PRINCIPALS' INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES: A COMPARISON OF

THOSE WHOSE SCHOOL MAKE AND DO NOT MAKE ADEQUATE YEARLY

PROGRESS IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA

by

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(Under the Direction of SALLY J. ZEPEDA)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices by examining two groups of principals. The researcher sought to understand what accountability reform meant to participants, and if this reform had changed their work as principals. Elementary school principals from the state of Georgia ($N = 150$), including 82 Georgia elementary school principals whose schools made Adequate Yearly Progress during the 2002-2003 school year and 68 Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make Adequate Yearly Progress for the 2002-2003 school year, were surveyed.

Data for this quantitative study were collected using a survey instrument, the *Principal Accountability Survey,* developed using the current related literature regarding accountability, the work of the principal, job stressors, and the evaluation of principals' effectiveness. The responses from the survey plus demographic data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The findings indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in the way that the two groups of surveyed elementary school principals coped with increased mandates for

accountability, the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders, the obstacles they

faced, and differences in the obstacles faced by principals relative to their work.

INDEX WORDS: Elementary School Principals, Accountability, Adequate Yearly Progress,

Obstacles faced by Principals, Instructional Leadership

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my wonderful husband, Gene, who has supported me throughout this endeavor. Thank you for your love, support and loyalty. I am grateful for the joy and happiness you have brought into my life. This would not be possible without you. I love you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Accountability is a key issue facing schools today (Archer, 2000; Jacabson, 2001; Knowles & Knowles, 2001). In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, reform signaled making schools less formal, more open, and more humanistic (Gutek, 2000). In the 1980s, reform signaled making schools more structured, more effectively managed, and geared to basic skills and subjects (Gutek, 2000). In 1981, U.S. Secretary of Education, Bell created the Commission of Excellence in Education. The Commission was created because of the Secretary's concern about "the widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1). Soliciting the "support of all, who care about our future" the Secretary noted that he established the Commission based on his "responsibility to provide leadership, constructive criticism, and effective assistance to schools and universities" so that they would improve (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1).

In 1983, the Commission on Excellence in Education issued its report, *A Nation at Risk,* in which it warned:

> The educational foundation or our society was being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. The report alleged that part of the responsibility of the America's declining productivity in the face of accelerating foreign competition could be traced to the school's poor performance. The report went on to charge that our society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purpose of schooling and of the high expectations and disciplined effort to attain them. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 3)

In 1990, the Bush administration issued the report, *National Goals for Education*, which was to guide the improvement of education at the state and local levels. In 1994, Congress passed *The Educate America Act.* The *Act* reaffirmed the national goals of the 1990s and added the goals of improving the professional skills of teachers and promoting parental involvement (The National Education Goals, 1994).

The intent of the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965,* commonly known as the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* was to improve student achievement and to change the culture of America's schools. *NCLB* embodies four key principles:

> Stronger accountability for results; greater flexibility for states, school districts and schools in the use of federal funds; more choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been demonstrated to work. (United States Department of Education, NCLB: A Desktop Reference, 2002, p. ix)

Americans believe that quality education is fundamental to the economic well being of the state and the democratic foundation of society (Gullatt & Ritter, 2000). Because of this belief, efforts to strengthen public education have been unfolding throughout the United States. Accountability in education has been a focus of governments and educational authorities, and schools are held accountable for both the effective teaching of students and for implementation of polices made at the school level by staff (Forster, 1999).

Educational policy arenas, both in the United States and other countries, currently are dominated by accountability concerns (Linn 2000; Popkewitz, 2000). Governments and school systems have been eager to hold schools accountable for the learning outcomes of students. In most accountability systems, schools as whole organizations are held accountable, and the work performance of teachers and administrators is measured indirectly through the behavior of

students (Quality Counts, 2001). Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is a series of performance goals that every school, local education agency, and the State as a whole must achieve within time frames specified in law to meet the 100% proficiency goal of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (Georgia Department of Education, 2003). A school may be doing all that can be expected of it to effectively teach a specified curriculum content, but some students may not master the content for reasons that are entirely beyond the control of the school (Forster, 1999). Yet, the principal is held accountable to ensure learning for all students.

School systems and Title I schools that do not meet AYP for two consecutive years will be subject to various forms of assistance, intervention, and other actions, with consequences increasing each year the school or system remains on the list. After four years of not meeting AYP, the school is identified for corrective action and either must change its' staffing or make another fundamental change (including instituting a new curriculum, appointing an outside expert to advise the school, or extending the school year or school day for the school). After the fifth year of not meeting AYP, the school must develop (not implement) an "alternate governance" plan that includes converting to a charter school, replacing all or most of the staff, turning the school over to a private management company, or having the state take it over (Georgia Department of Education, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Principals are being held accountable for student achievement although research has shown that they have only an indirect effect on student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998), and in September, 2003 141 elementary school principals in Georgia learned that their schools did not meet AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. Although the 141 elementary schools represent only 11.5% of the total number of PreK-5 schools, these schools and their principals

must now begin to develop strategies for improvement with the principal assuming full

responsibility for the direction of improvement and the results needed for their schools to meet

AYP in subsequent years.

In the final analysis and with legislation such as *NCLB,* principals determine whether and

how to implement standards, they decide what to emphasize, and they determine what to omit as

the focus of school improvement. Because principals play such a significant role in what occurs

in their school, it is easier to hold principals accountable. According to Uchiyama and Wolf

(2002):

> Successful principals work intentionally with their faculties to increase student learning.
> The principal that achieves success in their schools do so by creating effective learning
> environments, cultivating a professional community, setting goals for reform, and
> balancing pressure and support. (pp. 80-81)

Hallinger and Heck (1998) concluded that there was little evidence of a direct effect of

leadership on student learning, although they found some indirect effects. In particular,

Hallinger and Heck indicated there was a failure to recognize the multilevel nature of questions

concerning the impact of leadership. Hallinger and Heck implied that principals really do have a

substantial impact on teaching and learning but so far, researchers have been unable to measure

it. If this is true, why are principals being held responsible when schools fail?

Background of the Study

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* is a federal mandate designed "to improve student

achievement and to change the culture of America's schools" (U.S. Department of Education,

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2002, p. ix*).* Title I, Improving the Academic

Achievement of the Disadvantaged, is designed "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and

significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency

on challenging state academic achievement standards and academic assessments" (U.S.

Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2002, p. 1). *No Child Left Behind* requires states to develop accountability plans that must be submitted and approved by the federal government. The act holds schools, local educational agencies, and states accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2002).

State governments have also mandated accountability legislation. In Georgia, the *Quality Basic Education Act* was passed in 1985, and the Education Review Commission was established in 1985. The purpose of the Commission was to study developments in other states and the findings of educational research in an effort to improve Georgia's education system (*HB 1187*, p. 4). In 1998, Georgia Governor Barnes created the Education Reform Commission. The findings of this Commission laid the background for House Bill 1187, *the A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000*. *The A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000* charges the Office of Education Accountability with the "creation of a statewide accountability program that is performance based". Georgia's *A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000* gave the State Board of Education several tasks including:

- mandating interventions for failing schools

- mandating school improvement teams, removing school personnel in failing schools,

- allowing for the creation of state charter schools,

- mandating the complete reconstitution of the school and hiring all new staff, and

- mandating that parents have the option to relocate their children to another public school in the district.

According to the Association of Washington School Administrators (1999), principals are feeling the pressure of accountability more than anyone else especially given AYP. Adding to

the pressure, local school boards and superintendents are putting more immediate pressure on the principal (Tucker & Codding, 2002) in an effort to realize higher levels of student achievement. The stakes for principal accountability relative to increased levels of student achievement are spelled out in the *No Child Left Behind Act* that mandates corrective action for schools that fail to make improvement. The primary result for a principal in a school that fails to make AYP is a significant decrease in the authority of the principal.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices by surveying two groups of principals. Examined were a cadre of Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP during the 2002-2003 school year and a cadre of Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The researcher sought to understand what accountability reform has meant to participants, and if this reform has changed their work as principals. The knowledge gained through such a study might assist principals, assistant principals, central office personnel, superintendents, and others interested in understanding the effect accountability reform have on principals. The results of this study may also help aspiring principals and those in higher education who prepare future school leaders to understand the impact accountability has on the principal. Moreover, the results of such a study may assist those who supervise, evaluate, and provide assistance to practicing administrators.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Accountability: Refers to the decisions that are made and the actions that are taken as a result of student performance on formal assessments (e.g., standardized tests).

Adequate Yearly Progress: A series of performance goals that every school, local education agency and the State as a whole must achieve within time frames specified in law to meet the 100% proficiency goal of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*.

Elementary School: Elementary schools are schools that house Pre-K through fifth grade students.

Low performing schools: A school in which 50% or more of the students' scores in math and reading do not meet standards as determined by the Criterion Reference Competency Test.

Overview of the Research Methods

For the purposes of this study, a descriptive, non-experimental approach was used to provide a database to examine the relationship of the accountability system to the principals' instructional leadership practices. A cross-sectional survey design was used to measure elementary school principals' perspectives about accountability (Creswell, 2002). The data were collected through a survey of 150 principals.

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

2. What obstacles do principals face as the strive to achieve accountability mandates?

3. Are their differences in the perspectives of principals relative to their work whose schools did meet AYP to those principals of schools who did not make AYP?

Null Hypothesis

The following hypotheses stated in the null form were enumerated for testing:

H_o1: There is no statistically significant difference in the instructional practices of

Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year

and Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-

2003 school.

H_o2: There is no statistically significant difference between the principal's view of

accountability mandates of Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP for

the 2002-2003 school year and Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not

make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year.

