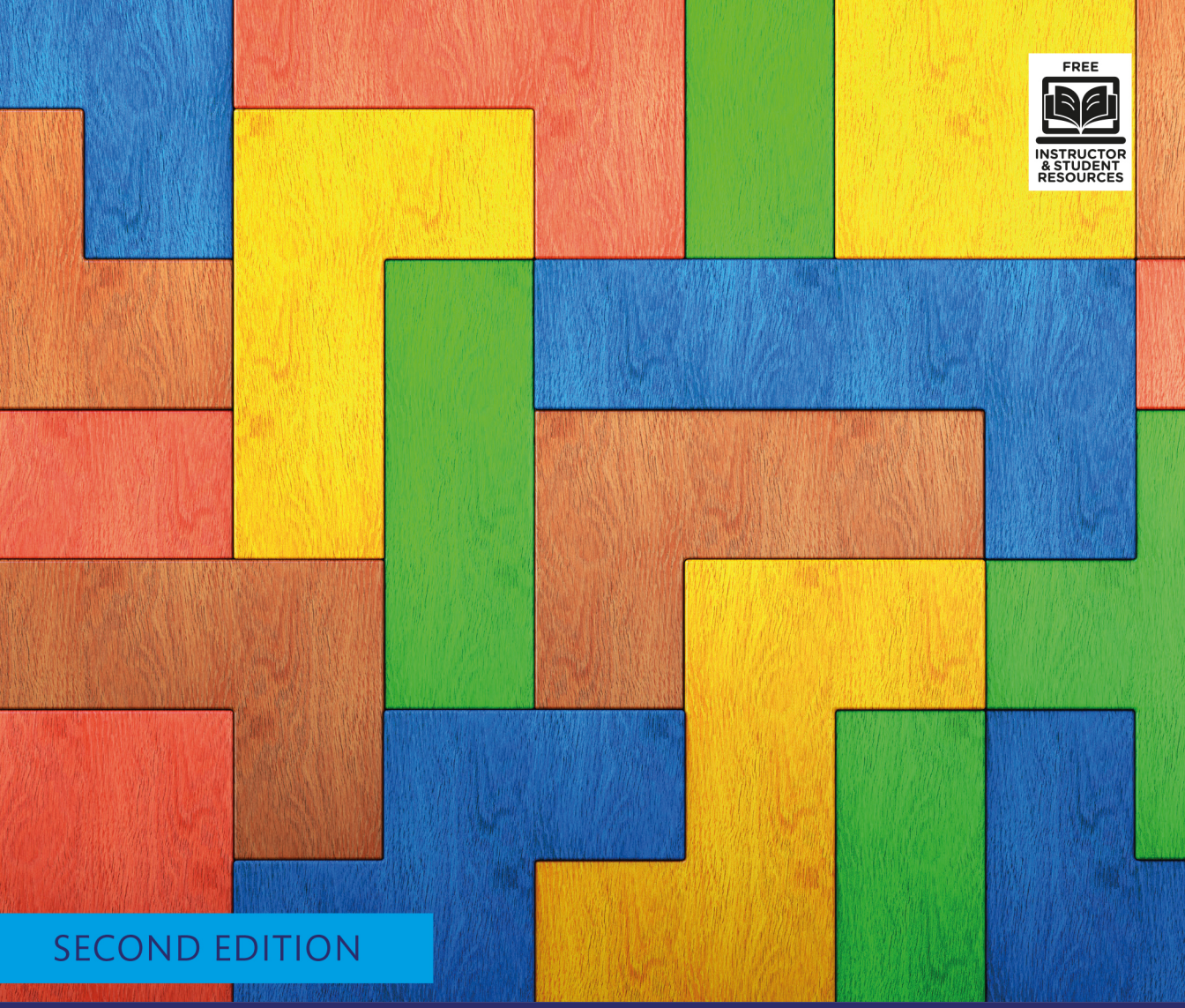

SECOND EDITION

INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP

Theory to Practice

Leslie S. Kaplan
and William A. Owings

ROUTLEDGE

Introduction to the Principalship

The second edition of this textbook from respected author team Kaplan and Owings explores how principals can effectively build a culture around student achievement. *Introduction to the Principalship,* a second edition closely aligned with NELP (2018) standards, helps aspiring principals understand how to develop a vision for improvement, make decisions and manage conflict, build teachers' capacity, communicate, monitor the organization's performance, and create a school climate of mutual respect. This important book provides readers with various leadership concepts to inform their practice, as well as the cognitive and practical tools to evaluate and prioritize what leadership actions to take. Each chapter offers opportunities for readers to create personal meaning and explore new ways of doing leadership to advance a positive, person-focused environment. Providing both the theoretical framework and skills for effective practice, *Introduction to the Principalship* addresses the issues most urgent and relevant for educational leadership graduate students learning how to build a school culture that promotes every student's success.

