three columns depict a combination of *strongly agree and agree, undecided*, and the combination of *strongly disagree and disagree* responses.

Table 22

*Data Regarding the Implementation of Practices*

Domain	Strongly agree & agree		Undecided		Strongly disagree & disagree	
	AF	AP	AF	AP	AF	AP
Compliance	55	75%	3	4%	16	21%
Clarification	56	76%	2	2%	16	21%
Culture	36	49%	4	5%	33	45%
Connection	48	64%	2	3%	24	32%
Average	49	66%	3	4%	22	30%

*Note.* AF = average frequency; AP = average percentage,

As shown in Table 22, an average of 66% of the respondents experienced organizational socialization across all domains, while an average of 30% of respondents experienced little to no domains. This shows that at least one third of the districts represented had not implemented any organizational socialization practices, and it was



unclear from the quantitative data whether the remaining two thirds intentionally implemented the practices experienced by new principals. The consistent turnover of one third of principals in schools reported in the literature matched this data point (Fuller, 2012; School Leaders Network, 2014; Superville, 2014). The districts employing the participants in this study reportedly experienced processes for the compliance (75%) and clarification (76%) domains, as these two domains are often regulated by education laws and legislation (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014). However, when it came to the culture domain, only 49% of the participants reported any processes or procedures. Finally, the processes and procedures related to the domain of connections was reportedly experienced by 64% of participants. The latter two domains—culture and connection—were reported in the literature to be the key to newcomers transitioning to the status of an insider (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; Bengtson, 2014; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). While participants reported experiencing processes and/or procedures to connect new principals to other district employees, only half of them reported experiencing any process for the domain of culture. The degree to which processes and/or procedures related to any of the domains that have been implemented by districts is further explored by reviewing the qualitative data related to Research Question 2.

**Qualitative results for Research Question 2.** In reviewing the qualitative data for Research Question 2 regarding the extent to which organizational socialization processes were implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role, the qualitative themes can reveal a more complete picture into the implementation of these practices. As reviewed in the data previously, several themes emerged from the qualitative data.

Table 23

*Qualitative Question 2: Themes by Domain*

	No process	Department lead	Prior experience	School staff	Buddy principal	Print resource	Meetings	Only laws
Compliance	31	17	12	8	9	8	23	9
Clarification	25	16	0	24	9	9	8	0
Culture	51	8	11	10	0	0	0	0
Connections	33	23	19	9	9	0	0	0
Total	140	64	42	51	27	17	31	9

Table 23 shows that the theme of no process used to provide new principals with organizational socialization across all domains was the most frequently occurring (140 times total) theme. The lack of a process means that there are no processes and/or procedures intentionally in place to bring newcomers from the outside to the inside. However, certain domains of the organizational socialization processes implemented by districts varied among the responses of the participants. One principal shared, “I would say outside of monthly meetings, there was no strong process used to provide information on rules and procedures for special education.” Another principal shared regarding the question related to who to establish relationships with in human resources, “No nothing was provided.” Participants reported that the domain of compliance was experienced across all seven other themes as a way new principals received information related to the rules and regulations of the job of principal. One principal shared, “I feel like I got to know some of the rules, processes, and procedures around my fiscal responsibilities from budget meetings,” while another principal shared, “I learned the rules, processes, and procedures around curriculum and instruction from my experience as a teacher in the district.” The clarification domain also appears to be widely experienced across different formats. The wide spread of experience of this domain could suggest implementation of practices related to supporting new principals in these two domains. For example, one

principal of a small district shared, “However, there was very limited exposure to organizational socialization practices related to culture and connection as only four themes were mentioned in relation to these domains.”

### **Data Results for Research Question 3**

The third research question in this study was, “To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role?” To answer this question, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The question of effectiveness builds upon the prior two questions and attempts to gain insight into the impact of the organizational socialization practices and processes experienced in adequately preparing new principals for their new role.

**Quantitative results for Research Question 3.** The quantitative data collected for Research Question 3 differ from the other two questions in that there were only a select number of questions asked regarding effectiveness. There were two initial questions in the survey tool, the first asking the effectiveness of the orientation process and the second asking the impact of the process components experienced in preparing the new principals for their role. The subsequent two sets of questions were asked in regard to each department as follow-up questions to the questions regarding the domains of clarification and culture. The questions related to compliance and connection were deemed to either exist or not and to not have an attached judgement of effectiveness. The following is an analysis of the data gathered from these questions.

Table 24 shows the perceived effectiveness of the orientation process experienced by new principals. Orientation processes are typically the experience new principals

have upon their initial hire. They usually involve signing their contract and learning about their benefits, and so forth. The table shows the combined total number and corresponding percentage of participants who rated the orientation process as *extremely or very effective, moderately effective, or slightly or not at all effective*. Only 11% of participants deemed their experience to be *effective or very effective*, while 30% of participants deemed the orientation processes they experienced to be *moderately effective*. However, more than half of the respondents deemed their orientation process to be *not at all or only slightly effective* in supporting the transition into their new role.

Table 24

*Perceived Orientation Process Effectiveness*

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely/very effective	8	11%
Moderately	22	30%
Slightly/not at all effective	44	59%

Table 25 shows the level of preparedness perceived by participants as a result of the overall organizational socialization processes experienced in their districts. The data gathered related to the effectiveness of the orientation process differ little when compared to the data regarding the level of preparedness felt by participants as a result of the process overall. The table shows the combined total number and corresponding percentage of participants who rated the overall organizational socialization process *extremely or very effective, moderately effective, or slightly or not at all effective*. A total of 14% of the participants reported to be extremely or very prepared for their new role as a result of the overall organizational processes they experienced, while 31% of them reported the processes they experienced to only have prepared them *moderately* for their

new role. Over half of the respondents felt the processes they experienced *slightly or not at all* prepared them for the role of principal.

Table 25

*Perceived Impact of Organizational Socialization Processes*

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely/very prepared	10	14%
Moderately prepared	23	31%
Slightly/not at all	41	55%

Table 26 shows the data collected regarding the perceived effectiveness of the information around the domain of clarification in supporting new principals in their new role. The domain of clarification relates to the information provided to new principals explaining their explicit role in carrying out their responsibilities. In regard to the domain of clarification, the table shows that the special education department (23% reported *extremely effective*, and only 7% reported *not at all effective*) was most effective in explaining the role of principals in carrying their duties related to special education issues. The human resources department was reported to be the least effective with 12% of the participants reporting the information to be *very effective* and 33% reporting the information to be *not effective at all*. The information regarding the domain of clarification was reported to be *moderately effective* between 24% and 39% of the respondents for each department. Across the departments, the table also shows the least number of participants found the organizational socialization process to be *extremely effective*.

Table 26

*Effectiveness of Clarification Information*

Department	Extremely Effective		Very Effective		Moderately Effective		Slightly Effective		Not at all Effective	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	9	12%	3	4%	21	28%	17	23%	24	33%
Business services	2	3%	15	20%	21	28%	18	24%	18	24%
Student services	4	5%	17	23%	19	26%	16	22%	18	24%
Education services	6	8%	11	15%	18	24%	23	31%	16	22%
Maintenance and operations	3	4%	9	12%	19	26%	23	31%	20	27%
Special education	17	23%	3	4%	29	39%	20	27%	5	7%

Note. F = frequency.

Table 27 shows the data collected regarding the perceived effectiveness of the information around the domain of culture in supporting new principals in their new role. The domain of culture relates to the information provided to new principals explaining the formal and informal norms of the department. The domain of culture determines the degree to which newcomers begin to feel like an insider as opposed to an outsider. This domain has a significant impact on the newcomers' sense of belonging and their desire to stay in the organization. In regard to the domain of culture, the table shows no department as having *extremely* or *very effective* practices to support new principals to learn the culture. In fact, between 41% and 56% of respondents found what departments shared about culture to be ineffective. The information regarding the domain of culture was reported to be *moderately effective* for between 12% and 26% of the respondents for each department.

Table 27

*Effectiveness of Culture Information*

Department	Extremely effective		Very effective		Moderately effective		Slightly effective		Not at all effective	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	6	8%	3	4%	19	26%	13	18%	33	45%
Business services	2	3%	7	10%	11	15%	22	30%	32	43%
Student services	2	3%	9	12%	15	20%	13	18%	35	47%
Education services	4	5%	6	8%	17	23%	17	23%	30	41%
Maintenance and operations	3	4%	3	4%	10	14%	17	23%	41	56%
Special education	4	5%	5	7%	9	12%	25	34%	31	42%

*Note.* F = frequency.