H_o3: There is no statistically significant difference between the obstacles Georgia

elementary principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year face and

Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003

school year face.

Significance of the Study

The growing movement toward holding schools and systems accountable for

student progress is well documented in the existing body of literature (Knowles & Knowles,

2001; Newman, King, & Rigdon, 1996). In the last 20 years, much attention has been paid to

educational leadership and its impact on student outcomes (Witiziers, Bosker, & Kruger, 2003).

Researchers concur that the effects of principal leadership on student achievement are indirect

and difficult to measure (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998). Wong and Morton (1998) concluded

that valid accountability measures should hold the educational policy actors accountable for

those tasks that fall within their purview. If accountability systems are to achieve their stated

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and implied goals of improved school performance by holding principals directly accountable for the achievement of the students in their schools, then it is vital to understand principals' perceptions on their work (Rallis & Goldring, 2000).

In 2002, Sumowski conducted a qualitative study, involving one principal. The study focused only on the principal's perspectives of the challenges and issues he alone faced during the process of recovering from being labeled as not meeting AYP and an external school improvement team being brought in to "improve the school." The implications of this study were that the principal encountered a number of challenges and barriers during the first year of the school improvement process. The chief challenges and barriers reported in Sumowski's (2002) study were:

1. Challenges and barriers in communication,

2. Conflict,

3. Maintaining staff morale; and,

4. Time management.

Sumowski's research was limited to the site-specific issues facing a single school and principal. During the 2002-2003 school year, 141 Georgia elementary schools (grades PreK-5) did not make AYP. This study focused on the 141 elementary principals in Georgia whose schools did not make AYP comparing the results to the responses of 141 elementary principals whose schools did make AYP in 2002-2003.

<p style="text-align:center">Organization of the Dissertation</p>

Chapter 1 included the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, overview of the research method, research questions, definition of terms, importance of the study, and organization of the study. Chapter 2 provides the review of literature relevant to accountability

and the principal. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the study. This chapter includes a description of the population surveyed, the instrumentation, and the procedures used in this study. Chapter 4 reports the data and its analysis. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the study's results and implications for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices by examining two groups of principals. Examined were 282 elementary principals: 141 Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP during the 2002-2003 school year and 141 Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The researcher sought to understand what accountability reform has meant to participants and if this reform has changed their work as principals. The knowledge gained through such a study might assist principals, assistant principals, central office personnel, superintendents, and others interested in understanding the effect accountability reform has had on the principal. The results of this study may also help aspiring principals and those in higher education who prepare future school leaders in understanding the impact accountability has had on the principal. Moreover, the results of such a study may assist those who supervise, evaluate, and assist practicing principals.

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

2. What obstacles do principals face as the strive to achieve accountability mandates?

3. Are their differences in the perspectives of principals relative to their work whose schools did meet AYP to those principals of schools who did not make AYP?

The Work of the Principal

With the rise of industrialization and the development of scientific management

techniques, the term principal teacher became just principal, and the job evolved with a

management focus (Rossow & Warner, 2000). The principal, as the formal leader, becomes a

steward of the system and the mission of the school as well as those individuals who are part of

the school (Senge, 1990). Eye (2001) reported that the principal must be able to coordinate

educational purposes, supervise service personnel, distribute time equitably across a variety of

tasks, interpret public perceptions, and evaluate impact of efforts toward meeting the needs of

students.

> Seifert and Vornberg (2002) stated:
>
> The principal is expected to examine the beliefs and values of the system, weighting them
> carefully for their impact on the purpose of the school, and then determine those that need
> to be changed to best meet the challenges of the larger community in which the school
> participates. (p. 20)

In their traditional roles, principals have been held accountable for the effectiveness of schools.

Measures of school effectiveness have included student achievement (Heck, Larsen, &

Marcoulides, 1990). In present restructuring initiatives, principals continue to be accountable "to

improve the teaching available to all children and to increase the learning of those children"

while they simultaneously attempt to change the roles and responsibilities for themselves and

their teachers (Kritek, 1993, p. 256).

How important is the principal? Studies on school effectiveness and student achievement

all reveal one commonality, the fact that the effectiveness of schools depends largely on the

quality of school leadership (Norton, 2003). Taylor and Tashakkori (1994) studied data from

9,987 teachers and 27, 994 students concerning healthy school climates. School leadership was

one of three major factors that determined the school climate. Studies have underscored the

impact of healthy school climate on positive student achievement, and the positive or negative effect that the principal has in creating a school climate (Newman & Associates, 1996; Winter & Sweeney, 1994).

Brewer (1993) noted that principal leadership affected both the selection and motivation of teachers in terms of their classroom goal setting. After controlling for a variety of environmental influences, Brewer found higher academic gains in high schools where principals held higher academic goals. Goldring and Pasternak (1994) found that the principal's role in framing school goals, establishing a clear mission, and gaining staff consensus were stronger predictors of school outcomes than other instructional or managerial activities. Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins, and Dart (1993) found that principal vision, group goals, high expectations, and individual support have effects on several in-school processes such as goal formulation, school culture, teachers, and policy. Leithwood, et al. concluded that these factors influenced school improvement outcomes including achieving school reform goals, enacting policy, and enacting organizational change. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) asserted that effective school principals maintained a strong task orientation where their focus was on the development of curriculum and instruction rather than on management or human relations' activities.

The school principal assumes many roles to fulfill her position as the leader of a school. Clark and Thomas (2001) found that the most important role is undoubtedly that of leader in curriculum improvement. The principal is a designer of environments conducive to learning and a program planner, implementer, and evaluator (Reilly, 2001). Principals must also create an environment in which teachers collaborate, exchange ideas, and develop tight collegial connections—and in which they share governance with their staff members (Evans, 1996).

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Principals are the key players in schools that ensure an excellent education for their students (Wolf, Borko, Elliot, & McIver, 2000).

Sebring and Bryk (2000) noted three common elements among principals of productive schools: their leadership style, their strategies, and the issues on which they focus. Sebring and Bryk pointed out several features that characterize the leadership style of principals of productive schools: an inclusive, facilitative orientation; an institutional focus on student learning; efficient management; and a reliance on a combination of pressure and support to motivate others. Principals of productive schools have a vision for their schools.

Section Summary

Traditionally, principals have been held accountable for the effectiveness of schools. Measures of principal effectiveness have included student achievement, commitment to academic goals, creation of high expectations for student achievement, the allocation of resources, and the development of stable learning environments (Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990). The work of principals has expanded during the past decade to include a larger focus on teaching and learning, professional development, data-driven decisions making, and accountability.

The work of the principal has evolved from a focus on the managerial to a focus on instructional issues, namely increased student achievement. With the demands of accountability, principals must be able to harmonize these two aspects of their work. Although, the principal is involved in all managerial duties involved with running a school, more time has to be devoted to the instructional program of the school to ensure academic success for all students. Principals must be able to increase student achievement while they change the roles of the teachers in their buildings.

The school principal assumes many roles. Research has shown that the most important role of the principal centers on curriculum and school improvement. The principal must establish a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning   Principals have to focus on the core business of schools and to have a deep knowledge of teaching and learning.

Job Stressors

Principals deal with conflict, stress, and a myriad of external forces and expectations (Drake & Roe, 1996). Dwindling resources, burgeoning paperwork, crumbling facilities, increasing public criticisms and expectations, growing numbers of students with special needs, and increasing demands by teachers and parents pose serious challenges to principals (Davis, 1998). Even the most skilled and experienced principals run the risk of failing in their jobs as a result of actions, events, or outcomes over which they may not always have direct control (Deal & Peterson, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1995).

Principals, who have departed from the principalship, cite the mounting stress of the job as their reason for leaving (Keller, 1998). During the movement to improve schools, the principal has become as visible and as accountable as a football coach has and must suffer the wrath of parents and state monitors (Steinberg, 2000). The pressures of accountability, test scores, the media, parents, legislatures, and outside special interest groups can be overwhelming. Principals are increasingly responsible for student achievement as measured by external standards. Standardized test scores are now a basis for judging a principal's ability to lead (Gilman & Givens, 2001).

There is a documented and growing shortage of people prepared to meet the increased demands and responsibilities that weigh so heavily on the principal's shoulders (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Million, 1998; Potter, 2001). The average age of principals in the United States is close to 50 (Long, 2000). It is estimated that 40% of all U.S. principals could retire in the next decade (Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2000), and many states will face principal shortages. A 1998 survey conducted by Educational Research Service found that some school districts were already experiencing difficulties filling administrative positions that were open because of retirements, resignations, and promotions. Half of the 403 school districts surveyed indicated problems in replacing elementary and secondary school principals.

Fewer qualified people want the principal's job (Keller, 1998). Several factors are holding teachers back from pursuing administrative certification, degrees, or positions. The factors that teachers cite as reasons for not pursuing the principalship include: too little pay, costly and irrelevant requirements, too many pressures, too many hats to wear, not having enough time, and too little authority (Gilman & Givens, 2001). According to the Educational Research Service (1998), teachers believed that the financial rewards of being a principal were not commensurate with the job's responsibilities.

Principal's time during the day is fragmented and there is often little opportunity to reflect on problems or to work on improvement strategies (Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2000). Many principals report that they work from 56 to more than 70 hours per week yet never feel that they are on top of their responsibilities (Rodda, 1999). Many times the principal is held responsible for mistakes the staff makes. Site-based management, the central office, and the school board limit the principal's ability to decide what is best for students and the school.