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Leslie S. Kaplan is a retired school administrator, a full-time education writer, and Adjunct Professor of Educational Leadership at Old Dominion University, USA.

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"There are lots of books about the school principalship but none that takes the reader systematically from the pre-beginning, through continuous learning, to legacy. Kaplan and Owings have produced a second edition that is a complete modern bible for anyone in or interested in the principalship. We learn about leadership itself, and key aspects: philosophy, culture, initiating, ethics, teacher capacity, conflict, data use, building capacity—all guided by standards, and action ideas essential to build, apply, and monitor the key standards, and their impact. I highly recommend this complete reference book for ethical action-oriented school leaders."

Michael Fullan, *Professor Emeritus, OISE/University of Toronto, is the Global Leadership Director, New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) and a worldwide authority on educational reform*

"Kaplan and Owings provide an exceptionally enriched analysis of school leadership, offering robust thinking about student learning and school improvement. They highlight lessons rarely discussed in readings about school: while information and knowledge are essential elements of leading, they are often insufficient. Embedded in the scholarship here is the simple most essential understanding of quality schooling: masses of resources without genuine care for students routinely fail to successfully educate children and youth."

Joe Murphy, *Professor Emeritus of Education, Vanderbilt University*

"In this vitally important work, veteran leaders and aspiring principals will find not only practical advice for the daily work of establishing but also keen insights about the deeper work of leadership. Administration and discipline often require the attention of school leaders. But Leslie Kaplan and Bill Owings bring extensive research and their half a century of leadership experiences to demonstrate that the most vital work of leadership is building and maintaining a culture that shapes the work of every staff member and creates a safe and challenging learning environment for every student. This is a book not merely to be read, but to be studied. There is no sugar-coating in these pages. Leadership is extremely hard and complex work. But Kaplan and Owings conclude, it is deeply rewarding and offers the reader opportunities to make a greater impact on generations of students and teachers."

Douglas B. Reeves, *author of* Fearless Schools: Building Trust and Resilience for Leader, Teaching, and Learning

Introduction to the Principalship

Theory to Practice

2nd Edition

Leslie S. Kaplan and
William A. Owings

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This book is dedicated to the aspiring principals who will make a difference – one school at a time.

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Preface

In these times of head-spinning transitions, leading today's schools cannot be "business as usual."

Our society is increasingly polarized. Seemingly, we cannot agree as a society about taking protective public health measures, charter schools and vouchers, gender neutral bathrooms, or accurately recounting our nation's history. In certain locales, school board meetings have become sites of agitated parents challenging curricula, textbooks, and library books that they believe advance "divisive" concepts or otherwise inappropriate content. Surveying education after the coronavirus' major disruptions, David Brooks, *New York Times* columnist, writes that with rising absenteeism, worsening student discipline problems, and increasing inequality, "America should be in the middle of a schools revolution."[1] Moreover, public school classrooms have more diverse students than ever before.[2] American schools are not yet back to "normal" – and perhaps they should never be.

Traditionally, the American public expresses high confidence in school principals. A 2019 Pew Survey named principals as the most trusted among specific group of public officials. Survey respondents perceived principals to be most likely to care about the public, give fair and accurate information, and be good stewards of resources.[3] Since the pandemic (2020 – 2022), however, Americans are expressing a widespread distrust of experts, elected officials, institutions, and their leaders[4] – including principals.[5] Yet most Americans still trust their educators.[6]

Ratings questions serve as a national barometer of the public school system's overall approval.[7] The Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa 53rd Annual Poll of Attitudes Towards the Public Schools (2020–2021 school year) finds that most schools retain their communities' goodwill and high regard. Local schools with which adults are familiar fare better in the ratings (63% receive "A" and "B" grades) than do public schools nationally (40% receive "A" or "B" grades). "Most Americans – especially parents with children in the public schools – remain confident in their local schools' ability to provide effective instruction and leadership."[8]

In these uncertain times, principals must be able to favorably meet both traditional and new challenges. As we learned in driver's education, when road conditions change, we need to apply different and occasionally counterintuitive driving skills: only *tapping* the brakes on icy patches or steering *into* the skid. Similarly, principals

can meet *technical* challenges with what they already know or can quickly learn. But *adaptive* challenges are much more complex, and no text or handbook will offer foolproof workable solutions.[9] Making the rapid transitions to remote learning during COVID or setting up hybrid learning once vaccines became widely available were monumental adaptive dilemmas that required immediate rethinking of the entire schooling enterprise. In dynamic and changing environments, "business as usual" is not an option. Rather, new ideas and prompt responses to successfully address the problems are essential.