**Qualitative results for Research Question 3.** Qualitative data for Research Question 3 were coded by looking for words describing effectiveness. Qualitative data collected revealed the different ways participants received qualitative data and were deemed helpful, effective, or supportive. Each time a participant mentioned words similar to effective, it was noted for which theme and to which of the four C’s of organizational socialization it referred. Table 28 depicts the qualitative data for Research Question 3. The number of times effectiveness was mentioned for each theme and component is displayed next to the total number of times the theme was mentioned for each component. In terms of the component of compliance, the most mentioned source of information was meetings, but meetings being helpful for this component only occurred five times. One principal shared, “There were several meetings held to support implementing restorative justice procedures and process[es] in the district.” Another principal responded, “Outside of the meeting when we went over the supervision and evaluation process, there was nothing else provided.” For clarification, the most mentioned source of information was staff at schools; information from staff being effective was mentioned 10 times. The domain of culture information was most received

from prior experience (11 times) but was mentioned as being effective six times. Lastly, for the domain of connection, department head was the most frequently mentioned source of information, with this information being effective only being mentioned eight times.

Table 28

*Qualitative Question 3 Themes by Domain*

Qualitative theme	Compliance		Clarification		Culture		Connection		Total	
Department head	17	9	16	6	8	2	23	8	64	25
Prior experience	12	8	0	5	11	6	19	9	42	28
Staff at school	8	4	24	10	10	4	9	3	51	21
Buddy principal	9	3	9	7	0	3	9	4	27	17
Print resource	8	1	9	1	0	0	0	0	17	2
Meetings	23	5	8	6	0	3	0	1	31	15
Total	77	30	66	35	29	18	60	25	232	108
Percentage	39%		53%		62%		42%		47%	

The total column in Table 28, was used to determine the percentage of times information in each domain was mentioned to be effective. The most effective information was reported to be about the domain of culture (62%). Overall from all of the themes, the data show that 47% of the information provided proved to be effective.

### Summary

This chapter began with the purpose of the study, the research questions, the research methods, and the data collection procedures used in the study. It also included the population, sample, and demographic information for the participants. Chapter IV then provided a presentation of the data collected in the study. The data were presented in two sections.

The first section presented data related to the framework used for the study. The framework used for this study viewed organizational socialization in four domains: compliance, clarification, culture, and connections. Both the quantitative and qualitative



data were presented for each of the six departments highlighted in the study: human resources, student services, business services, special education, education services, and maintenance and operations. Across all four domains, each department studied yielded the quantitative data depicted in Tables 21 and 22. Table 29 shows the special education department with a combined *strongly agree and agree* total of 78% of participants reporting to have received information regarding the domains of organizational socialization. The education services department and student services department followed with 75% and 72% respectively. The maintenance and operations department was reported by participants to provide the least amount (43%) of information regarding the four domains.

Table 29

*Qualitative Data Across for All Four Domains by Department*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Human resources	17	23%	32	43%	4	5%	16	21%	1	1%
Business services	14	19%	35	47%	2	2%	19	26%	4	5%
Student services	16	22%	37	50%	2	2%	17	23%	3	4%
Education services	17	23%	39	52%	3	4%	14	19%	2	2%
Maintenance and operations	10	13%	22	30%	8	11%	32	43%	3	4%
Special education	16	22%	42	56%	3	4%	10	14%	3	4%
Average		20%		46%		5%		24%		3%

Note. F = frequency.

Table 30 shows the quantitative data for each domain across all departments. The combined percentages of *strongly agreed and agreed* reveal the number of participants who reported to have received information across all departments. While participants reported that an average of 76% to 77% of them experienced receiving information regarding compliance, clarification, and connections, only an average of 51% of them

received information regarding the culture of the district. In fact, 44% of participants reported not having received any culture domain information. This was derived from the combination of the *disagree and strongly disagree* data in the domain of culture.

Table 30

*Quantitative Data Across by Domain Across all Departments*

Department	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Compliance	16	22%	39	53%	3	4%	14	19%	2	2%
Clarification	16	22%	40	54%	2	2%	14	19%	2	2%
Culture	12	16%	26	35%	4	5%	28	39%	4	5%
Connection	16	22%	40	54%	4	5%	12	16%	2	2%

*Note.* F = frequency,

The second section presented information by research question. This study asked three questions: (a) What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role, (b) To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role, and (c) To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role? Each question was presented with both quantitative and qualitative data. The following summarizes those findings.

The first question attempted to gain insight into whether new principals experienced organizational socialization to assist them in their first year. The quantitative data in Table 31 show that almost as many participants *strongly agreed* (35%) that they experienced information in any domain and across departments as *disagreed* (30%) that they experienced any information. The combined percentages from

*strongly agree and agreed* show that 59% of participants reported experiencing any of the organizational socialization domains across all departments.

Table 31

*Participants Who Experience Organizational Socialization*

Likert rating	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	26	35.0
Agree	18	24.0
Undecided	3	4.0
Disagree	22	30.0
Strongly disagree	5	7.0
Total	74	100.0

The qualitative data for Research Question 1 revealed four major themes across the four domains. These themes revealed how new principals received information regarding each of the domains. Of the eight total themes, four occurred over 40 times: No process was used, information came from the department lead, from prior experience, and from school staff. The table shows that across all four domains, the theme of no process in place occurred 140 times. The 140 occurrences are compared to the occurrence of information from the department lead (64 times), prior experience (42 times), and school staff (51 times), close to three times the number of occurrences of the other themes.

Table 32

*Summary of Major Themes by Domain*

Domain	No process	Dept. lead	Prior exp.	School staff
Compliance	31	17	12	8
Clarification	25	16	0	24
Culture	51	8	11	10
Connections	33	23	19	9
Total	140	64	42	51

The second research question attempted to gain insight into the extent to which districts have purposely implemented organizational socialization processes. The quantitative data for this question shown in the Table 33 revealed that an average of 66% of the respondents experienced organizational socialization across all domains, while an average of 30% of respondents experienced little to no domains. This shows that at least one third of the districts represented have not implemented any organizational socialization practices, and it is unclear from the quantitative data whether the remaining two thirds intentionally implemented the practices experienced by new principals.

Table 33

*Summary of Quantitative Data for Question 2*

Domain	Strongly agree & agree		Undecided		Strongly disagree & disagree	
	AF	AP	AF	AP	AF	AP
Compliance	55	75%	3	4%	16	21%
Clarification	56	76%	2	2%	16	21%
Culture	36	49%	4	5%	33	45%
Connection	48	64%	2	3%	24	32%
Average	49	66%	3	4%	22	30%

*Note.* AF = average frequency; AP = average percentage,

The qualitative data for Research Question 2 provide more insight into the implementation of organizational socialization practices. The qualitative data revealed four major themes around the implementation of organizational socialization. These are the same data used for Research Question 1; the table has been duplicated below (see Table 34). Several principals reported that though they experienced a socialization practice, it was not purposeful or intentional. It was apparent in the 140 instances of no process used occurring across all departments and organizational socialization domains, that participants experienced very little actual implementation of practices.

Table 34

*Summary of Qualitative Data Question 2*

	No process	Dept. lead	Prior exp.	School staff
Compliance	31	17	12	8
Clarification	25	16	0	24
Culture	51	8	11	10
Connections	33	23	19	9
Total	140	64	42	51

The third research question sought to gain insight into the perceived effectiveness of the organizational socialization practices experienced by new principals. In the quantitative data, two domains were followed up with questions regarding the effectiveness of the information in supporting their success. Table 35 depicts the four domains and percentage of respondents having experienced the domain. In addition, it shows the perceived effectiveness of the two domains with follow-up questions. Respondents reported that 22% of them found the information about the clarification of roles and responsibilities to be effective. Respondents also reported that 12% of them found the information about the district department cultures to be effective. It is also important to note that respondents reported receiving more information from the special education departments than from the other departments.