Politics, bureaucracy, paperwork, and special interests are some of the frustrations that bedevil today's school superintendents and principals, according to an in-depth study conducted by the Public Agenda for the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds (2001). The Public Agenda surveyed 853 public school superintendents and 909 public school principals about the challenges they faced and what might help them to do their jobs better. Fifty-seven percent of the principals maintained that even good administrators in their districts were overwhelmed. According to the survey, insufficient funding was a pressing problem. Lack of control over the schools they were expected to manage was also a problem. Principals felt that giving them more autonomy to run the schools while still holding them accountable for results would be a somewhat effective way to improve schools. Many principals voiced unease about the increasing use of students' standardized test scores to judge principal and school performance, and those schools should not be judged by what students do on one test late in the year.

Section Summary

Redefining one's leadership role can be challenging and stressful (Blase & Blase, 1997). The world in which schools must function is changing at accelerated rates, causing educational leaders to operate in situations that are increasingly complex and constrained. This situation means that leadership practices suitable to meet yesterday's needs are inadequate to meet tomorrow's demands (Evans, 1996). Contemporary principals report growing concern about the barriers of stress and time as well as the changes in the principalship including increased responsibility and decreased autonomy and authority (Portin & Shen 1998; Public Agenda, 2001).

The pressures of accountability test scores, the media, parents, and legislatures and outside special interest groups can be overwhelming. The principal deals with conflicts, stress,

and external forces and expectations. The principalship is a challenging job. Principals agree

that that the ability to manage politics is the key to survival. In addition to running their schools,

principals must also juggle complaining parents, cumbersome laws, and threats of litigation.

Murphy and Shipman (2000) acknowledged that school leaders today encountered two

formidable challenges. The first challenge is that today's school leaders must be willing to

change from focus on process to a concern for outcomes and from risk avoiders and conflict

mangers to risk takers. The second challenge is to adopt leadership strategies and styles that are

in harmony with the central tenets of the school organizations they seek to create.

Dilemmas Faced by Principals

Uncertainty, tension, and conflict arising from the environments created by restructuring

generate problems and dilemmas for those involved. This is particularly true for principals who

find themselves at the center of relationships between participants with divergent and convergent

interests (Dimmock, 1999). The traditional roles of principals and other educators in schools are

changing and will continue to be reshaped, redefined, and renegotiated as restructuring occurs

(Leithwood, 1994). Timar (1989) noted that the ultimate success of educational reform under the

rubric of restructuring is fundamentally tied to changes in school cultures and social organization

requiring dramatic changes in "the rules of behavior that define both the roles of individuals and

their interactions" (p. 266).

Between May 1996 and February 1997, Wildy and Louden interviewed 74 principals.

From the interviews, 90 short vignettes were constructed containing critical incidents identified

by the principals. Of these, 71 vignettes were used to develop standards for principal's

performance. A total of 945 school administrators rated the vignettes. From this study, three

dilemmas were identified in principals' work in restructuring school: the dilemmas of autonomy, efficiency, and accountability.

The first dilemma has been characterized as the autonomy dilemma (Wildy & Louden, 2000). In restructuring, sharing power requires the principal to delegate leadership responsibilities, to develop collaborative decision-making processes and to bring shared authority to life (Murphy, 1994). The principal is expected to support and to coordinate a group of professionals (Chapman & Boyd, 1986). This dilemma arises when the demand for the principal to be the facilitator of shared decision-making is coupled with the demand to be the autonomous educational leader and school site manager (Clune & White, 1988).

The second dilemma has been characterized as the efficiency dilemma (Wildy & Louden, 2000). School restructuring calls for decision-making processes that are both democratic and efficient (Marshall, 1991). Collaborative decision-making structures and processes are expected to encompass the views of teachers, community members, and sometimes students (Angus, 1995). The dilemma for the principal is to be both efficient and collaborative.

The third dilemma is the accountability dilemma. The principal is faced with the competing demands of meeting local school needs and also complying with centrally imposed directives (Wildy & Louden, 2000). The dilemma is that the principal is accountable for the outcomes of collaborative decisions.

Section Summary

Principals involved in school restructuring face several dilemmas. The autonomy dilemma concerns how to provide strong and shared leadership. The efficiency dilemma concerns how to lead collaborative decision-making and to ensure that decision-making is

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efficient. The accountability dilemma concerns how to empower local decision-making and to comply with external accountability requirements.

Uncertainty, tension, and conflict arising from the turbulent policy environments created by restructuring generate problems, dilemmas, and challenges for those involved. This is particularly true for principals (Dimmock, 1999). Although principals' dilemmas may seem unresolveable, the dilemmas are manageable. Principals must understand the dilemmas they face in order to manage the dilemmas.

School restructuring has had an impact on the knowledge, skills and dispositions required of school leaders. Principals are expected to share their power. At the same time, principals are under pressure to provide leadership, guarantee the efficiency of school management, and to be accountable to all stakeholders. As expectations rise, dilemmas of restructuring will heightened.

Evaluation of the Principals' Effectiveness

DiMaggio and Powell (1991) suggested that the association of managerial activity with organizational output, such as student performance, continues to be particularly weak in schools in spite of increasing pressure to standardize and to regulate this relationship. Hallinger and Heck (1998) examined 40 empirical studies on principals' effects between 1980 and 1995. Three models were used to investigate the relationship between school leadership and student achievement. The direct model, suggested that leaders' practices could have effects on student outcomes and that these effects could be measured apart from related variables. The mediated model hypothesized that leaders achieved their effects on school outcomes through indirect paths. The reciprocal effect model suggested that the relationships between the principal and features of the school and its environment were interactive. Hallinger and Heck (1998)

concluded that studies in which the indirect models showed a greater impact of school leadership on student performance than the studies that employed the direct models.

Pounder, Ogawa, and Adams (1995) reported that the research had not led to an integrated concept of school leadership or to a better understanding of the impact of leadership on school performance. Hallinger and Heck (1996) concluded that the empirical studies in the U.S. and U.K are not altogether consistent in direction and size. Dutch studies on educational leadership failed to show a positive and significant relationship between the principal and student achievement (Van de Grift, 1990; Van de Grift & Houtveen, 1999). Given this divergence, the question of whether school principals' matter in the influence on student achievement remains unsolved (Witziers, Bosker, & Kruger, 2003).

Andrews and Soder (1987) conducted a two-year study on the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement. The study was a part of a collaborative effort of the University Washington College of Education to improve a district's 67 elementary and 20 secondary schools. The researchers administered a questionnaire to all district instructional staff designed to measure 18 strategic interactions between principals and teachers in terms of the principal as resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence. Using principal as the independent variable, the study found that the normal gains of students in strong-leader schools were significantly greater in both total reading and total math that those students in schools rated as having average or weak leaders.

Witziers et al. (2003) conducted a quantitative meta-analysis on the direct effects of educational leadership on student achievement studies conducted between 1986 and 1996. Thirty-seven studies were selected. The study suggested, in general, that the effect sizes are small. The study indicated that not more that 1% of the variation in student achievement was

associated with difference in educational leadership. Witziers et al. (2003) also go on to report that the measures used in the studies were far from reliable and thus may lead to an underestimation of the association between educational leadership and student achievement.

Section Summary

Empirical research on principals' instructional management activity is inconclusive and contradictory (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Although studies on leadership effectiveness are often contradictory and inconsistent, two important generalizations can be derived from the research (Davis, 1998). First, there is no single model or uniform prescription for leadership effectiveness. Effective leadership is a multifaceted process that is often defined through both subjective and objective measures of leader behavior and its effect on organizational processes and outcomes. Second, a thorough analysis of leadership effectiveness requires three important components: (a) an understanding of the empirical bases of organizational effectiveness, (b) an understanding of how leaders can influence or mitigate various situational and environmental factors external to the behaviors of the leader and, (c) an understanding of how various situational factors can influence or mitigate leadership behavior (Davis, 1998).

The attributes of leadership effectiveness do not guarantee success, are not uniformly present in all leaders, and do not appear among leaders in any formulaic combination (Sergiovanni, 1995). Hallinger and Heck (1998) concluded that there is little evidence of a direct effect of leadership on student learning although they found some evidence of indirect effects. Hallinger and Heck imply that principals have an impact on teaching and learning but so far, researchers have been unable to measure it.

Accountability

Newmann, King, and Rigdon (1997) generalized that accountability could be clustered across four components: performance results, standards for judging that performance, significant consequences for success or failure in meeting specified standards, and external agents that judge the ability to meet those standards. Gullant and Rutter (2000) defined accountability as the decisions that are made and the actions that are taken as a result of the performance shown by the assessment.

The reasons for calls for greater educational accountability can be traced to the wider economic, political, and social contexts of which schools area part (Leithwood & Earl, 2000). The importance of academic success and fiscal stability of schools and school districts is not debatable (Paulen, Kallio, & Stockard, 2001). With the impact of *No Child Left Behind, 2001, A Nation At Risk*, and the accountability movement, a renewed interest and focus has been placed on ensuring that every student has access to free and appropriate learning opportunities (Haertel, 1999; Lashway, 2001; McNeil, 2000; Smith, Heinecke, & Noble, 1999; Wellstone, 2000).

Accountability in education has been high on the agenda of governments and educational authorities for some years (Foster, 1999). As a corporate body, the school is accountable for the effective teaching of students, and governments and school systems have been eager to hold schools accountable for the learning outcomes of their students (Foster, 1999).

In the mid-60s, President Lyndon Johnson persuaded Congress to pass legislation that would address the differences in achievement students came to school with as first graders. In addressing this issue, Congress passed the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* that focused on compensatory education (Seifert & Vornberg, 2002).