Given these realities, aspiring school leaders must learn how to meet both technical and adaptive difficulties. For technical issues, they must learn the structures of schooling; the school district's goals, policies, and practices; and the "nuts and bolts" of organizational and instructional leadership. They must learn how to lead their schools to provide every child with the safe and supportive instructional environment needed to perform to state (or higher) academic standards, enact good citizenship, and experience personal well-being. They must enact ethical behaviors and build the relational trust inside and outside the school necessary to work collaboratively with teachers, parents, and the larger community. And they must engage in respectful dialog around common goals and values for student and teacher performance. Throughout their careers, effective principals will continually hone their listening, conflict management, and problem-solving capacities to clearly understand and ably address their own and their community's priorities for their children's education.

Meeting adaptive challenges requires still more. Principals will need to increase their capacities to develop empathy, emotional intelligence, situational awareness, relational trust, and transparency with their teachers, students, and publics. As professionals, principals benefit from defining (and using their experiences to continually update) their personal philosophies of education and leadership to guide their thinking in familiar and novel circumstances. They will learn how to understand, initiate, manage, and respond effectively to change. They will develop more sophisticated ways of thinking to help them manage conflict, make sound decisions, respond effectively to crises, and solve thorny problems to advance their schools' goals. They will build teachers' instructional and leadership capacities and encourage the innovation and new ideas needed to achieve ambitious goals for their students and themselves. In these ways, principals will spread leadership thinking and doing across the school, creating collegial teams to help meet adaptive predicaments successfully.

OUR COUNTRY NEEDS STRONG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In the late eighteenth century, our nation's founders gave us two rare "inextricably intertwined" gifts: a democratic republic and public education.[10] Unlike living under an all-powerful monarch in England, the American republic form of government would enable educated citizens to govern themselves through elected representatives. The founders worried that without informed citizens, mob rule might take sway or unscrupulous politicians could gain power by manipulating an ill-informed public. At the Constitutional Convention's end, elder statesman Benjamin Franklin, one of the

delegates, reportedly answered a question about what type of government we would have: "A republic, if you can keep it."

A nation depends on widespread and effective schooling to survive and thrive. Since 90% of today's children in America attend public schools,[11] our national well-being depends on public schools successfully educating every child – without regard for parents' income or zip code or learning obstacles – with the knowledge, skills, and shared societal norms foundational for healthy democratic self-governance. In this way, public schools extend their society's culture across generations.

At their best, public schools also provide the settings and relationships for children and young people to engage with new people, new experiences, new ideas, and new behaviors that advance their abilities to live productively and responsibly in their immediate and larger society. This includes getting to know, like, and respect classmates and teachers from different racial, ethnic, language, and cultural backgrounds as persons much like themselves. These interactions prepare young people with the attitudes and capacities they will need to interact effectively as adults at work, in their communities, in cosmopolitan environments, and in their relationships. And principals create, shape, and sustain the safe and supportive learning environments that nurture and facilitate these outcomes.

Amid the current uncertainty, our public schools need more than a return to "normal." For many young people, "normal" in schools has meant unequal and inequitable opportunities to learn. This time of crisis can prompt us to reimagine how to make public schools a place where every child can receive and succeed in a high-quality academic program that prepares them for responsible citizenship, college, and career.

This book presents the knowledge, perspectives, and skills to preparing aspiring principals to become "building-ready" for this influential leadership responsibility. Despite the political polarization, the national turmoil, and the disturbing headlines, principals can make their schools islands of sanity, learning, and wellbeing in which students and teachers thrive.

THIS BOOK'S GOALS

Introduction to the Principalship: Theory into Practice, 2nd edition, is designed to help aspiring principals understand the organizational, human, and leadership components of a successful school. It describes what the effective principalship looks like from the inside, providing a working model of organizational and instructional leadership in action. Most importantly, this book identifies how principals can make students and adult learning – including their own – top priorities that improve student outcomes and teacher/staff effectiveness and satisfaction.

Most teachers enter education to make the world a better place one classroom at a time. Most aspiring principals seek leadership positions to make the world a better place one school at a time – a way to benefit more children and their communities. Yet although teachers see their principals at work every day, most teachers – and many assistant principals – do not fully understand the role's complexities, its scope, or its subtleties. When they begin their first leadership positions, they are often surprised.