Table 35

*Organizational Socialization Domains Experienced vs. Effectiveness*

Domain	Experienced	Effectiveness
Compliance	76%	
Clarification	77%	22%
Culture	55%	12%
Connections	77%	

Qualitative data gathered about the effectiveness involved collecting data regarding whether participants mentioned a particular qualitative theme to be effective, helpful, or supportive in any way. The themes in the qualitative portion of data collection describe the manner in which new principals received organizational socialization domain information. Six themes were mentioned to have been effective modes of information: department head, prior experience, school staff, buddy principal, print resource, and meetings. Table 36 summarizes the data across all departments and themes by domain. The table shows that even though the participants reported having the fewest experiences with the domain of culture across all themes (29 times as compared to 60 to 77 times of other domains), the highest percentage of effectiveness (62%) was from the culture domain. The domain of compliance was experienced the most across all themes (occurred 77 times), but the percentage of participants who deemed the information effective was the lowest (39%).

Table 36

*Effectiveness Across Departments by Domain*

Domain	# of occurrences of themes	# of occurrences of effectiveness	Percentage of perceived effectiveness.
Compliance	77	30	39%
Clarification	66	35	53%
Culture	29	18	62%
Connections	60	25	42%
Totals	232	108	47%

Chapter V provides a summation of the mixed methods study. Major findings, unexpected findings, and conclusions based on the data analysis are all included in this chapter. In addition, Chapter V presents implications for action, recommendations for further research, and the researcher's concluding remarks and reflection.

## CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Overview**

This study began in Chapter I with an introduction to the background and rationale to conduct the study. Chapter II was a comprehensive literature review, which presented the theoretical framework for organizational socialization. In Chapter III, the design and methodology of the study was presented. Then, Chapter IV presented the data and analysis from the survey and interviews conducted for the study. In the final chapter, a brief summary of the study is provided as well as the findings and conclusions from the data. The study ends with remarks and reflections from the researcher, implications for action, and recommendations for the field as well as for further research.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first-year principals' transition into their new role. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first-year principals perceived these processes are effective.

### **Research Questions**

1. What organizational socialization processes were experienced by first-year principals to support their transition into their new role?
2. To what extent are organizational socialization processes implemented by districts and their departments to support the transition of first-year principals into their new role?
3. To what degree do first-year principals perceive the district organizational socialization practices to be effective in supporting the transition into their new role?

## **Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures**

In order to capture the complex nature of first-year principals' experiences with organizational socialization, a mixed methods approach to research was used. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data provides greater insight into the answers to research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Both a survey and interviews were used to collect data. Quantitative data were collected via electronic survey using SurveyMonkey. The quantitative data provided the foundational information on the use of organizational socialization practices in districts. Qualitative data were collected via interviews. The data collected from interviews helped the researcher to understand the lived experience of first-year principals' engagement in the organizational socialization processes and practices used by school districts.

### **Population**

The population for this study was new principals in California. With research revealing that an average of 20% of principals leaving their job each year, the approximate number of new principals and population for this study was 2,079 (Burrows-McCabe, 2014). To narrow the population, the researcher chose to focus on new principals enrolled in the ACSA Clear Administrative Credential Program (CACP), who began as principals during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. Of the 485 participants in the CACP program, 181 were first-year principals. This group served as the target population or the sampling frame for this research.

The ACSA CACP program was chosen because of its longevity and involvement in the socialization process to provide the required coaching and support needed for administrators who, once employed in an administrative position, need to obtain their



Clear California Administrative Services Credential. The data collected from both methods were compared and combined to create a complete picture of the experience of new principals with organizational socialization.

### **Sample**

The researcher used convenience sampling in the quantitative portion of this study. In convenience sampling, subjects are chosen on the basis of how accessible they are, or how fast they can be contacted (Creswell, 2013). The findings from convenience sampling are difficult to generalize, so researchers need to provide in-depth descriptions of how the characteristics match those of the population. The sample for this study was convenient because the researcher worked for ACSA and had access to the population.

In California, there were approximately 4,158 new principals for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years (Béteille et al., 2012; Clifford et al., 2012). The ACSA CACP program had 181 first-year principals enrolled, and they served as the target population for this study. Both the confidence level and the confidence interval level are considered when calculating the sample size for quantitative research. In particular, for this study a confidence interval level of 5 and a confidence level of 95% resulted in calculated sample size of 123 respondents. However, during data collection, only 75 participants responded. With this number of respondents, it is not possible to generalize the results with confidence across the rest of the population of new principals in California. Therefore, the findings in this study were limited to the participants in the ACSA CACP program.

There are differing opinions among researchers in determining the sample size in qualitative research ranging from five to 25 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Morse, 1994;

Patton, 1990). The researcher used a stratified random sampling method to select 10 participants from those who responded to the quantitative survey used in this study.

### **Demographic Data**

The participants in this study were asked to provide demographic information in the electronic survey, which asked questions regarding the following: (a) gender, (b) years in education, and (c) education leadership experiences prior to principalship. Participants were advised that their information would be used only to provide context for the results of the dissertation and for statistical purposes.

Table 37 shows that of the 75 respondents, 49 were female and 26 were male. Table 38 shows the number of years each participant has been in education in spans of 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, and 16 or more years. The respondents in this study represented a wide array of educational experience with 14.7% of respondents with 1-5 years of experience, 52% with 6-10 years of experience, 17.3% with 11-15 years of experience, and 16% with more than 16 years of experience. Lastly, Table 39 shows that prior to becoming a principal, 36.5% of the respondents were assistant or vice principals, 36.5% of respondents were in “other” leadership roles, 8.2% of the respondents were teachers in charge, and 18.9% were teacher leaders.

Table 37

*Gender of Participants*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	49	66.2
Male	26	33.8
Total	75	100.0

Table 38

*Years in Education*

Years in education	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Years	11	14.7
6-10 Years	39	52
11-15 Years	13	17.3
16 or more years	12	16
Total	75	100.0

Table 39

*Educational Leadership Experiences*

Role before principal	Frequency	Percentage
Assistant principal	27	36.5
Other leadership role	27	36.5
Teacher in charge	6	8.2
Teacher leader	14	18.9
Total	75	100.0

### **Major Findings**

There were several major findings resulting from this study. The research questions in this study were designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data regarding the experience of new principals with the four domains of organizational socialization: compliance, clarification, culture, and connections. They were also designed to examine this experience across the major departments in school districts: human resources, education services, fiscal services, maintenance and operations, special education, and student services. The major findings are outlined below.

#### **Finding 1: Organizational Socialization Experience Across All Domains**

The majority of new principals do experience organizational socialization across all domains in the framework and receive information from three main sources: district department leaders, school staff, and principal experiences. However, many respondents

shared that they received the information, but it was not specifically for them as new principals and not a part of a plan to socialize them into the district. Many shared that information came only when they asked a specific question. Based on research, the lack of purposeful processes can lead to employee dissatisfaction and low performance (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bengtson, 2014; Grusec & Hastings, 2014).

### **Finding 2: Little Organizational Socialization Experienced**

One third of participants received little to no organizational socialization, and the majority of those who did experience organizational socialization did not experience it in a formal manner. The research shows that regardless of whether organizations provide a purposeful process for socialization or not, it will happen. The results, however, can have a negative impact on both the employee and the organization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; Brody et al., 2010).

### **Finding 3: Compliance and Clarification Domains Experienced the Most**

New principals experience the domains of compliance and clarification the most as it relates to organizational socialization. The compliance domain pertains to the laws and regulations needing to be followed in a specific position as well as the basic components in hiring (contracts, tax forms, etc.). Participants shared that most of them only received information regarding rules and regulations in relation to specific departments across the district. This mirrors what research says about current practices in organizational socialization. Organizations focus primarily on legal requirements to fulfill their legal responsibilities. Many organizations focus on an initial onboarding that only includes reviewing the contract, signing tax forms and benefit forms, and following safety rules (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; Fursman, 2014).

#### **Finding 4: Special Education Department Provides the Most Socialization**

Out of all district departments, special education was found to provide new principals with the most experience with organizational socialization practices. In particular this department provided the most respondents with information about their roles and responsibilities related to the principals' special education duties. Several participants commented on the special education department and appreciated the clarity provided about their roles and responsibilities. They also shared that the information about their roles and responsibilities came through different modalities (meetings, staff, leaders, etc.). Special education is regulated by laws and regulations that are then implemented by each school district. Much of the data here mirror the research, which indicates that the majority of organizations focus their socialization efforts on the legal aspect of onboarding new employees (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; A. M. Ellis et al., 2015).