History of Federal Accountability Legislation

Educational policy arenas currently are dominated by accountability concerns (Linn, 2000; Popkewitz, 2000). Secretary of Education T.H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1981, directing this group to examine the quality of education in the United States. In 1983, the Commission of Excellence issued its report, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. A Nation At Risk* warned:

> The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. The report alleged that part of the responsibility of America's declining productivity in the face of accelerating foreign competition could be traced to the school's poor performance. (p. 1)

In 1983, President Reagan stated, "From Maine to California, parents, teachers, school officials, and state and local office holders have been vigorously working to improve the fundamental-not fund budget structures, not frills in the curriculum but teaching and learning" (Gutek, 2000, pp. 280).

In 1990, the Bush administration issued a report, *National Goals for Education* that was a guide to the improvement of education across states and local districts. Among the goals prescribed were that by the year 2000:

1. All American children would enter school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate would reach 90%.
3. All students would complete grades 4, 8, and 12 demonstrating competency in English, math, science, civics, government, and history.
4. U.S. students would rank first in the world in mathematics and science.
5. Every school in the US would be free of drugs and violence.
6. Every America adult would be literate and possess the knowledge and skills needed for citizenship and competition in the global economy. (Gutek, p. 285-286)

President George Bush convened the Nations' Governors summit in 1989 in an attempt to legitimate and to generate national student performance standards. The 1994 *Improving America's School Act* (IASA), which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*,

mandated that rigorous national standards apply to all students, including those receiving Title I

services. To meet the new policy challenge, states and districts were required to develop content

and performance standards, to adopt annual assessments, and to hold school systems accountable

for the achievement of students (Sunderman, 2001). In 1994, Congress passed the *Educate*

America Act. The act reaffirmed the national goals of the 1990s and added the goals of

improving the professional skills of teachers and promoting parental partnership in the education

of children (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education,

2002).

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* mandates that all states establish a single statewide

accountability system that will be effective in ensuring that all districts and schools make

adequate yearly progress. The accountability system must be based on academic standards and

assessments, include achievement for all students, and include sanctions and rewards to hold all

public schools accountable for student achievement. If a school fails to make adequate yearly

progress, possible corrective actions include:

1. Replace school staff relevant to the failure;
2. Institute and implement a new curriculum;
3. Significantly decrease management authority at the school;
4. Appoint outside experts to advise the school;
5. Extend the school year or school day;
6. Restructure internal organization of the school. (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2002*,* p. 6)

In most accountability systems, schools as whole organization are being held accountable, and

the work performance of teachers and administrators is measured indirectly through the behavior

of students (Quality Counts, 2001).

In 1998, Georgia Governor Barnes, created the Education Reform Commission of 2000.

The finding of the Commission laid the background for House Bill 1187, *The A Plus Education*

Reform Act. The A Plus Education Reform Act charges that the Office of Education accountability will produce school report cards. The report cards will contain grades that reflect the schools' annual academic performances. *No Child Left Behind* mandates that all students will be proficient in language arts and mathematics, as determined by state assessments, by 2014. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a series of performance goals set by the state for each school district and school. Under *NCLB,* for the 2003-2004 school year, schools that do not meet AYP for two consecutive years will be subject to various forms of assistance, intervention, and other actions, with consequences increasing each year the school or LEA remains on the list (Georgia Department of Education-No Child Left Behind Website).

In Georgia during the 2002-2003 school year there were 1999 elementary, middle, and high schools of which 1269 met AYP while 730 schools in total did not meet AYP. For the 730 schools and their personnel who did not meet AYP, certain consequences are being put in place. It is noted that the consequences for schools and their system personnel span a four-year period with consequences escalating each subsequent year that their schools do not meet AYP. Consequences for schools at the end of their fourth year of not meeting AYP include such measures as restructuring with the replacement of personnel, including the principal. Table I outlines the consequences for schools that fail to make AYP.

Table 2.1

Consequences for Schools Not Making AYP

Year	Consequence
1	No Consequences

Table 2.1 (continued)

Consequences for Schools Not Making AYP

Year	Consequence
2	Needs Improvement Year 1 • Public School Option: Parents have option to transfer child to a higher performing public school in the district. • School Improvement Plan: Schools must identify the specific areas that need improvement and work with parents, teachers, and outside experts to develop a plan to raise student achievement. • Must receive technical assistance from the LEA to help it improve.
3	Needs Improvement Year 2 • Supplemental Services: Parents of students in Title I schools have the option for requesting tutoring and other supplemental educational service. • Technical assistance and public school choice continue.
4	Needs Improvement Year 3 • Technical Assistance continues • Public choice continues • Supplemental Services continues • School is identified for corrective action and thus must change its staffing or make fundamental change.
5	Needs Improvement Year 4 • Plan for Restructuring: School must develop an "alternate governance" plan that includes converting to a charter school, replacing all or most of the staff, turning it over to a private management company, or have the state take it over.

Source: Georgia Department of Education
http://www.ganet.org/services/leg/ShowBillPre.cgi?year=1999&filename=1999/HB1187

Section Summary

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires states to test more, to set more ambitious improvement goals for schools, and to increase sanctions for schools that fail to meet these goals. These provisions will have major implications for state and district assessments and accountability policies (Goertz & Duffy, 2003). Policy makers expect one assessment system to provide indicators of the performance of the education system, to hold schools accountable, to motivate students to perform better, and to aid in instructional decisions about individual students (McDonnell, 1994).

Effective accountability systems work best to improve performance when they target important objectives, can identify problems in practice, monitor results, stress positive incentives, affect individuals who play critical roles, involve all stakeholders, build capacity, and invest in results (Lingenfelter, 2003). Well-designed assessment and accountability systems can help the principal focus attention on the students that need the most help, motivating students and teachers, while developing curriculum and instruction (Goertz & Duffy, 2003). Policy makers must recognize the limits and the promises of such policies, however.

Chapter Summary

The review of literature began with a discussion on the work of the principal. The discussion focused on the skills necessary to become an effective principal, the many roles that principals must fulfill, and the importance of the work of the principal. Schools that make a difference in student's learning are led by principals who make significant and measurable contributions to the effectiveness of staff and the learning of pupils in their charge (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Murphy & Hallinger, 1992).

The principalship is the most visible role in schools. Thereby, making the position very stressful and causing many teachers to shy away from the position of principal. The next section of the review of literature dealt with the stressors of the job. The third section dealt with the dilemmas of the principalship. Research conducted by Public Agenda (2003) suggested that the most consuming part of the job of principals comes from too much fault-finding from all stakeholders, not enough time, and too many obstacles thrown in the principals' path. The research also states that warring factions, special interests, turf battles, paperwork, rules and regulations, and litigious parents get in the way and prevent principals from focusing on curriculum and school improvement. Principals are facing more changes than any other group involved in school reform (Bradley, 1992).

The review of literature ends with a discussion on accountability. Accountability has steadily risen to the top of the principal's agenda. Much of the school year now revolves around two pivotal moments: the week in which students take the mandated statewide test and the day when the scores are released (Lashway, 2001). There are so many variables involved in the test process that the principal has no control over; yet, the principal stands to be replaced if student achievement does not increase. For more than a decade, efforts have been made to improve American schools with standards-based reforms. This approach has focused new attention on achievement of students and accountability. As a result, many states have now developed accountability systems (Elmore, Abelmore, & Fuhrman, 1996; Ladd, 1996).

Empirical research on principals' instructional management activity is inconclusive and contradictory (Hallinger & Heck, 1996); yet, principal accountability for student achievement continues to increase (Boyd, 1996; Duffy, 1997; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994). Current reform initiatives call for greater accountability on the part of the school, and these initiatives now

mandate a key role for principal leadership (Wolf et al., 2000). Principals find themselves in the "eye of the storm" as a society conditioned by instant gratification and change expects immediate results from the latest reform effort (Copeland, 2001; Donaldson, 2002; Taylor & Williams, 2001). The position of principal is the only legislated position held accountable for increased student achievement. Therefore, a study involving principals' perspectives on accountability is important.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of accountability on principals'

instructional leadership practices by comparing two groups of principals. Compared were the

responses of 129 Georgia elementary principals whose schools made Adequate Yearly Progress

(AYP) during the 2002-2003 school year with the responses of the 129 Georgia elementary

school principals whose schools did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The

researcher sought to understand what accountability reform has meant to participants and if this

reform has changed their work as principals. This chapter reports the methodology of the study

including a description of the research design, the population and sample examined, the

instrument used for collecting data, the procedures followed to collect data, and an overview of

the statistical analysis procedures to analyze data.

Research Design

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features of the data in this study.

According to Trichim (2000), descriptive statistics form the basis of virtually every quantitative

analysis of data and that through descriptive statistics, the researcher describes what is and what

the data show. Descriptive statistics present quantitative descriptions in a manageable form

(Mills, 2000). For the purposes of this study, a descriptive, non-experimental approach was used

to provide a database to examine the relationship of the accountability system to the principals'

instructional leadership practices.

A cross-sectional survey design was used to measure elementary principals perspectives

about accountability (Creswell, 2002). The study design relied on a mailed survey to collect

data. Creswell (2002) stated, "A mailed questionnaire is a convenient way to reach a geographically dispersed sample of a population. The mail facilitates collecting data quickly" (p. 403).

The descriptive component of the study consisted of two parts: The first part of the instrument asked principals to provide demographic characteristics such as:

1.   Numbers of years experience as a principal;

2.   Gender;

3.   Highest degree earned; and

4.   Number of years at the current site.

AYP status for the 2002-2003 school year and other demographic information about the school were pulled from the Georgia State Department Homepage.