They wonder, "Where do I begin? "How can I focus on what's important, not simply on what's urgent – and how can I know the difference?" "How do I effectively manage a school with countless moving parts – and all these people?"

Many introductory textbooks for future principals don't help answer these questions. Instead, they take an outsider's view, briefly surveying educational leadership "topics" such as school administration, governance, finance, law, public relations, and other areas as if observing leadership from an altitude of 10,000 feet. In contrast, this book views the principalship from inside the principal's office, walking the school's corridors and visiting its classrooms, identifying the priorities and organizational dynamics that actual leaders must address effectively as they work to promote every student's success.

With this in mind, the authors have written an introduction to the principalship that meets professors' needs for scholarly study and conceptual challenge and graduate education students' need for practical professional relevance and high personal meaning. This book can advance the following shared goals:

- To use a textbook that adult students and their professors will find readable, interesting, scholarly, and immediately practical and relevant.
- To address what future principals will need to know, understand, and be able to do as their school's organizational and instructional leader (closely aligned with the 2018 National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Recognition Standards. Building Level).
- To identify student learning as the principal's priority by providing a rationale and strategies for establishing a learning culture that actively supports students and teachers.
- To enable future principals to develop their philosophies of education and leadership to guide their thoughts and actions by considering contemporary perspectives and articulating their own.
- To help future principals develop a social justice leadership orientation by considering what equity, equality, inclusion, and fairness look like in schools and knowing how to enact them.
- To examine how leaders can understand, initiate, develop, and sustain organizational change in ways that enhance student learning and teacher capacity and satisfaction – while keeping principals realistic about their roles as "change agents".
- To explain the importance of principals developing and enacting ethical behaviors and relational trust in their schools with teachers, parents/guardians, and community.
- To inform future principals of the advantages of developing teachers' professional capacity for instruction and leadership.
- To describe how principals can effectively use decision making and problem solving – especially in crises – as leadership tools to improve their schools.
- To develop future principals' perspective on how to use data for informed decision making and accountability and data's role (and limits) in teacher and principal evaluation.
- To highlight research-supported best practices for school improvement.

- To cultivate reflective practitioners by providing ongoing opportunities to enact and discuss educational ideas and behaviors with peers and professors.
- To advance graduate student learning with frequent occasions to generate personal meaning, workplace relevance, and networking by actively applying the content in appropriate contexts, generating feedback, and reflecting on its implications.
- To facilitate the transfer of learning and practice from graduate classrooms into teacher leader, assistant principal, or principalship positions.
- To enable aspiring principals to build their leadership skills as they apply the book's concepts to advance teaching and learning in their current schools.
- To help future principals identify learning and field experiences to help them become more effective school leaders.
- To accommodate adult students' varied learning styles with auditory, graphic, and interpersonal learning activities.
- To help aspiring principals compile portfolios documenting their knowledge, competencies, and professional experiences to demonstrate their readiness to assume school leadership.
- To "keep it real" by infusing successful practitioners' orientations from two authors with 60+ years of combined K-12 school leadership.

Features of *Introduction to the Principalship*: *Theory into Practice, 2nd edition*

This text offers **special features** to help future principals learn each chapter's content:

- ***NEW to this edition*:** NELP Standards. The 2018 National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Recognition Standards, Building Level, recognize an historic shift occurring in educational leadership as policymakers, families, and other PK-12 constituents increasingly hold educational leaders accountable for every student's academic success and personal well-being.

Shortly after publishing our first edition, the ISLLC (Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium) Standards (2015, with which our original text aligned), morphed into PSEL (2015, *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*). PSEL then changed again into a more specific rubric of what beginning principals should know and be able to do: NELP (2018).[12] CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) uses NELP to evaluate principal preparation programs seeking this national endorsement.[13]

Introduction to the Principalship, 2nd edition, aligns closely with the 2018 NELP Building Level Standards.[14] These are appropriate for advanced educational leadership programs at the master, specialist, or doctoral level that prepare assistant principals, principals, curriculum directors, supervisors, and other education leaders in school building environments. While linked to the earlier ISLLC/PSEL standards, NELP provides more specificity around performance expectations for beginning level building and district leaders. It details behaviors that novice leaders and program graduates should know and be able to do as a result completing a high-quality educational

leadership preparation program. As with previous iterations of principal preparation standards, each standard rests on well-documented and presented research support. We revised and aligned each chapter to infuse NELP standards, identifying them (and their components) in each chapter and in an overall matrix as a separate page early in the book to aid instructor and program planning.

Below, we identify the standards including the content knowledge and educational leadership skills for principals, assistant principals, and other school and central office leaders who work in school buildings with examples. Each standard begins with:

"Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to …"

1. Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Improvement.