#### **Finding 5: Domain of Culture Experienced the Least**

The organizational socialization domain of culture was experienced the least by participants. Quantitative data showed that nearly half of the respondents reported that they did not receive information related to the culture domain. This was reinforced when they were interviewed about the domain of culture. The theme of no process used emerged 51 times compared to an average of 30 times in the other domains. The domain of culture is particularly important because it develops the sense of belonging new employees need in order to feel like they are a part of the organization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; Bengtson et al., 2013). And thus, many new principals will likely feel like they do not belong in that district, which makes it easier for them to leave.

### **Finding 6: Information Acquired From District Leaders, School Staff, and Prior Experience**

Most organizational socialization information was provided by district office leaders, school staff, and prior experience. These modes on how principals obtain information provide insight into how organizational socialization occurs in districts. Respondents shared that school staff can be very helpful in the dissemination of socialization information. Prior experience within the district was also highlighted by the participants as one of the most common ways (42 times), and most effective (28 of the 42 times was deemed effective), that new principals acquired information across all domains and district departments. The research on succession planning and socialization is clear, in that leaders who are bred inside an organization typically are already insiders and can hit the ground running in many aspects of their new role (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Burrows-McCabe, 2014). The information on prior experience in an organization being an effective way new principals are socialized indicates that districts hiring from within may have a better chance at holding onto their new principals.

### **Finding 7: Orientation Processes Ineffective**

Orientation processes were deemed ineffective by new principals participating in this study. New principals perceived that the organizational socialization processes they experienced did little to prepare them for their new role. Many participants communicated that the information distributed was not very useful, and it only pertained to actions the departments wanted them to complete. However, the information shared was not geared to support them in completing the actions the district wanted the principals to complete. Research shows that effective orientation and socialization

processes decrease the time between when a person is hired and when he or she reaches his or her maximum performance level (Batistic & Kase, 2015; Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; Bengtson, 2014). With only 60% of districts having any processes in place, and almost 60% of those processes being ineffective, principals are taking a longer time to reach their maximum performance level.

## **Conclusions**

Several conclusions may be drawn from the literature and findings of this study that provide insight into the organizational socialization of new principals, and which provide information around the four domains: compliance, clarification, culture, and connection across all school district departments.

### **Conclusion 1. Little Evidence of Organizational Socialization**

Without purposeful organizational socialization practices in place, the time it takes principals to feel a part of the community and easily manage their duties will be longer than if these practices were implemented. School districts seldom use purposeful organizational socialization strategies to support new principals' transition into their new role. Research on the socialization of principals calls out a need to focus on the approach used to socialize new principals (Bengtson et al., 2013; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Joppy, 2014; Lashway, 2003; G. M. Steyn, 2013). An intentional practice to begin new employees on an intentional socialization experience includes support transitioning into the position when first hired and continues over a period of time.

### **Conclusion 2. Domain of Culture Is Experienced the Least**

Principals who do not receive information about the culture of the district are unable to be acculturated into the district culture in a timely fashion. Without a clear and

concise process to quickly acclimate new leaders to both the school and district culture, the amount of time it will take for new principals to impact school outcomes will be much longer. District culture pertains to the informal and formal norms in an organization, and usually relates to communication processes and social rules. New leaders must figure out how to be accepted into the work groups of other principals in order to impact the organization (Bengtson et al., 2013; Myung et al., 2011; G. M. Steyn, 2013). This is critical for new principals who are often charged with developing a positive school culture, for which districts are routinely neglecting to provide support (Bregy-Wilson, 2013; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Deal & Peterson, 1990).

### **Conclusion 3. Ineffective Organizational Socialization Practices**

Where there is a lack of clarity and deliberate implementation of organizational socialization, new principals perceive the practices to be ineffective. The literature calls for districts to pay particular attention to the process used to acclimate new principals to the new district and school. In other job sectors, it is sometimes called onboarding (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014; Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Graybill et al., 2013). Bauer and Erdogan (2014) stated, “The faster new hires feel welcome and prepared for their jobs, the faster they will be able to successfully contribute to the firm’s mission” (p. 1). Ineffective organizational socialization practices can be a barrier to success for new principals.

### **Conclusion 4. Compliance and Clarification Domains Common**

District departments overseeing the implementation of state and federal laws are more likely to have organizational socialization processes in place and are likely to focus on the compliance and clarification domains. This became very evident as the



departments reported to have provided information in either the domains of compliance or clarification were special education, human resources, and fiscal services. These are rules and regulations that can be quite costly if districts are sued for not following them. So there is a vested interest for districts to provide support to new leaders in these areas in order to decrease the amount of time new principals spend learning these rules and procedures on their own thus assisting them to transition into their new role (Bengtson et al., 2013; Calareso, 2013; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2006; Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011).

### **Conclusion 5. Prior Experience Matters**

When new principals previously worked in the district, their organizational socialization process experience was positive. New principals who worked in the district prior to becoming a principal reported having received information across most domains and departments. Prior experience and understanding the school district's operation and culture supports the concept of succession planning in school districts. The familiarity with district culture is especially important in assisting new principals to successfully transition into their new role. Succession planning and development of potential leaders should ensure that they are aligned with the district vision, mission, goals, and culture of the organization (Bengtson et al., 2013; Calareso, 2013; Carttar et al., 2015).

### **Conclusion 6. District Leaders Matter**

When district leaders take on the responsibility of designing and implementing the organizational socialization process, new principals are likely to be more effective and satisfied with their job. The involvement of all departments is critical for creating successful transitions into the new leadership role. Russell and Sabina (2014) found that these leaders play a role not only in identifying potential leaders but also in providing

developmental experiences connected to each of the departments. Districts are made up of many different departments. These departments together create a nested system of support for new principals and thus can provide great insight into the information and experiences needed to develop leaders (Bennett et al., 2011; Hardie, 2015). District leaders play a huge role in the socialization of new leaders and can be a major support as they transition into leadership.

### **Implications for Action**

The need for new principals grows each day, and as the ever-evolving stakes for school improvement increase and change, it is important they are able to hit the ground running. Organizational socialization is the key to the new principals' self-efficacy and confidence in successfully fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of their job. The following is a discussion of the implications for actions to ensure that new principals are provided with the appropriate support to transition into their new role.

#### **Implication 1: Implement Organizational Socialization**

At the local level, districts need to create policies and procedures to implement organizational socialization using the four C's as a framework for content. At the state level, organizations like ACSA, the California School Boards Association, The California County Superintendents Education Services Association, and the Commission of California Teacher Credentialing need to provide guidance and capacity building opportunities for leaders seeking to implement socialization practices. These same organizations need to take leadership in advocating for strong organizational socialization practices as a policy and necessary component of supporting new administrators. The ever-changing role of principals, the high turnover rate of principals, and the inability of

principal preparation programs to successfully integrate new principals into their specific school district all call for the need for organizational socialization. Research has shown evidence of the positive impact organizational socialization can have on the performance of employees (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; Bengtson, 2014; Fursman, 2014).

### **Implication 2: Focus on Culture and Connection**

District culture is a complex but important part of any school district. As such, superintendents and their cabinet members need to be clear about what informal and formal norms exist in their culture and to be clear about which of these need to be presented to new principals. This can be done by opening the lines of communication between and among district office leaders to share and agree upon what norms to include in the district organizational socialization process. District office leaders need to identify specific people with whom new principals need to establish relationships. These individuals would be those who know district history, know the inner workings of the district, and those with great influence. In addition, districts need provide new principals with information about the culture of the school to which they are being assigned, because not only do new principals need to become insiders within their school district but also within their school. The sense of belonging that comes from becoming an insider also adds to job satisfaction. When principals are satisfied with their job, they are less likely to leave. When it comes to their school culture and their ability to become fully immersed in their school culture and community, they can better develop a deep understanding of the cultures and ethnicities of the students in their school. Being a part of the community and having strong relationships connects everyone involved in a way that builds long-lasting loyalty.

### **Implication 3: Purposeful and Intentional Process**

Human resource departments need to develop handbooks to implement and guide the agreed-upon organizational socialization process in the school district. This handbook should follow the framework in this study and provide guidance to each department in the district on its roles and responsibilities in the process. In addition, human resource departments should also use this handbook as way of guiding new principals through the organizational socialization process at their specific school. The results of this study revealed that organizational socialization practices have been implemented haphazardly. This haphazard implementation has led to ineffective practices. Districts need to move beyond the contract-signing basics to simply assigning a mentor/coach to support new principals. Even assigning the mentor/coach is basic, as it is required for new principals; many of these coaches are not from the district and do not have an intentional purpose of socializing the principal.