The second and third parts of the survey were designed to determine what accountability reform has meant to participants and if this reform has changed their work as principals. In this study, the independent variable is whether or not the principals' school made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The dependent variable was the participants' perceptions of how accountability had affected their work. The survey contains 15 likert-scale and 2 open-ended questions. The survey was purposefully short in an effort to encourage the surveyed principals to return it (Creswell, 2002).

<center>Research Questions</center>

The following overall research questions guided the direction of the study:

1.   How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

2.   What obstacles do principals face as the strive to achieve accountability

<center>32</center>

mandates?

3.   Are their differences in the perspectives of principals relative to their work whose schools did meet AYP to those principals of schools who did not make AYP?

Stated through null hypothesis, the researcher examined:

H_o1: There is no statistically significant difference in the instructional practices of Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year and Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school.

H_o2: There is no statistically significant difference between the principal's view of accountability mandates of Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year and Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year.

H_o3: There is no statistically significant difference between the obstacles Georgia elementary principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year face and Georgia elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year face.

Population and Sample

The researcher consulted the Georgia Department of Education to determine the number of schools that made and did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. Table 3.1 illustrates the total number of elementary, middle, and high schools (including Title I status) that made and did not make AYP in Georgia during the 2002-2003 school year.

Table 3.1

Georgia Statewide AYP Numbers

Schools	Met AYP	Did not Meet AYP	Total Schools	Percent Met AYP	Percent Not Meeting AYP
All	1269	730	1999	63.5%	36%
Title I	758	357	1115	68%	32%
Non Title I	511	373	884	57.8%	42%
High	106	255	361	29.4%	70%
Middle	78	328	406	19.2%	80%
Elementary	1083	141	1224	88.5%	11%
K12	2	6	8	25%	75%

Source: Georgia Department of Education (2003).

During the 2002-2003 school year, Georgia had 1224 elementary schools. Of the 1224 elementary schools, 88.5% (1083) met AYP for the 2002-2003 school year while 11.5% (141) did not make AYP (see Appendix A). Geographically, the schools were distributed throughout the state (see Appendix B). A return rate of 50% plus 1 was sought to strengthen the results of the study and the generalizability of findings (Creswell, 2002).

<center>Sample Selection Process</center>

The study consisted of two target populations; principals of schools who did not met AYP for the 2002-2003 school year, and principals of schools who did meet AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. Although there were 141 schools that did not meet AYP for the 2002-2003 school year only 129 schools were used for this study. The 12 schools in Cobb, Fulton, and Gwinnett were excluded from the study because of board policy regarding external research.

For this study, the researcher wanted to sample for comparison purposes, principals of elementary schools that did not meet AYP for the 2002-2003 school year and principals of elementary schools that did meet AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The population for this study consisted of 258 elementary school principals from the state of Georgia. Within this sample were 129 elementary school principals whose schools did not meet Georgia's Adequate Yearly Progress Goals for the 2002-2003 school year and 129 elementary school principals whose schools did meet Georgia's Adequate Yearly Progress Goals for the 2002-2003 school year.

From the target population of principals whose schools did meet AYP for 2002-2003 school year, the researcher:

1. Looked at the counties in which the 129 elementary schools that did not make AYP were located

2. In the 63 counties, there are 627 elementary schools. By subtracting the 129 schools that did not meet AYP, there are 498 remaining elementary schools that made AYP.

3. The sample population (N=129) was selected from the remaining 498 schools by simple random sampling using a random numbers table.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to collect data for the study was the researcher-developed *Principal Accountability Survey (PAS)* (see Appendix C). In designing this instrument, the researcher was guided by the work of Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) who believed the basic steps included:

1. designing the research objective;

2. designing the questionnaire format;

3. field-testing the questionnaire;

4. writing a cover letter;

5. distributing the questionnaire;

6. analyzing the questionnaire data.

The *PAS* consisted of three parts. The demographic section of the survey included data on the principal's years of experience as a principal, the gender of the principal, and the highest degree earned by the principal. The demographic information was collected to determine characteristics of the respondents. The second part of the instrument contained items concerning accountability, the work of the principal, and job stressors based on the review of literature in Chapter 2. Participants were asked to rate each item based on a five-point Likert scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. The third part of the survey asked principals to respond to two open ended questions. Open-ended question allows participants to create a response within their cultural and social experiences instead of the researcher's experiences (Neuman, 2000). The questions sought to understand more broadly the principal's perspectives on accountability. The open-ended questions included:

1. How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

2. What obstacles do principals face as the strive to achieve accountability mandates?

Using frequencies, the responses to the open-ended questions were examined to determine commonalties across responses.

Validity and Reliability of the Principal Accountability Survey

Content validity for the PAS was approached using several strategies. The survey items were shaped from a review of literature on the principalship and accountability. This served to

indicate content validity by determining if statements captured what was expressed in the

literature. Table 3.2 presents an overview of the PAS items related to the literature.

Table 3.2

PAS Items Related to the Literature on the Principalship and Accountability

Clusters	Questions	Supports from the Literature
Instruction	1. The principal's vision guides the total school program.	Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins, & Dart, 1993
	2. I am spending more time in classrooms monitoring instruction.	Goertz & Duffy, 2003
	4. My faculty and I are spending more time analyzing test data.	Gilman & Givens, 2001
	5. I spend more time analyzing test data.	Gilman & Givens, 2001
	13. Conflicting agendas interfere with the instructional program of my school.	Public Agenda, 2001; Sumowski, 2002
Accountability	6. Accountability mandates have changed our focus on school improvement.	Linn, 2000
	7. The pressures of accountability have increased my stress level.	Fenwick & Pierce, 2001
	9. I have often thought of leaving the principalship because of accountability mandates.	Keller, 1998
	10. Accountability has changed my role as the leader of my school.	Public Agenda, 2001
	11. Accountability has diminished my role as the leader of the school.	Portin & Shen, 1998
	12. Accountability mandates have affected staff morale.	Newman & Associates, 1996
	16. How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	Wildy & Louden, 2000
Obstacles	17. What obstacles do principals face as they strive to achieve accountability mandates?	Dimmock, 1999
	8. Time constraints are one of the obstacles I face.	Ferrandio & Tirozzi, 2000

Table 3.2 (continued)

PAS Items Related to the Literature on the Principalship and Accountability

Clusters	Questions	Supports from the Literature
	3. Communication with stakeholders is strained.	Dimmock, 1999
	6. The central office staff provides support and training for the implementation of the *HB 1187* mandates.	Drake & Roe, 1996
	7. The central office staff provides support and training for the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind* mandates.	Drake & Roe, 1996

According to Thorndike (1997), content validity requires a set of reviewers who have knowledge of the subject matter. First, 23 elementary principals from 1 county were asked to give feedback to the survey and to respond to the questions in the survey. The feedback given by this group of principals was considered and changes to the instrument were made. Second, Sumowski's (2002) study was examined relative to the themes and propositions he generated within his case study research that he examined a single principal's perspectives of the challenges and issues faced during the process of recovering from being labeled as not meeting AYP and an external school improvement team being brought in to "improve the school." Sumowski examined the instrument, and he gave feedback on the items. His suggestions were incorporated into the PAS (see Appendix C).

Third, the survey was presented to a jury of experts. The jury of experts consisted of a panel of 10 educators with graduate degrees and experience as administrators at the elementary school level. The expert panel rated, on a scale of 1-5, the relevance of each item to what the

survey intended to measure. Suggestions made by the jury of experts were incorporated into the final instrument.

Fourth, a draft of the instrument was given for review to the researcher's dissertation committee, consisting of trained professionals who understood the purpose of the study. The feedback from the dissertation committee was incorporated into the instrument. Finally, a pilot study was conducted on a sample similar to the study sample. The pilot version of the instrument was administered to 80 elementary school principals and assistant principals who were members of the Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals in the same region as the researcher.

To examine the consistency of responses the test was split in half. To test reliability a single test, split half test, was done on the data. The test showed no statistical differences between the groups surveyed.

<div align="center">Data Collection Procedures</div>

Once the dissertation committee accepted the proposal, the researcher secured permission to conduct the study from the University of Georgia's Institutional Review Board. All surveys were mailed to the participating schools in early April with a return date of April 17, 2004. Included in the packet with the survey was a cover letter explaining the purpose, intent, and use of the survey. For convenience of respondents, pre-addressed, stamped envelopes were used for returning the completed surveys. Confidentiality of responses was assured, and the privacy and confidentiality of individuals who completed the survey were protected. Numbers were assigned to participant surveys for identification purposes and color coded for determination of response. Appropriate follow-up procedures (including a second mailing after 14 days and post-card reminders) were used to prompt the pool of principals to complete and to

return the survey to the researcher. Five weeks after the surveys were mailed, the researcher called 15 elementary schools informing the secretary that a copy of the survey would be faxed to the school. The researcher stressed the importance of getting the principal to complete and fax the survey back.

Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive analyses, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to organize and to summarize the data. A reliability coefficient was computed for the *Principal Accountability Survey (PAS)*. Independent t-test procedures were used to determine differences among comparison groups. An alpha level of .05 was used in determining statistical significance. The *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) was used to analyze the data.

Findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4. A summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices by examining two groups of principals. Examined were a cadre of Georgia elementary school principals (N =82) whose schools made AYP during the 2002-2003 school year and a cadre of Georgia elementary school principals (N =68) whose schools did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year. The researcher sought to understand what accountability reform meant to participants and if this reform had changed their work as principals. The study also explored how principals are coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders. The researcher wanted to identify obstacles principals faced as they strove to achieve accountability mandates, and determine if there were differences in the perspectives of principals relative to their work in schools not did meet AYP to those principals of schools that did not met AYP. The major findings of the study are presented in this chapter. The survey response rate of the sample is presented in the first section. A demographic profile of respondents is presented in the second section. Research findings are presented in the third section.