   > "… collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community."

   Example: Program completers can show evidence of knowing the research on the role and importance of school mission and vision and develop a comprehensive plan for communicating the mission and vision.

2. Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms.

   > "… understand and demonstrate the capacity to advocate for ethical decisions and cultivate and enact professional norms."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence that they know, practice, and can communicate to diverse constituencies the professional norms – including integrity, competency, fairness, transparency, trust, equity, democracy, digital citizenship, diversity, inclusiveness, and the belief that each child can learn – that support student success and well-being.

3. Standard 3: Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness.

   > "… develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence that they know the research on the outcomes for students of equitable and inequitable use of educational resources and opportunities. They can demonstrate the skills needed to evaluate sources of inequality and bias in allocating educational resources and opportunities and advocate for more equitable access to resources.

4. Standard 4: Learning and Instruction.

   > "… evaluate, develop, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports, and assessment."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence of content knowledge on infrastructures for the ongoing support of academic and non-academic programs and demonstrate skills needed to evaluate (a) curricula, use of technology, and other supports and (b) academic and non-academic systems.

5. Standard 5: Community and External Leadership.

   > "… engage families, community, and school personnel in order to strengthen student learning, support school improvement, and advocate for the needs of their school and community."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence of knowledge of strategies for understanding and cultivating relationships with families, engaging them in their children's education, and demonstrating skills needed to foster two-way communication with families.

6. Standard 6: Operations and Management.

   > "… improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operations systems to develop and improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence of knowledge of strategies for aligning and allocating resources according to school priorities and student needs and demonstrate skills required to evaluate resource needs.

7. Standard 7: Building Professional Capacity.

   > "… build the school' professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning."

   Example: Program completers can provide evidence of knowledge of effective communication and demonstrate skills required to model and foster effective communication.

8. Standard 8: Internship.

   > "Candidates successfully complete an internship under the supervision of knowledgeable, expert practitioners that engages candidates in multiple and

> diverse school settings and provides candidates with coherent, authentic, and sustained opportunities to synthesize and apply the knowledge and skills identified in NELP standards 1–7 in ways that approximate the full range of responsibilities required of building-level leaders and enable them to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult in their school."

Example: Candidates are provided a minimum of six months of concentrated (10 – 15 hours per week) internship or clinical experiences that include authentic leadership activities within a school setting.

Every educator, whether working in schools or in district central offices, accepts the same basic challenge: supporting every student's learning and development. Clear and consistent leadership standards anchored in research and effective practice can help each one understand these expectations.

- ***Learning Objectives***. Each chapter begins with Learning Objectives that identify the concepts educational leadership students and their professors will be able to analyze, assess, define, describe, discuss, evaluate, explain, list, relate, or summarize after reading the chapter. These objectives tend to be "big picture" issues. For example, after reading Chapter 1, the readers will be able to "Compare and contrast principal and teacher roles and responsibilities and their respective impacts on organizational functioning" and "Describe school leadership as a process of influence."
- ***Reflections and Relevance***. Located immediately following each chapter's major concepts, these individual, paired, and small group exercises – questions, class discussions, analysis, role plays, and assignments – ask students to think though what they are learning and apply the new concepts to their own experiences and responsibilities. The activities and simulations give future principals relevance and personal meaning as well as opportunities to try out and receive feedback on their growing leadership behaviors. Connecting theory to practice in this way facilitates the students' transfer of learning from the text and graduate classrooms to their current and future schools. Likewise, interacting with peers during socially mediated activities can help graduate students extend and cultivate their network of colleagues who know them, share and understand their professional leadership challenges, and can help them problem solve "back at school." These activities also give instructors checks for understanding and occasions to deepen and extend student learning. Professors can adapt and revise activities as needed to accomplish their instructional goals.
- ***NEW to this edition***: ***Key Takeaways***. Instead of summarizing chapters in a *Conclusion*, we identify the "key takeaways" – the "big ideas" worth remembering – organized by Learning Objective. This helps answer readers' question, "What about this information is *meaningful for me* as an aspiring principal?
- ***NEW to this edition***: ***Suggested Readings***. Each chapter will conclude with five or six annotated suggested readings to extend and deepen discussion of key issues in chapter.