### **Implication 4: Learn from Compliance Departments**

Human resource departments should pull together other compliance-oriented departments like special education and fiscal services not only to ensure alignment but also to learn from what they do to support new principals. These departments should provide guidance on creating districtwide organizational socialization processes. Though the compliance and clarification domains are seen as basic level parts of organizational socialization, the confidence and clarity they bring to the roles, responsibilities, and duties of the principal cannot be undervalued.

### **Implication 5: Succession Planning**

District leadership teams need to build strong succession plans. Succession plans are comprised of several components: the identification of future principals, the support of those individuals to get their administrative credential, the mentoring of future principals by district leaders, and finally, supporting those future principals into their first principalship. Principals who have been a part of an in-district leadership development program begin their jobs most often as insiders. They have a jump start on learning the culture and already have many connections and meaningful relationships with others. Districts with strong succession planning processes need to ensure that they specifically include the organizational socialization domains as a strong part of the content used in these programs. Once hired into the principalship, new principals need to continue their learning around these domains at their specific schools. Districts need to invest in building strong leadership succession plans that not only seek to recruit but also retain principals. Thus, these succession plans need to begin with the identification of potential new leaders and end with the fully socialized principal.

### **Implication 6: Include District Leaders**

District leaders need to take responsibility for supporting school site leaders. District department leaders need to be fully engaged in supporting new principals and move beyond informing principals of what they need to do and timelines in which to do it, to requiring them to move into playing a pivotal role in introducing new principals to the formal and informal norms in the district and in their specific departments. Thus, these departments interact with principals on a regular basis. These leaders need to develop full socialization plans for each domain in regard to their area of responsibility.

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the findings and research of the study, there are several recommendations for further research. The role of the principal is and will continue to be complex and constantly evolving. At the same time, districts are routinely replacing one third of their principals each year. The need for new principals coupled with the complexity of the job make organizational socialization critical to the success of schools and school districts in educating today's students. These recommendations are intended to expand upon and gain greater insight into the use of organizational socialization in education.

### **Recommendation 1: Organizational Socialization Content**

Conduct a study to determine the best content to be included in a purposeful organizational socialization process for new principals. A Delphi study should be undertaken to identify the content an expert panel of school and district leaders believes should be included in the onboarding process for newly hired principals in the areas of human resources, business services, student services, and curriculum and instruction.

### **Recommendation 2: Organizational Socialization in One School District**

Initiate a study regarding the organizational socialization processes in one school district to go deeply into the experience of new principals and district leaders. This ethnographic study should examine the culture in a district and how new principals are brought into the culture. Having the experience of both the new principal and district leaders can provide insight into specific practices and their perceived impact on new principal support. It would also assist districts with learning what specific practices exist in the district in order to perhaps make improvements in supporting new principals.

### **Recommendation 3: Study the Identified Themes**

Conduct a mixed methods study with either new principals or district department leads to delve into the themes of this study. This study could further discuss the ways in which new principals receive socialization information for each component and the perceived effectiveness of the information.

### **Recommendation 4: Correlational Study With New Hires Outside vs. Inside**

#### **Districts**

Conduct a correlational study with a similar population, comparing the experience of new principals who have been a part of an in-district leadership program to those who were not a part of such a program. This comparison could provide insight into the advantages of these programs and provide the education community with information on why it might be important to spread these programs.

### **Recommendation 5: Study on New Principal Exits**

Conduct a phenomenological study to examine how and why new principals leave districts or the principal position. The focus of the research questions should seek to determine whether a specific process to socialize them using all of the identified components would have been sufficient to keep them in their positions. There continue to be concerns over the turnover rate of new principals, and this study could assist with providing insight into how to keep new principals.

### **Recommendation 6: Specific Impact for Principals of Color**

The issue of race and ethnicity adds a dimension to the work of organizational socialization that is not currently evident in the research. Conduct a study into whether the socialization of principals of color differs from that of all principals to provide

districts with information relative to recruiting and retaining leaders of color. Recent research has shown that having an administrator of color has a positive impact on students of color.

### **Concluding Remarks and Reflections**

The culture, procedures, rules, and values in an organization are crucial parts of organizational socialization and thus critical to the success of new employees (Bengtson, 2014). A myriad of issues facing schools requires districts to be more thoughtful about how they support new principals and the implementation of strong organizational socialization practices. Organizational socialization will support new principals with learning and experiences they need to transition successfully into their new role (Bengtson, 2014; Brody et al., 2010; Joppy, 2014).

When I began my first principalship in 2004, I signed my contract at the district office and was told which day to report to my school site. I arrived to an empty school and found the custodian who let me into my office. In the 16 years following my first year, I have worked to support and mentor new and aspiring principals. The new principals who participated in this study shared their experiences of support provided to assist them in transitioning into their new role.

The data gathered and analyzed in this study confirm that new principals are not experiencing systematic purposeful organizational socialization processes and practices. The research and literature show that the implementation of these practices will not only bolster the success of principals, but that it will also decrease the high turnover rate of principals. All four domains of organizational socialization are critical for new principals. Principals interviewed and surveyed shared that they are receiving required



information regarding rules, processes, and procedures. However, they are not getting information on what formal and informal norms they need to follow as they go about fulfilling these responsibilities. This can be very problematic for new principals and has led to principal turnover.

The process of moving from outsider to insider within an organization is complex, and the findings of this study can be used to assist districts to support their principals better in this endeavor. New principals can use the findings in this study to help navigate the challenge of getting to know the important aspects of their district outlined by the four domains of organizational socialization. My hope is that the education community, as a whole, places more emphasis on the importance of socializing new staff into an increasingly complex educational system.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Overall Themes from Literature											
	Changing Role of the Principal	Impact of Principals on School Achievement	Increased Need for New Principals	Supports for New Principals	Stages and Components of Socialization	Principal Succession Planning	Principal Preparation Programs	Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components	Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success	Organizational Socialization Defined	Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization
Anderson, L. W. and L. A. Van Dyke (1972).	X	X	X								
Armstrong, D. E. (2012)		X	X	X		X	X			X	
Batistic, S. and R. Kase (2015).					X			X	X	X	X
Bauer, T. N., & Erdogan, B. (2011).					X			X	X	X	X
Bauer, T. N. and B. Erdogan (2012).					X			X	X	X	
Bauer, T. N. and B. Erdogan (2014).					X			X	X	X	
Bengtson, E., Zepeda, S. J., & Parylo, O. (2013).			X	X		X	X		X	X	X
Bengtson, E., et al. (2013).				X		X	X	X			
Bengtson, E. D. e. u. e. (2014).		X		X	X	X	X			X	X
Bennett, F., Carpenter, V., & Hill, M. (2011).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Beteille, T., et al. (2011).	X	X	X	X		X					
Bêteille, T., et al. (2012).	X	X	X	X		X					X
Bickman, L., Goldring, Ellen, De Andrade, Ana. (2012).	X	X		X						X	X
Bower, J. L. (2007).						X		X	X		

Overall Themes from Literature											
	Changing Role of the Principal	Impact of Principals on School Achievement	Increased Need for New Principals	Supports for New Principals	Stages and Components of Socialization	Principal Succession Planning	Principal Preparation Programs	Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components	Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success	Organizational Socialization Defined	Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization
Bridges, E. (2012).	X	X	X							X	
Briggs, K., Cheney, G., Davis, J., & Moll, K. (2013).	X		X							X	
Brody, J. L., et al. (2010).					X			X	X	X	X
Browne-Ferrigno, T. (2003). "	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Brundrett, M., & Rhodes, C. (2005).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015).	X										
Burkhauser, S., Gates, S. M., Hamilton, L. S., Ikemoto, G. S., & Education, R. (2012).		X	X			X	X				
Calareso, J. P. (2013).	X	X				X					
California, S. O. (2007).							X				
Carter, M. Z., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., & Mossholder, K. W. (2013).									X	X	X
Chao, G. T., et al. (1994).					X			X	X	X	X
Charry, K. (2012).		X									X
Consortium, I. S. L. L. (Ed.). (2007).		X					X				
Cooper-Thomas, H., Anderson, N., & Cash, M. (2011).					X			X	X	X	X
Corell, C. A. (2010).	X	X	X	X							