The Principal Accountability Survey (PAS) was mailed to 258 (N=258) elementary school principals in the state of Georgia in which 129 were mailed to elementary principals of schools that did not meet AYP for the 2003 school year and 129 were mailed to elementary principals of schools that did meet AYP for the 2003 school year. After all follow up communication, 164 surveys were returned, equaling a 63.56% return rate. Of the returned surveys, 14 were unusable, because the surveys were returned "blank", equaling a return rate of 58%. Sixty-eight elementary principals of schools that did not meet AYP returned surveys for a

return rate of 52.71%, while 82 (*N*=82) elementary principals of schools that met AYP returned surveys for a return rate of 63.56%.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic information was collected about each of the elementary school principals including: (a) years served as a principal, (b) gender, (c) highest degree earned, and (d) number of years at the current site. The demographic information allowed the researcher to create a profile of the respondents and then to compare the responses from the various demographic groups.

Years served as principal was the first item addressed in the demographic section of the survey. The survey revealed that of the 150 elementary school principals that responded, 52 (34.67%) had served as a principal 3 years or less, 66 (44%) had served as a principal 4 to 10 years, 21 (14%) had served 11 to 20 years, and 11 (7.33%) had served 20 or more years. The data are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Frequency Distribution of Years Served as Principal

Years Served As Principal	Frequency	Percent
0-3 years	52	34
4-10 years	66	44
11-20 years	21	14
20+years	11	7

Gender was the second item addressed in the demographic section of the survey. The survey revealed that of the 150 elementary school principals that responded, 67 (45%) were male and 82 (55%) were female. The data are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Frequency Distribution by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	67	45
Female	83	55
Total	150	100

The next item addressed the highest degree earned by the surveyed principals. Of the 150

principals surveyed 1 (.7%) had a Bachelor's Degree, 17 (11.3%) had a Master's Degree, 107

(71.3%) had a Specialist in Education Degree, and 25 (16.7%) held a Doctorate Degree. The

data are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Frequency Distribution by Degree Level

Highest Degree Earned	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor	1	1
Masters	17	11
Specialist	107	71
Doctorate	25	16

The last demographic item asked elementary school principals the number of years they

had worked at their current site. Of those responding to this question, 53 (38.4%) had worked at

the current site 3 years or less, 59 (42.75%) had worked at the current site 4-10 years, 20

(14.49%) had worked at the current site 11-20 years, and 6 (4.34%) had served more than 20

years. The data are presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4

Frequency of Years at Current Site

Years at current site	Number of Years	Percent
0-3 years	53	38
4-10 years	59	42
11-20 years	20	14
20+years	6	4

Survey Analysis

Examined first were the descriptive information. The data in Table 4.5 included the frequency, mean, and standard deviation for each variable used in the analysis of the five-part Likert scale survey, the PAS. The variables were paired. Each question was answered by both groups of principals. The status of the school meeting or not meeting AYP served as the two conditions.

Table 4.5

Frequency, Mean, and Standard Deviation Scores From Survey of Principals that Met AYP (N=68) and Principals that Did Not Meet AYP (N=82)

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D.
1. The principal's vision guides the school program.							
Met AYP	0	0	5	24	52	4.58	.60
Did Not Meet AYP	1	0	3	25	39	4.48	.72
2. I am spending more time in classrooms monitoring instruction							
Met AYP	1	9	26	32	14	3.59	.94
Did Not Meet AYP	5	10	18	22	13	3.41	1.17

Table 4.5 (continued)

Frequency, Mean, and Standard Deviation Scores From Survey of Principals that Met AYP (N=68) and Principals that Did Not Meet AYP (N=82)

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D.
3. Communication with stakeholders is strained.							
Met AYP	32	27	12	7	2	4.00	1.06
Did Not Meet AYP	17	28	14	6	2	3.77	1.02
4. My faculty spends more time analyzing data.							
Met AYP	2	8	13	44	15	3.75	.95
Did Not Meet AYP	0	6	18	28	16	3.79	.90
5. I spend more time analyzing data.							
Met AYP	1	4	5	42	29	4.16	.84
Did Not Meet AYP	1	1	15	22	29	4.13	.91
6. The central office provides support and training for implementation of HB1187.							
Met AYP	2	7	24	31	18	3.68	.99
Did Not Meet AYP	2	5	19	24	18	3.75	1.02
7. The central office provides support and training for the implementation of *No Child Left Behind* mandates.							
Met AYP	0	9	20	31	22	3.80	.96
Did Not Meet AYP	2	2	19	22	22	3.89	1.00
8. Accountability mandates have changed our focus on school improvement.							
Met AYP	3	9	13	32	25	3.81	1.10
Did Not Meet AYP	4	3	9	26	26	3.98	1.11
9. The pressures of accountability have increased my stress level.							
Met AYP	2	9	11	26	34	2.01	1.10
Did Not Meet AYP	1	9	7	20	31	1.95	1.11

Table 4.5 (continued)

Frequency, Mean, and Standard Deviation Scores From Survey of Principals that Met AYP (N=68) and Principals that Did Not Meet AYP (N=82)

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D.
10. Time constraints are one of the obstacles I face.							
Met AYP	1	4	10	17	50	1.64	.96
Did Not Meet AYP	0	1	9	19	39	1.58	.77
11. I have often thought of leaving the principalship due to accountability mandates.							
Met AYP	30	20	11	8	13	3.56	1.46
Did Not Meet AYP	24	14	15	4	11	3.52	1.44
12. Accountability has changed my role as the leader of my school.							
Met AYP	8	16	17	24	17	3.31	1.27
Did Not Meet AYP	6	8	18	19	17	3.48	1.23
13. Accountability has diminished my role as the leader of my school.							
Met AYP	26	39	2	11	4	3.87	1.14
Did Not Meet AYP	23	24	6	11	4	3.75	1.25
14. Accountability mandates have affected staff morale.							
Met AYP	3	14	29	14	21	2.55	1.16
Did Not Meet AYP	1	13	13	21	20	2.32	1.13
15. Conflicting agendas interfere with the instructional program of my school.							
Met AYP	9	18	15	23	14	2.81	1.29
Did Not Meet AYP	1	13	21	13	20	2.44	1.15

In 10 of the paired samples, the mean was greater for principals of schools that met AYP.

In five of the paired samples, the mean was greater for principals of schools that did not meet

AYP. Overall, the principals' responses indicated that there were no significant difference

between the principals whose schools that met AYP and principals whose schools that did not

meet AYP. The determinations of statistically significant different scores are presented through

t-test results in later tables.

<div align="center">Research Questions and Hypotheses</div>

To be able to test the null hypothesis for each of the three research questions, descriptive

and inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics provided the mean and the standard

deviation. Inferential statistics were used to determine if the differences in the means were

statistically significant. Independent t-test procedures were used to determine differences among

comparison groups.

Research Question 1: How are principals coping with increased mandates for

accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

H_o1: There is no statistically significant difference in the instructional practices of

Georgia elementary school principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year

and Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-

2003 school.

In order to answer research Question 1, means and standard deviation were calculated for

the four questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that dealt with how accountability

mandates had changed the principals' work as instructional leaders. The mean of the principals

whose schools met AYP was 4.02 indicating that the principals agree that accountability had

changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The mean for the principals whose

schools did not meet AYP was 3.9 indicating that the principals agreed that accountability had

changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The standard deviation of the

principals whose schools met AYP was .54. The standard deviation of the principals whose

schools did not meet AYP was .57. The t-value for the items on the PAS pertaining to instruction was .-71 and the p-value was .478. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F* ratio of .481, which was not significant at the .05 level. Based on these results, H_o1 is accepted. The data are presented in Table 4.6

Table 4.6

T-test Descriptive Statistics for the Instruction Items on the PAS

Variable	Group	Number	X	SD	t	p
Instruction	Met AYP	80	4.02	.54	.-71	.478
	Did Not Meet AYP	68	3.9	.57		

Research Question 2 : What obstacles do principals face as they strive to achieve accountability mandates?

H_o2: There is no statistical significant difference between the principal's view of accountability mandates of Georgia elementary school principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year and Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year.

In order to answer research Question 2, means and standard deviation were calculated for the five questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that dealt with obstacles faced by principals. The t-value for the items on the PAS pertaining to obstacles faced was .-85 and the p-value was .392. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F* ratio of .000, which was not significant at the .05 level. Based on these results, H_o2 is accepted. The data are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

T-test Descriptive Statistics for the Obstacles Items on the PAS

Variable	Group	Number	X	SD	t	p
Obstacles	Met AYP	77	3.16	.58	.-85	.392
	Did Not Meet AYP	66	3.08	.57		

Research Question 3: Are their differences in the obstacles faced by principals relative to their work in schools that did meet AYP to those principals of schools that did not make AYP?

H$_o$3: There is no statistically significant difference between the obstacles Georgia elementary school principals faced whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year and the Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year.

In order to answer research Question 3, means and standard deviation were calculated for the six questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that dealt with accountability. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .51. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .56. The t-value for the items on the PAS pertaining to instruction was .-71 and the p-value was .478. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F* ratio of .070 which was not significant at the .05 level. Based on these results, H$_o$3 is accepted. The data are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

T-test Descriptive Statistics for the Accountability Items on the PAS

Variable	Group	Number	X	SD	t	p
Accountability	Met AYP	81	3.19	.51	.-268	.789
	Did Not Meet AYP	68	3.17	.56		

Open Ended Responses

The *PAS* instrument included two open-ended questions in which the participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

1.   How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional

leader?