- ***NEW to this edition*: *Using this text synchronously and asynchronously.*** In our era of electronic teaching platforms and global pandemics, educators have increasingly had to teach their courses virtually. Many college and university courses are scheduled asynchronously, making it difficult for professors to actively engage students in their learning in ways that increase retention and transfer. This second edition addresses this concern with a suggestion. *Reflections and Relevance* activities can be used synchronously *and* asynchronously to deepen and extend student learning. Professors teaching synchronously can use these learning activities as parts of class instruction. Instructors in asynchronous formats can make the course Zoom room (or similar platform) available for small student groups during the week between class sessions to complete these activities independently and then discuss together. The professor can choose to participate – or not – in these small group sessions, depending on the professor's preferences and course objectives.
- ***Companion website.*** *Introduction to the Principalship* has a companion website that includes links to supplemental materials that can bring additional insights and perspectives to the chapter content. These include PowerPoint slides for each chapter as well as additional readings, and video clips with related teaching and learning activities.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

This text is organized into ten chapters.

Chapter 1, ***Leading an Organization*:** New to the second edition, this chapter adds an organizational perspective and factors that principals must understand and respond to if they are to lead successful schools. It describes leadership as a process of influence and organizations as systems. It also identifies and explains the new research on the foundational behaviors and skills that principals use to enact both transactional and transformational instructional leadership and considers how NELP standards can guide school leadership growth.

Chapter 2, ***Principal Leadership for a Student-Centered Learning Environment*:** Describes components of principal leadership for a student-centered learning environment (previously Chapter 1) and includes new research findings on effective principals' influence on student, teacher, and school outcomes, and the dynamics that contribute to these outcomes. Principals and empathy is another new addition to this chapter.

Chapter 3, ***Developing Your Philosophy of Education and School Leadership*:** Provides a more complete discussion of principals developing a philosophy of education and school leadership and integrates NELP standards into a philosophy of educational leadership. John Dewey, Elliott Eisner, and Paulo Freire offer models of educational philosophies. A new section discusses how principals can enact social justice and improve student outcomes by addressing inequities in allocating resources including teacher quality, educational programs, student achievement, and funding.

Chapter 4, ***Understanding and Leveraging Your School Culture*:** Describing how school leadership *is* culture building, this chapter defines *school culture* and illustrates

the ways it appears in schools. It explains how principals create the environment that improves school culture, presents the research on how school culture and climate affect school functioning and outcomes, and discusses how principals can initiate and sustain beneficial school improvements by making organizational learning integral to school culture. The chapter also updates: Edgar Schein's views about organizational culture, 1985 – 2017; research on principals and culture creation; the research on principals, school culture, and student achievement; and illustrates why yesterday's school culture doesn't work today.

Chapter 5, ***Initiating and Sustaining Change***: To help aspiring and novice principals more realistically perceive their roles as "change agents," a new section presents change as a continuum from incremental to fundamental. The chapter explores how appreciating and leveraging the school culture elements can enable change and reviews the factors respecting and supporting adults learning. It also describes how applying conceptual models of change to facilitate the process can help principals address the dynamic cognitive, emotional, and structural factors the change process requires. Kurt Lewin, John P. Kotter (new to this edition), Chris Argyris, Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal, and Michael Fullan offer conceptual and practical frameworks to guide principals when leading school improvement.

Chapter 6, ***Building Ethical Behavior and Relational Trust***: Introduces new discussions of emotional intelligence, situational awareness, and the relationship between interpersonal trust and effective communications. This chapter also explains how ethical behaviors and relational trust appear in schools, discusses perspectives for making ethical decisions, and relates how principals' use of these in decision making and in relationship building can cultivate a positive school climate, culture, practices, and relationships with parents and community members that help schools succeed.

Chapter 7, ***Building Teacher Capacity***: Considers why principals will want to develop teachers' professional capacities; discusses how teachers' motivations, unvoiced expectations, and "psychological contracts" influence their willingness to grow professionally and contribute to school improvement. Additionally, the chapter explores how principals can develop teachers' competence in instruction and leadership using coaching and professional learning communities to improve teachers' classroom practices. Cognitive and instructional coaching models are new to this chapter.

Chapter 8, ***Conflict Management, Decision Making, and Problem Solving***: Focuses on how leaders understand and address conflict, problem solving/decision making, and crises in schools. Discusses how conflict may positively and negatively impact organizations, the factors that influence decision making, and the real-world constraints on making "perfect" decisions. Rational decision making and shared decision-making models and their implications for school effectiveness are considered. New to this edition, a section on *Crisis Management* considers crises from traditional and chaos theory perspectives. It also gives future principals realistic ideas about the range of crises schools often face and how they can thoughtfully anticipate, prepare themselves and their faculty and staff for, respond to, and learn from these events with the flexibility (and humility) these situations warrant.