<b>Overall Themes from Literature</b>											
	<b>Changing Role of the Principal</b>	<b>Impact of Principals on School Achievement</b>	<b>Increased Need for New Principals</b>	<b>Supports for New Principals</b>	<b>Stages and Components of Socialization</b>	<b>Principal Succession Planning</b>	<b>Principal Preparation Programs</b>	<b>Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components</b>	<b>Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success</b>	<b>Organizational Socialization Defined</b>	<b>Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization</b>
Crow, G. M. (2006).	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
Cuban, L. (2014).	X	X	X							X	X
Darling-Hammond, L., et al. (2016).		X									
Doyle, D., et al. (2014).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Ellis, A. M., et al. (2014).					X			X	X	X	X
Ellis, A. M., et al. (2015).					X			X	X	X	X
Farley-Ripple, E. N., et al. (2012).	X	X	X			X					
Fong, A. B., Makkonen, R., & Regional Educational Laboratory, W. (2011).	X	X	X			X					
Friedman, S. D. (1986).						X			X	X	X
Fullan, M. (Ed.). (2003).		X	X							X	
Fullan, M. (2014).	X	X				X	X				
Fullan, M. and J. Quinn (2015).		X	X			X			X		
Fullan, M. a. C. F. (2015).	X		X								
Fuller, E. J. (2012).	X	X	X	X							
George, B. (2013).									X	X	X
Gill, J. (2013).	X	X	X				X				
Glasspool, T. S. (2007).	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greenberg, M., PhD. (2013).										X	X

<b>Overall Themes from Literature</b>											
	<b>Changing Role of the Principal</b>	<b>Impact of Principals on School Achievement</b>	<b>Increased Need for New Principals</b>	<b>Supports for New Principals</b>	<b>Stages and Components of Socialization</b>	<b>Principal Succession Planning</b>	<b>Principal Preparation Programs</b>	<b>Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components</b>	<b>Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success</b>	<b>Organizational Socialization Defined</b>	<b>Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization</b>
Guterman, J. (2007).	X	X	X	X							
Hargreaves, A. (2009).		X	X	X		X					X
Hargreaves, A. and D. Fink (2012).	X		X			X	X			X	X
Haueter, J. A., et al. (2003).					X			X	X	X	X
Heck, R. H. (1995).		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hervey, S. D., Mercer U., US.	X	X	X			X	X				
Hitt, D. H., Tucker, P. D., Young, M. D., & University Council for Educational, A. (2012).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Jackson, A. D. (2010).	X	X	X	X		X				X	X
Joppy, D. A. (2014).		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kay, K. a. G., Valerie. (2014).	X	X								X	X
Klein, A. (2015).	X	X									
Klein, H. J., & Polin, B. (2012)					X			X	X	X	X
Korte, R. and S. Lin (2013).					X			X	X	X	X
Korte, R., et al. (2015).					X			X	X	X	X
Kramer, M. W. (2010a).					X			X	X	X	X
Lai, E. (2015).	X	X	X	X							X



Overall Themes from Literature											
	Changing Role of the Principal	Impact of Principals on School Achievement	Increased Need for New Principals	Supports for New Principals	Stages and Components of Socialization	Principal Succession Planning	Principal Preparation Programs	Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components	Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success	Organizational Socialization Defined	Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization
Lashway, L., & Eric Clearinghouse on Educational Management, E. O. R. (2003).	X	X	X			X	X				X
Lauder, A. (2000).	X	X	X			X	X				
Leithwood, K., & et al. (1994).	X	X	X			X	X				
Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (1999).		X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Lynch, J. M. (2012).		X	X		X		X			X	
Marks, W. (2013).	X	X	X	X		X					
Marzano, R. J., et al. (2005).	X	X	X			X					
Mette, I. M., & Scribner, J. P. (2014). Turnaround, Transformational, or Transactional Leadership. doi: 10.1177/1555458914549665	X	X	X								
Meyer, M. J., & Macmillan, R. B. (2011).		X				X	X				X
Mitgang, L., & Wallace, F. (2012).	X	X	X			X	X				
Mitgang, L. D. (2007).	X	X		X		X	X				X
Normore, A. H. (2004).	X	X	X				X				
Normore, A. H. (2010).	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	
Peters, A. L. (2008).		X	X	X			X				X
Rothwell, W. J. (2010).	X	X	X	X		X	X				X

<b>Overall Themes from Literature</b>											
	<b>Changing Role of the Principal</b>	<b>Impact of Principals on School Achievement</b>	<b>Increased Need for New Principals</b>	<b>Supports for New Principals</b>	<b>Stages and Components of Socialization</b>	<b>Principal Succession Planning</b>	<b>Principal Preparation Programs</b>	<b>Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components</b>	<b>Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success</b>	<b>Organizational Socialization Defined</b>	<b>Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization</b>
Roza, M. (2003).	X	X	X								
Russell, J. L. I. N. j. p. e., & Sabina, L. L. (2014).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Saks, A. M., et al. (2007).					X			X	X	X	X
Saks, A. and J. A. Gruman (2014).					X			X	X	X	X
Samuels, C. (2015).	X	X									
Schmidt-Davis, J., Bottoms, G., & Southern Regional Education, B. (2011).	X	X	X			X	X				
Schmoker, M. (2016).	X		X	X							
Snell, A. (2006).					X			X	X	X	X
Spillane, J. P. and L. Anderson (2014).	X	X		X		X	X			X	X
Sterr, T., U Southern California, US.	X	X	X			X	X				
Steyn, T. (2013).					X		X		X	X	X
Strickland-Cohen, M. K. K. S. t. e., McIntosh, K., & Horner, R. H. (2014).	X	X	X	X							X
Sun, J. and K. Leithwood (2012).	X	X				X	X				
Superville, D. R. (2014).	X	X	X				X				

<b>Overall Themes from Literature</b>											
	<b>Changing Role of the Principal</b>	<b>Impact of Principals on School Achievement</b>	<b>Increased Need for New Principals</b>	<b>Supports for New Principals</b>	<b>Stages and Components of Socialization</b>	<b>Principal Succession Planning</b>	<b>Principal Preparation Programs</b>	<b>Frameworks for Organizational Socialization and Components</b>	<b>Impact of Organizational Socialization to Newcomer Success</b>	<b>Organizational Socialization Defined</b>	<b>Importance of Leadership Involvement in Socialization</b>
Tschannen-Moran, M. and C. R. Gareis (2015).	X	X					X				
Tyre, P. (2016).		X	X	X		X	X				
United State Office of Personnel Management. (2011).					X			X	X	X	X
Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979).					X			X	X	X	X
Wagner, J. B. (2012).	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Wanberg, C. R. (2012).					X			X	X	X	X
Whaley, M. (2007).					X			X	X	X	X

<b>Organizational Socialization Components and Content</b>					
	<b>Compliance: performance, task socialization</b> Basic legal and policy related rules and regulations	<b>Clarification: language, performance, task socialization</b> Understanding of the new job and related tasks and expectations	<b>Culture: politics, history, organizational socialization, organizational goals and values</b> Informal and formal organizational norms related communication, processes, and social rules	<b>Connections: people, group socialization</b> Group socialization opportunities, connections to important people in the district	<b>Role of Organization Leaders: people, group socialization, history, organizational goals and values.</b> Leaders across the organization's role in socializing new leaders.
Batistic, & Kase (2015)	X	X	X	X	X
Bauer & Erdogan (2012)	X	X	X	X	X
Bauer & Erdogan (2014)	X	X	X	X	X
Bengtson, E., et al. (2013)	X	X	X	X	X
Bengtson, E. D. (2014)	X	X	X	X	X
Chao, et al. (1994)	X	X	X	X	X
Cooper-Thomas, et al (2011)	X	X	X	X	
Ellis, et al. (2014)		X	X		X
Ellis, et al. (2015)		X	X	X	X
Graybill, et al. (2013)			X	X	X
Grusec, J. E. and P. D. Hastings (2014)			X	X	
Haueter, J. A., et al. (2003)	X	X	X	X	X
Heck, R. H. (1995)	X	X	X	X	X
Joppy, D. A. (2014)	X	X	X	X	X
Klein, H. J. and B. Polin (2012)	X	X	X	X	X
Korte, R., et al. (2015)		X	X		
Lapointe, E., et al. (2014).	X	X	X	X	X