2.   What obstacles do you face as a principal while striving to achieve

accountability mandates?

The researcher analyzed the open-ended responses by pulling all surveys from the respondents whose schools met AYP and wrote responses to these questions. Then, the *PAS* surveys from principals of schools that did not make AYP were pulled for analysis as well. In total, 115 of surveys had written responses. Of the 82 principals who were surveyed and whose schools made AYP, 62 wrote responses whereas of the 68 principals who did not make AYP, 53 wrote responses.

The data from the 62 principals whose schools did make AYP relative to the first question, "How have accountability mandates affected your role as instruction leader?" had a range of responses. The responses were catergorized nine broad categories: testing, data

analysis, paperwork, time constraints, pressure, stress, role as instructional leader, lack of

support, and low parental involvement. The responses are found in Appendix D.

The data from the 53 principals whose schools did not meet AYP relative to the first

open-ended question, "How have accountability mandates affected your role as instruction

leader" had a range of responses. The responses were categorized across seven broad categories:

testing, data analysis, paperwork, time constraints, pressure, stress, and role as an instructional

leader. The responses are found in Appendix E.

The data from the 62 principals whose schools met AYP relative to the second open-

ended question on the *PAS, "*What obstacles do you face as principal while striving to achieve

accountability mandates," had a range of responses. The responses were categorized around 10

broad topics: time issues, attendance issues, how to handle exceptional children, low parental

involvement, low morale, funding, availability of highly qualified teacher, management duties

conflicting with instructional duties, stress and bureaucracy were obstacles the respondents faced

while striving to achieve accountability mandates. The responses are reported in Appendix F.

Concerning the second open-ended question, "What obstacles do you face as a principal

while striving to achieve accountability mandates," responses of the principals whose schools

that did not meet AYP are indicated in Appendix G. The responses clustered around eight broad

topics: lack of time, attendance issues, how to handle exceptional children, low parental

involvement, low morale, funding, conflicting programs, and, availability of highly qualified

teachers.

In regard to the first open-response question, How have accountability mandates affected

your role as instructional leaders, there were similarities in the responses made by the two

groups. Many of the respondents agreed on 10 items, regardless of whether or not their schools

met AYP. The responses are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Similarities Across Groups to the Open-ended Question:
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?

Principals Whose Schools Met AYP	*Principals Whose Schools Did Not Make AYP*
Pressure to meet AYP	Pressure to meet AYP
Low teacher morale	Low teacher morale
Time constraints	Time constraints
Too much paperwork	Too much paperwork
Pressure to increase test scores	Pressure to increase test scores
Stress	Stress
Instruction is data driven	Instruction is data driven
Increased role as instructional leader	Increased role as instructional leader
Attendance	Attendance
Frustration	Frustration

In regard to the second open-ended question, "What obstacles do you face as a principal

while striving to achieve accountability mandates," there were similarities in the responses made

by the two groups. Many of the respondents agreed on eight items, regardless of whether or not

their schools met AYP. The responses are presented in Table 4.10

Table 4.10

Similarities Across Groups to Open-ended Question:
What obstacles do you face as principal while striving to achieve accountability mandates?

Principals Whose Schools Met AYP	*Principals Whose Schools Did Not Make AYP*
Lack of time	Lack of Time
Attendance	Attendance
How to handle exceptional children (e.g., Special education, ESOL)	How to handle exceptional children (e.g., Special education, ESOL)
Low morale (faculty, students, parents)	Low morale (faculty, students, parents)
Funding	Funding
Availability of high quality teachers	Availability of high quality teachers

Table 4.10 (continued)

Similarities Across Groups to Open-ended Question:
What obstacles do you face as principal while striving to achieve accountability mandates?

Principals Whose Schools Met AYP	*Principals Whose Schools Did Not Make AYP*
Management duties conflict with instructional duties	Management duties conflict with instructional duties
Low Parental Involvement	Low parental involvement

Chapter 5 follows with the summary, conclusions, and recommendations. Further,

Chapter 5 provides insights into the findings of the present study in relation to the reviewing

literature in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECCOMENDATIONS

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study are presented in this chapter. This chapter is organized into seven sections including (a) summary of purpose, (b) summary of procedures, (c) summary of descriptive data, (d) summary of findings, (e) conclusions, (f) recommendations, and (g) implications.

Restatement of the Research Question

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices by examining two groups of principals. The researcher sought to understand what accountability reform has meant to participants, and if this reform has changed their work as principals. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

2. What obstacles do principals face as they strive to achieve accountability mandates?

3. Are their differences in the obstacles faced by principals relative to their work in schools that did meet AYP to those principals of schools that did not make AYP?

The population for this study was composed of a sampling of public elementary school principals in the state of Georgia whose schools did and did not make AYP for the 2002-2003 school year.

Summary of Procedures

For the purposes of this study, a descriptive, non-experimental approach was used to provide a database to examine the relationship of the accountability system to the principals' instructional leadership practices. A cross-sectional survey design was used to measure elementary principals perspectives about accountability (Creswell, 2002). The study design relied on a mailed survey to collect data.

The surveys were mailed to 258 elementary school principals in the state of Georgia including, 129 principals whose schools made AYP during the 2002-2003 school year and 129 principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-2003 school year. Of the 258 elementary school principals invited to participate, 164 completed and returned useable surveys, equaling a return rate of 63.56%. Of the surveys returned, 14 were returned blank. There were 150 useable surveys for a response rate of 58.13%.

The *Principals Accountability Survey* consisted of three parts (see Appendix B). The demographic section of the survey included data on the principal's years of experience as a principal, the gender of the principal, and the highest degree earned by the principal. The demographic information was collected to determine characteristics of the respondents. The second part of the instrument contained items concerning accountability, the work of the principal, and job stressors based on the review of literature in Chapter 2. Participants were asked to rate each item based on a five-point Likert scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. The third part of the survey asked principals to respond to two open ended questions. Open-ended question allowed the participants to create a response within their cultural and social experiences instead of the researcher's experiences (Neuman, 2000).

The *Principals Accountability Survey* along with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study was mailed in April 2002 to 129 elementary school principals whose schools made AYP and 129 principals of schools that did not make AYP in the state of Georgia. A friendly reminder was sent to all non-respondents at the end of the two-week deadline. The researcher received 150 useable surveys. The data were analyzed using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS). An alpha of $p<.05$ were used to determine statistical significance.

<center>Summary of Descriptive Data</center>

The demographic information collected for each elementary school principal with the survey included: (a) number of years served as principal, (b) gender, (c) highest degree earned, and (d) number of years at the current site. Internal consistency estimates were calculated using coefficient alpha. More than half (55%) of the respondents were female. At least 87% of the principals held the Specialist in Education Degree. A small percentage of responding principals had more than 10 years experience as a principal. Over half, 78%, had served less than 11 years as principal. Only a small percentage of responding principals (4%) had worked at their current site more than 20 years.

<center>Summary of Findings</center>

The following summarizes the findings for each of the research questions and null hypothesis as a result of the statistical tests that were calculated by using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS).

Research Question 1

How are principals coping with increased mandates for accountability and the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders?

H_o1 (Null Hypothesis #1)

<center>56</center>

H_o1: There is no statistically significant difference in the instructional practices of

Georgia elementary school principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year

and Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make AYP during the 2002-

2003 school.

In summary, elementary school principals' instructional practices are the same whether or

not their schools met AYP. In order to answer research Question 1, means and standard

deviation were calculated for the four questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that

dealt with how accountability mandates had changed the principals' work as instructional

leaders. The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 4.02 indicating that the

principals agreed that accountability had changed the nature of their work as instructional

leaders. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.9. The standard

deviation of the principals whose schools met AYP was .54. The standard deviation of the

principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .57. The t-value for the items on the PAS

pertaining to instruction was. -71 and the p-value was .478. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F*

ratio of .481, which was not significant at the .05 level. Based on these results, H_o1 is accepted.

The data were presented in Table 4.6

Research Question 2

What obstacles do principals face as they strive to achieve accountability

 mandates?

H<u>$_o$2 (Null Hypothesis #2)</u>

H_o2: There is no statistically significant difference between the principal's view of

accountability mandates of Georgia elementary school principals whose schools met AYP for the

2002-2003 school year and Georgia elementary school principals whose schools did not make

AYP during the 2002-2003 school year. In summary, elementary school principals faced the

same obstacles surrounding accountability whether or not their schools did or did not meet AYP.

In order to answer research Question 2, means and standard deviation were calculated for the

five questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that dealt with obstacles faced by

principals. The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 3.16 indicating that the

principals somewhat agreed about some of the obstacles faced as they strove to achieve

accountability mandates. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.08

indicating that the principals somewhat agreed about some of the obstacles faced as they strove

to achieve accountability mandates. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools met

AYP was .58. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was

.57. The t-value for the items on the PAS pertaining to obstacles faced was. -85 and the p-value

was .392. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F* ratio of .000, which was not significant at the .05

level. Based on these results, H_o2 is accepted. The data were presented in Table 4.7.

Research Question 3

        Are their differences in the obstacles faced by principals relative to their work in schools

that did meet AYP to those principals of schools that did not make AYP?

$\underline{H_o3 \text{ (Null Hypothesis \#3)}}$

        There is no significant difference between the obstacles Georgia elementary school

principals whose schools made AYP for the 2002-2003 school year faced and Georgia

elementary principals whose schools did not make AYP faced during the 2002-2003 school year.