Chapter 9, ***Enacting Data-Informed Accountability***: Presents new sections on equity concerns (and whether the persistent underfunding of high-poverty schools

represents an "opportunity gap" and "investment gap"). Continuous improvement models – such as the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycle give principals and their leadership teams a systematic approach to gathering and using data for school improvement. The chapter also updates information on using student attainment information and standards-based performance ratings in teacher and principal evaluation.

Chapter 10, *Building Your Capacity for the Principalship*: This completely new chapter introduces adult career development as a whole life process. It identifies career stages and describes how an effective induction stage helps beginning principals overcome the insecurity of inexperience, making mistakes (and learning from them), feeling like an imposter, and acquiring professional maturity. Developing more sophisticated conceptual problem-solving skills, engaging in professional reflection, and finding a work-life balance receive attention. Guidance for constructing a professional portfolio to help transition into the principalship concludes.

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NELP STANDARDS BY CHAPTERS

NELP Standards	Chapters									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Leading an organization	Student-centered leadership	Philosophy of education & leadership	School culture	Initiating Change	Ethical behaviors & trust	Building teacher capacity	Conflict, problem-solving	Data-informed accountability	Building your capacity
Standard 1 Mission, Vision, and Improvement	**1.1 1.2**	**1.1**	**1.1 1.2**	**1.1**	**1.1 1.2**		**1.1 1.2**		**1.1 1.2**	**1.2**
Standard 2 Ethics and Professional Norms	**2.1 2.3**		**2.1 2.2**	**2.1**	**2.1 2.2 2.3**	**2.1 2.2 2.3**	**2.1 2.3**	**2.1 2.2 2.3**	**2.1 2.2 2.3**	**2.1 2.2 2.3**
Standard 3 Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness	**3.2 3.3**	**3.1 3.2 3.3**	**3.1 3.2 3.3**	**3.1**	**3.1 3.2**	**3.1 3.2 3.3**	**3.3**		**3.1 3.2 3.3**	**3.1 3.2**
Standard 4 Learning and Instruction	**4.1 4.4**	**4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4**	**4.2 4.4**	**4.4**	**4.1 4.2 4.4**		**4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4**		**4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4**	**4.1 4.3**
Standard 5 Community and External Leadership	**5.1 5.2**		**5.2 5.3**	**5.1 5.2**	**5.1 5.2 5.3**	**5.1 5.2 5.3**		**5.1 5.2 5.3**	**5.1 5.2 5.3**	**5.1 5.3**
Standard 6 Operations and Management	**6.1 6.2**	**6.1**	**6.2**		**6.1 6.2**	**6.1 6.3**	**6.1**	**6.1 6.2 6.3**	**6.1 6.2 6.3**	**6.1 6.2**
Standard 7 Building Professional Capacity	**7.1 7.2 7.4**		**7.1 7.2 7.3**	**7.2 7.3**	**7.2 7.3 7.4**	**7.2**	**7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4**	**7.3 7.4**		**7.2 7.3**
Standard 8 Internship	The specific NELP Standards involved in the Internship depend on the Graduate School's curriculum. Ideally, the Internship should infuse all NELP Standards.									**8.1**

NOTES

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CHAPTER 1

Leading an Organization

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.1 Compare and contrast principal and teacher roles and responsibilities and their respective impacts on organizational functioning.

1.2 Analyze how understanding organizations as open systems with rational, natural, and social components can help principals become more effective leaders.

1.3 Describe school leadership as a process of influence.

1.4 Identify and explain the foundational behaviors and skills that principals use to enact both transactional and transformational instructional leadership

1.5 Discuss how the NELP standards inform the principal practices identified as increasing *every* student's achievement.

NELP Standards: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.4

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has never been more challenging. Contemporary problems are multifaceted, interconnected, shifting, and often contradictory. Many difficulties do not have once-and-for-all solutions. Yet we expect our leaders – whether in governance, business, finance, the military, or education – to solve them. According to Ronald A. Heifetz, co-founder of the Center for Public Leadership at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and author of *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (1994), leadership does not mean rallying others to solve problems we already know how to solve but to help them face problems that have not yet been successfully addressed.[1]

School principals keenly feel this reality. Societal shifts and nationally driven school reform efforts have altered the principal's role. School reforms of the 1980s and 1990s identified principals as transformational leaders who engage in school problem finding

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and problem solving, build the school's leadership teaching capacity, share decision making, and facilitate systemic change. If finding ways to improve *every* child's learning and achievement has become the school's central purpose, then improving leading, teaching, and learning – and shaping the organization called school to facilitate and nurture this process – has become the principal's central focus.