<b>Organizational Socialization Components and Content</b>					
	<b>Compliance: performance, task socialization</b> Basic legal and policy related rules and regulations	<b>Clarification: language, performance, task socialization</b> Understanding of the new job and related tasks and expectations	<b>Culture: politics, history, organizational socialization, organizational goals and values</b> Informal and formal organizational norms related communication, processes, and social rules	<b>Connections: people, group socialization</b> Group socialization opportunities, connections to important people in the district	<b>Role of Organization Leaders: people, group socialization, history, organizational goals and values.</b> Leaders across the organization' s role in socializing new leaders.
Saks, A. and J. A. Gruman (2014)	X	X		X	X
Spillane, J. P. and L. Anderson (2014)	X	X	X	X	
Van Maanen, J. (1972)	X	X	X	X	
Van Maanen, J. and E. H. Schein (1979)	X	X	X	X	
Wanberg, C. R. (2012)	X	X	X	X	

ACSA CACP Program Brochure



### The Platinum Standard among California induction programs

ACSA is proud to serve new leaders in the longest running coaching-based Clear Administrative Services Credential program in the state. Through targeted coaching and timely and ongoing professional development, our program participants build capacity to develop positive and collaborative school cultures. Our program is designed to support and accelerate school leader practice to positively impact student learning.

The new Clear Induction Standards and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing-approved programs that align with them went into full effect July 1, 2015 as the only way to clear the Administrative Services Credential. As part of the new standards, all new administrators must enroll in a CTC-approved clear induction program within one year of their administrative employment. Credentialing candidates who come to us know they'll be getting exactly what they need.

The ACSA Clear Administrative Credential Program is now accepting applications for the Fall Cohort.

#### *Benefit from...*

- 40 hours per year of individualized, on-site leadership coaching
- A highly trained, skilled, and successful Certified Leadership Coach
- 20 hours of individualized professional development opportunities
- Cohort based collaboration and connectivity with new administrators throughout California
- Collaborative and supportive system for developing your induction plan and action steps

Find out more online at [www.acsa.org/programs](http://www.acsa.org/programs)

- Program Overview
- Application & Enrollment
- Local Programs
- Cohort Timeline

Direct support grounded in the individual needs of the new leader in their work context

## APPENDIX C

### Organizational Socialization of 1st-Year Principals Survey

Organizational Socialization is the experience a new employee has while learning content, and processes by which he or she adjusts to a specific role in an organization (Chao et al., 1994). The purpose of this survey is to examine the organizational socialization processes and components implemented by districts and their various departments to support your transition into the role of principal and the degree to which you felt the processes were effective. **Some questions pertain to specific departments in your school district.**

For the purpose of this survey, please assume the following:

- Human resource departments deal with anything personnel related.
- Business services department deal with any budget and/or fiscal issues.
- Student services department deal with any student related issue or service not connected to special education.
- Special education department deal with any issues related to the identification and service of special education students.
- Education services departments deal with any regular education program related including curriculum, instruction, and professional learning.
- Maintenance and operation departments deal with anything facility and building services related.

>> You will be prompted to complete the Informed Consent Form<<

>>You will be asked the following demographic questions regarding gender, number of years in education, and other school leadership experience<<

There is a mix of questions in this survey. Several questions ask you to the degree to which you agree with a statement. Several questions will ask you about the depth and quality of the information on a 5-point scale.

#### District Interactions

1. To what degree do you agree that the district provided you with opportunities to interact with other district employees to experience the culture of the district?
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Undecided
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
2. Did the district provide you with an orientation that included any or all of the following?
  - Values of the district

- Mission/Vision of the district
- Objectives of the district
- None of the Above

3. To what degree do you agree that the district provided you with a buddy principal you could call when you had questions?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. To what degree do you agree that the district of any of the departments provide you with any of the following information or resources in any form?

- Rules, processes, and procedures needed to fulfill responsibilities.
- Roles and responsibilities of principals in the district.
- Formal and informal norms.
- Relationships and/or connections to establish.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

## **Department Practices**

### *Human Resources*

5. To what degree do you agree that the human resource department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your human resource related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. To what degree do you agree that the human resource department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to human resource issues?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided



- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to human resource issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

7. To what degree do you agree that the human resource department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7a. How effective was the explanation of the department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

8. To what degree do you agree that the human resource department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you should establish a relationship?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

*Business Services*

9. To what degree do you agree that the business services department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your business services related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. To what degree do you agree that the business services department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to business services issues?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to business services issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

11. To what degree do you agree that the business services department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11a. How effective was the explanation of the business services department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

12. To what degree do agree that the business services department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you should **establish a relationship**?

- Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

*Student Services*

13. To what degree do you agree that the student services department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your student services related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. To what degree do you agree that the student services department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to student services issues?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to student services issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

15. To what degree do you agree that the student services department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15a. How effective was the explanation of the student services department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

16. To what degree do you agree that the student services department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you should **establish a relationship**?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

*Special Education*

17. To what degree do you agree that the special education department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your special education related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18. To what degree do you agree that the special education department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to special education issues?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to special education issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

19. To what degree do you agree that the special education department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

19a. How effective was the explanation of the special education department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

20. To what degree do you agree that the special education department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you should establish a relationship?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

### *Education Services*

21. To what degree do you agree that the education services department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your education services related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. To what degree do you agree that the education services department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to education services issues?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided

- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to education services issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

23. To what degree do you agree that the education services department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

23a. How effective was the explanation of the education services department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

24. To what degree do you agree that the education services department introduced you to individuals within the department with whom you should establish a relationship?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

### *Maintenance and Operations*

25. To what degree do you agree that the maintenance and operations department provided you with the **rules, processes and procedures** you needed to complete your maintenance and operations related responsibilities.

- Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

26. To what degree do you agree that the maintenance and operations department explained your **roles and responsibilities** as they relate to maintenance and operations issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

26a. How effective was the explanation of your roles and responsibilities as they relate to maintenance and operations issues?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

27. To what degree do you agree that the maintenance and operations department explained the **formal and informal norms** to follow when interacting with the department?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

27a. How effective was the explanation of the maintenance and operations department formal and informal norms in helping you to understand and follow them?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

28. To what degree do you agree that the maintenance and operations department introduce you to individuals within the department with whom you should establish a relationship?

- Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**Overall Socialization Experience**

- 29. How prepared did you feel for the job after the organizational socialization process?  
0 (not prepared) - 5(very prepared)
  
- 30. How effective were the orientation processes provided by the district?  
0 (Not effective) – 5(very effective)
  
- 31. What advice would you give your district about how to make the socialization/orientation process better?  
(Open response)



## APPENDIX F

### Interview Guide

#### Organizational Socialization of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Principals: Interview

First, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. As a reminder, the purpose of this research is to contribute to the knowledge around the organizational socialization of first year principals exploring the question, "How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes in their district?" I want to understand the meaning that principals attribute to their organizational socialization as experienced in the district in general, but also from these specific departments within the district: Human Resources, Fiscal Services, Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, Student Services, and Facilities and Maintenance. For this study, organizational socialization refers to how a new employee learns social norms, processes, and procedures as they adjust to a new job within the context of a specific organizational culture and setting.

The interview will take about an hour to an hour and a half. I may ask some follow up questions if I need further clarification. Any information that is obtained in connection to this study will be confidential. Data collected will be reported without reference to any individual or an institution. Once the data has been transcribed, you will have an opportunity to make sure your thoughts, feeling, and ideas have been accurately captured. If at any point in the interview you want to skip a question, or stop the interview, please let me know.

With your permission, I would like to tape record this interview to ensure your thoughts are captured accurately. Thank you.  
Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### **Part I- Personal Information**

1. Please state your name, position, name of your school district.
2. Please share your educational background?
3. Can you share some information about your schools and districts' demographics (i.e. population of city, district size, rural, urban)?

#### **Part II- Research Questions**

**Research Question:** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes in their district?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience with the district culture and the opportunities you have had to interact with other district employees?
2. What was your experience with getting to know and understand the values, mission, vision, and/or objectives of the district?
3. What was your experience with a district provided buddy or colleague to assist you with questions about district norms, processes, and procedures?

***Sub Research Question 1:*** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Human Resources Department?

**Interview Questions:**

- a. What was your experience in learning about human resources rules, processes and procedures in the district?
- b. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in human resource related issues?
- c. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the human resource department?
- d. What was your experience in learning with whom in the human resource department you should establish relationships?

***Sub Research Question 2:*** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Fiscal Services Department?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience in learning about fiscal rules, processes and procedures in the district?
2. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in fiscal related issues?
3. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the fiscal services department?
4. What was your experience in learning with whom in the fiscal services department you should establish relationships?

**Sub Research Question 3:** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Curriculum and Instruction Department?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience in learning about curriculum and instruction rules, processes and procedures in the district?
2. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in curriculum and instruction issues?
3. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the curriculum and instruction department?
4. What was your experience in learning with whom in the curriculum and instruction department you should establish relationships?

**Sub Research Question 4:** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Special Education Department?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience in learning about special education rules, processes and procedures in the district?
2. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in special education issues?
3. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the special education department?
4. What was your experience in learning with whom in the special education department you should establish relationships?

**Sub Research Question 5:** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Student Services Department?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience in learning about student services rules, processes and procedures in the district?
2. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in student services issues?
3. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the student services department?
4. What was your experience in learning with whom in the student services department you should establish relationships?

**Sub Research Question 6:** How do first year principals experience and make meaning of the organizational socialization processes used by the Facilities and Maintenance Department?

**Interview Questions:**

1. What was your experience in learning about Facilities and Maintenance rules, processes and procedures in the district?
2. What was your experience in learning your specific role and expectations in facilities and maintenance issues?
3. What was your experience in learning the formal and informal norms to follow when interacting with the facilities and maintenance department?
4. What was your experience in learning with whom in the facilities and maintenance department you should establish relationships?

**Part III-Closing Remarks**

Any additional insights about your organizational socialization experience in (DISTRICT NAME) and its impact on your first year experience as a principal?

This concludes our interview. Is there anything you want to add to our conversation that I haven't asked you and you feel is important for me to know?

Thank you so much for your time and support in this research project. I will send you an e-mail containing the transcription of our interview for your feedback. If you would like a copy of my findings, once published, I would more than happy to share them with you as well. Thank you again.

## APPENDIX E

### Survey Critique by Participants

As a doctoral student and researcher at Brandman University your assistance is so appreciate in designing this survey instrument. Your participation is crucial to the development of a valid and reliable instrument.

Below are some questions that I appreciate your answering after completing the survey. Your answers will assist me in refining both the directions and the survey items.

You have been provided with a paper copy of the survey, just to jog your memory if you need it. Thanks so much.

1. How many minutes did it take you to complete the survey, from the moment you opened it on the computer until the time you completed it?
2. Did the portion up front that asked you to read the consent information and click the agree box before the survey opened concern you at all?

If so, briefly describe your concern:

3. Was the Introduction sufficiently clear (and not too long) to inform you what the research was about?

If not, what would you recommend that would make it better?

4. Were the directions to, and you understood what to do?

If not, briefly state the problem:

5. Were the brief descriptions of the rating scale choices prior to your completing the 30 items clear, and did they provide sufficient differences among them for you to make a selection?

If not, briefly describe the problem:

6. As you progressed through the survey in which you gave a rating of # through #, if there were any items that caused you say something like, "What does this mean?" Which item(s) were they? Please use the e-mailed copy and mark those that troubled you.

Thanks so much for your help

## APPENDIX F

### Field Test Participant Feedback Questions

Use the interview protocol to conduct the interview and then ask the following questions.

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe what you do as a leader when working with your team or staff?
2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?
3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?
4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?
5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview... (I'm pretty new at this)?

## APPENDIX G

## ACSA Letter of Support

April 18, 2017

Dear Mrs. Ausara,

On behalf of the Association of California School Administrators, I would like to extend our support for your research proposal. ACSA is excited about the opportunity to engage our members in the meaningful research around the organizational socialization of school principals. The potential that this research has in providing great insight into how district leaders can support new principals is immense.

Should there be need for any additional information, please do not hesitate contacting me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wesley Smith  
Executive Director, ACSA  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## APPENDIX H

### **E-mail Invitation to Research Participants**

You are invited to participate in a study of new principals who are participants in ACSA's Clear Administrative Credential Program. The researcher is Alicia Ausara doctoral candidate at Brandman University conducting research as part of our dissertation that focuses on the organizational socialization of first-year principals.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this mixed methods study is to identify and describe the organizational socialization processes implemented by school districts to support first year principals. In addition, it is the purpose of this study to identify and describe the degree to which first year principals perceive these processes are effective.

**Procedures:** I am asking for your assistance by participating in completing a survey (Link Below) that will take you no longer than 15 minutes to complete. I would also like to know if you would be willing to participate in an interview lasting no longer than 60 minutes.

**Inconveniences and Discomforts:** There are no known major risks to your participation in this research study. It may be inconvenient to participate in an interview for up to an hour. Some questions may describe personal information and this may be uncomfortable. You may stop the interview at any time, take a break or withdraw.

**Benefits:** This research will provide further information regarding the organizational socialization of first-year principals. You fit this criterion and can add to the guidance for districts wishing to improve their organizational socialization processes. Your participation would be greatly valued.

**Anonymity:** If you agree to participate, you may be assured that it will be completely confidential. No names will be attached to records or notes from the survey or interviews. You will be assigned a participant number. The data will not reference your name, title or school name, district name or institution name. All information will remain in locked files only accessible to the researcher.

You are encouraged to ask any questions, at any time, that will help you understand the study. You may contact me at [aausara@mail.brandman.edu](mailto:aausara@mail.brandman.edu) or by phone at 916-276-1130. You may also contact or write the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618 (949) - 341-7641. I appreciate your consideration.

Survey Link: [Organizational Socialization](#)

Respectfully, Alicia Ausara



## APPENDIX I

### **Informed Consent Form**

**INFORMATION ABOUT:** The organizational socialization process experienced by first-year principals

**RESPONSIBLE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION:** BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY  
16355 LAGUNA CANYON ROAD IRVINE, CA 92618

**RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR:** Alicia Marie Ausara, Doctoral Candidate

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** The purpose of this study is to examine the organizational socialization processes and components implemented by districts and their various departments to support the transition of first year principals and the degree to which the first-year principals report these processes to be effective.

A myriad of issues facing schools today call for the implementation of strong organizational socialization practices focused specifically on you-the first year principal. Organizational socialization supports new principals with learning the content and processes needed to adjust to their new role in the school district. This mixed methods study will examine the use of organizational socialization practices used by districts and the departments within the districts, and ascertain the first-year principal's view of the effectiveness of these processes and in so doing fill a much needed gap in the area..

By participating in this study I agree to respond to the survey and possibly participate in an interview. The one-on-one interview will last between 30 – 60 minutes and will be conducted in person, by phone or electronically. Completion of the surveys and interviews will take place in August and September 2016.

I understand that:

- a) There are no known major risks or discomforts associated with this research. There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. It may be inconvenient to participate in an interview for up to an hour but the researcher will conduct the interviews at a time and place that is convenient.
- b) There are no major benefits to the participation in the study. The possible benefit of this study is that input may help add to the research regarding organizational socialization. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about the organizational socialization processes I experienced.

- c) I understand that I will receive a \$5 Starbucks gift card for participating.
- d) Any questions I have concerning my participation in this study will be answered by Alicia Ausara. She can be reached by email at [aausara@mail.brandman.edu](mailto:aausara@mail.brandman.edu) or by phone at xxx-xxx-xxxx.
- e) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.
- f) I understand that the interview portion of the study will be audio-recorded, and the recordings will not be used beyond the scope of this project.
- g) I understand that the audio recordings will be used to transcribe the interviews. Once the interviews are transcribed, the audio and electronic interview transcripts will be kept for a minimum of five years by the investigator.
- h) I understand no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained.
- i) I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the “Research Participant’s Bill of Rights”. I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX J

**Follow-Up Email to Participants Who Completed the Survey**

Greetings \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for completing the survey to add to our knowledge about the organizational socialization experience of new principals. As a reminder, your information will be kept confidential in the publication of this study. For your time and valuable input, please accept the attached Starbucks gift card. If you have been selected to be interviewed, you will be contacted within the next week.

Thank you again, for our time.

Alicia Ausara