Our concept of leadership has matured to meet these new realities. Jerry Patterson, professor of leadership studies at the University of Alabama and former PreK-12 principal and district superintendent, defined *leadership* simply as "the process of influencing others to achieve mutually agreed upon purposes for the organization."[2] In this view, leadership is a focused process based on relationships that uses influence to accomplish goals that both the employees and the organization share. All leadership definitions contain these core elements.[3]

But leadership does not occur in a vacuum. In our dynamic society, organizations carry out much of life's daily activities. Organizations – such as schools, businesses, industries, military services, and government – are not brick-and-mortar buildings. Rather, they are people working together in structured ways to meet an identified need, to produce specific goods or services, or to accomplish other outcomes. And because organizations can be large and confusingly elaborate, they depend on effective leaders who can energize and direct capable followers to make their enterprises work.

Principals make the difference between schools that serve all their children well and schools that don't. Successful principals create the conditions for effective leading, teaching, and learning to happen. Yet education research shows that most school factors, taken separately, have only small effects on student learning. The real payoff comes when individual variables combine to reach a critical mass, forming a series of constructive interactions rippling throughout the school and community. Understanding organizations is aspiring principals' first step toward recognizing and wisely navigating their schools' opportunities and limitations. This is where a book introducing the principalship should logically begin.

DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

At every level of organizations, leaders provide clear focus and direction. They have a deep understanding of the organization's central mission and its core knowledge and skills. They have the capacity to set direction, innovate, and inspire others to perform at their best. They have the aptitude to lead in uncertain situations.

Flexible and collaborative, leaders are strong relationship and team builders. They create and sustain the climates that support employees' efforts, engaging their motives to invest in their work, continue learning, and increase their skills. Leaders guide colleagues through frequent improvement changes. They manage conflict well and ensure that organizational problems are quickly identified, ethically decided, and effectively resolved. Accountability for performance is clear, fair, and public. No wonder finding leadership talent is such a vital need. In fact, business consultants conclude that the quality of leaders is declining and suggest that organizations "reexamine and redesign"

their leadership development programs.[4] What it took to be a leader several decades ago is not sufficient to be a successful leader in this moment and going forward.

This is especially true for schools. As organizations, schools present leaders with unique complications. They involve inputs educators cannot control (such as family resources, parent education, children with different cultures, languages, and learning needs); variables they can't easily measure (such as classroom culture, peer influence, teacher beliefs and biases, and principal leadership); and outcomes they cannot predict or easily assess (including emotional intelligence, practical intelligence, creativity, persistence, and resilience).[5] The late Kenneth E. Boulding, a Nobel Prize-nominee in Peace and Economics, dryly observed that if physical systems were as complex as social systems' patterned series of interrelationships, "we would creep hesitantly out of bed each morning, not knowing whether we were about to crash to the floor or float to the ceiling."[6] It is no wonder that principals often feel overwhelmed, as if they are responsible for everything that occurs in their buildings over which they have only indirect (if any) control.

Leading schools as organizations is very different than leading classrooms. Contrasts exist in the scope of responsibilities, the range of persons with whom one interacts, the time frames in which each works, the array of environments of which one must be aware and coordinate, the amount of ambiguity and competing demands each must negotiate, and the degree of predictability or uncertain that impacts one's workday.

Because the professions hold different organizational roles, teachers and principals see and act differently in the school as their scope of responsibility diverge.[7] For example, teachers concentrate on meshing their students with the curriculum in ways that promote every student's learning. By comparison, principals orchestrate the school's entire educational and co-curricular program and the performance of everyone within it (ranging from dozens to thousands) according to district and state standards. Teachers manage their course materials; compile and analyze data about their students' attendance and performance; and meet their grade-level expectations for student learning. Principals steer schoolwide improvement efforts, coordinating all academic departments in a context of ambiguity and competing demands from inside and outside the school and district. Teachers consult with colleagues, students, and parents, typically one-on-one or in small groups, usually inside the school. Principals consult with a wide array of adults in the school community in formats ranging from individuals to small and auditorium-sized groups. In addition, teachers' time frame typically centers on the week, the marking period, or the semester, whereas principals' strategic and school improvement planning spans days to years. And while teachers have predictable daily schedules organized by ringing bells and moving students, principals tend to arrive early, stay late (especially if they work in middle or high schools that have sports teams), and watch their plans frequently interrupted by the "urgent" rather than the "important."

In short, principals focus on both the organization and the classrooms. Teachers, unless they are also school leaders, tend to focus on their own classrooms. Classroom expertise, although central to teaching effectiveness, is only part the knowledge, skills, and mindsets that principals need to be successful school leaders. Understanding organizations as open systems with rational, natural, and social dynamics operating within them can orient aspiring principals to the varied contexts in which they will work.