        In summary, the obstacles elementary school principals' faced were the same whether or

not their schools met AYP. In order to answer research Question 3, means and standard

deviation were calculated for the six questions on the *Principals Accountability Survey* that dealt

with accountability. The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 3.19 indicating that the principals agreed that accountability had changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.17 indicating that the principals agreed that accountability had changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .51. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .56. The t-value for the items on the PAS pertaining to instruction was. -71 and the p-value was .478. The one-way ANOVA yielded an *F* ratio of .070 which was not significant at the .05 level. Based on these results, H_o3 is accepted. The data were presented in Table 4.8.

It is interesting to note that the open-ended responses to the question, "What obstacles do you face as principal while striving to achieve accountability mandates," indicated strong similarities to the obstacles faced by both the principals whose schools made AYP and those whose schools did not make AYP. Table 4.14 highlights the similarity of responses among the two groups of principals.

<div align="center">Conclusions and Discussion</div>

After analyzing the data, the following conclusions were made:

Conclusion 1

Within this study, the instructional practices of elementary school principals' have changed regardless of whether or not their schools met AYP. The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 4.02 indicating that the principals agree that accountability had changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.9. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools met AYP was .54. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .57.

Data from the open-ended responses were analyzed and from what was self-reported, the changes appear to cluster around, pressure to meet AYP, low teacher morale, time constraints, too much paperwork, pressure to increase test scores, stress, data driven instruction, increased role as instructional leader, attendance, and frustration. Principals are analyzing data and using the data to direct the school program, and they are spending more time in class monitoring data but spending less time with curricular issues. Sebring and Bryk (2000) pointed out several features that characterize the leadership style of principals of productive schools. Inclusive principals are facilitative orientated. They focus on student learning. They are efficient managers, and they rely on a combination of pressure and support to motivate others. Principals of productive schools have a vision for their schools. Clark and Thomas (2001) found that the most important role is undoubtedly that of leader in curriculum improvement. However, the open-ended responses indicated that these principals were focused more on monitoring teacher performance than on student learning or the overall direction of the curricular program.

Goldring and Pasternak (1994) found that the principal's role in framing school goals, establishing a clear mission, and gaining staff consensus were stronger predictors of school outcomes than other instructional or managerial activities. Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins, and Dart (1993) found that principal vision, group goals, high expectations, and individual support have effects on several in-school processes such as goal formulation, school culture, teachers, and policy. Leithwood et al. concluded that these factors influenced school improvement outcomes including achieving school reform goals, enacting policy, and enacting organizational change. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) asserted that effective school principals maintained a strong task orientation where their focus was on the development of curriculum and instruction rather than on management or human relations' activities.

Conclusion 2

From prior research, findings indicate that principals are feeling the pressure of accountability more than anyone else especially given AYP (Association of Washington School Administrators, 1999). Adding to the pressure, local school boards and superintendents are putting more immediate pressure on the principal (Tucker & Codding, 2002) in an effort to realize higher levels of student achievement. Principals agree that accountability mandates have changed their focus to school improvement. Accountability has increased their stress level, changed their role as the leader of the school, and affected staff morale. These finding were illuminated repeatedly in the open-ended responses of the principals regardless if their respective schools achieved AYP or not during the 2002-2003 school year.

The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 3.16 indicating that the principals somewhat agreed about some of the obstacles they faced while they strove to achieve accountability mandates. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.08 indicating that the principals somewhat agreed about some of the obstacles faced as they strove to achieve accountability mandates. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools met AYP was .58. The standard deviation of the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .57.

The pressures of accountability test scores, the media, parents, legislators, and outside special interest groups can be overwhelming and the open-ended frequency in which the principals commented about these pressures were noteworthy. The principalship is a challenging job, and the principal is faced with the competing demands of meeting local school needs while also complying with centrally imposed directives (Wildy & Louden, 2000).

Empirical research on principals' instructional management activity is inconclusive and contradictory (Hallinger & Heck, 1996); yet, principal accountability for student achievement continues to increase (Boyd, 1996; Duffy, 1997; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994). Current reform initiatives call for greater accountability on the part of the school, and these initiatives now mandate a key role for principal leadership (Wolf et al., 2000). Principals find themselves in the "eye of the storm" as a society conditioned by instant gratification and change expects immediate results from the latest reform effort (Copeland, 2001; Donaldson, 2002; Taylor & Williams, 2001). The position of principal is the only legislated position held accountable for increased student achievement since the inception of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

Conclusion 3

Elementary school principals face many obstacles relative to their work. The respondents agreed that time restraints, conflicting agendas, support from the central office, and communication with stakeholders were obstacles they faced. The mean of the principals whose schools met AYP was 3.19 indicating that the principals agreed that accountability has changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The mean for the principals whose schools did not meet AYP was 3.17 indicating that the principals agreed that accountability has changed the nature of their work as instructional leaders. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .51. The standard deviation of principals whose schools did not meet AYP was .56.

Principals deal with conflict, stress, and myriad external forces and expectations that affect their performance (Drake & Roe, 1996). Dwindling resources, burgeoning paperwork, crumbling facilities, increasing public criticisms and expectations, growing numbers of students with special needs, and increasing demands by teachers and parents pose serious challenges to

principals (Davis, 1998). Even the most skilled and experienced principals run the risk of failing

in their jobs as a result of actions, events, or outcomes over which they may not always have

direct control (Deal & Peterson, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1995). Although there were no statistical

differences between the principals whose schools met or did not meet AYP relative to how they

are coping with increased mandates for accountability, the changing nature of their work as

instructional leaders, and the obstacles they faced while striving to achieve accountability

mandates, both groups wrote in detail about their struggles with time, the special education

population, lack of parental involvement, low teacher morale, low funds, stress, and lack of

support personnel.

> One principal of a school that did meet AYP detailed:

> Time constraints and teacher morale are critical issues. We have spent countless hours
> with curriculum mapping. As soon as we have it refined, standards and textbooks
> change. It is also difficult to prepare adequate situations when funding system is not
> consistent and the ability to prepare for the next school term is difficult due to test results
> not being ready.

> Another principal of a school that met AYP wrote:

> Some areas are difficult to make improvement-attendance and special education.
> Changes and lack of flexibility add to stress for all. Lack of sense of fairness adds to
> stress.

> One principal of a school that did not meet AYP wrote, "Mandates are unrealistic. They

lack common sense." Another principal of a school that did not meet AYP wrote:

> In regards to obstacles faced, it's difficult trying to be sure we are following all
> guidelines, and trying to find highly qualified teachers in special education, art, music,
> etc. Keeping morale of teachers and staff. Lack of funding for mandates is also a
> problem.

> Another principal of a school that did not meet AYP listed the biggest obstacles faced:

> CRCT test administered-while local recreation department starts ball. Students not
> getting enough rest. Families who do not value high standards. More legal issues with
> children-custody guardianship-Who's taking care of the children? Poverty, students with

weak language vocabulary development. Conflicting philosophies-CRCT-2hrs/day—too much for 6 year olds.

During the movement to improve schools, principals are increasingly responsible for student achievement as measured by external standards, and standardized test scores are now a basis for judging a principal's ability to lead (Gilman & Givens, 2001). For example, one principal whose school did met AYP indicated:

Much of our staff development, faculty meetings, etc., are driven by test score interpretation, standards, etc. Little time is left for individual school philosophies.

Another respondent whose schools did not meet AYP wrote:

The stress of improving test scores and attendance affects the entire school climate. Student attendance is not something we can control, however, when attendance is down, we are labeled failures.

Another principal whose schools did not meet AYP detailed:

There is a cloud of negativity that seems to impact everything I/we do. Parents are suspicious and afraid. Teacher morale is low. Our excellent school reputation is tarnished. Nothing seems to matter except test scores and attendance.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Additional study is needed in the area of principals and efforts at leading schools toward AYP. Current researcher finds it difficult to determine the direct effects of effective school leadership and student achievement related to reaching AYP. This study addressed three important issues regarding the principal: instructional practices, accountability, and obstacles faced in schools that did or did not meet AYP, and the direct or indirect affects of the principal related to AYP, however, the effects of the principal on student achievement was out of the scope of this research. Therefore, such future studies should be considered in order to identify and measure attributes, qualities, and skills of principals and how these, when combined affect:

1) school improvement, 2) attainment, 3) myriad other factors including but not limited to student achievement, teacher morale and turnover, and meeting federally imposed guidelines such as in state and federal legislation.

Recommendation 2

A replication of the study in other states may prove beneficial. Replication would provide data that could be compared with the data generated from this study in which only selct elementary school principals were surveyed. As the study examined the perceptions of elementary school principals in Georgia, it is recommended that the perceptions of Georgia middle and high school principals also be surveyed regarding accountability.

Recommendation 3

A follow-up study employing qualitative methods needs to be done. This recommendation is based on the number of the comments the participants wrote to the two open-ended questions. The perspectives of selected participants would help to shape further research while illuminating more fully the differences between principals and their work in schools that did or did not make AYP.

Recommendation 4

In light of the open-ended responses, the researcher realized that the wrong questions may have been asked based on the responds given to the open-ended questions. The questions should have asked who has specifically caused the nature of work to changed, what have been the most significant changes in the work of the principal, why and how has the work changed, and if the work would have changed without legislation. Also, what kind of effect has the nature of the work had on student achievement and the education process.

Implications

The findings of the study may assist examining the effects of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices, how principals are coping with increased mandates for accountability, the changing nature of their work as instructional leaders, and what obstacles principals face as they strive to achieve accountability mandates. Professors at institutions of higher education could find the results of this study useful in training their students to become elementary school administrators. The findings indicate that all elementary schools principals share the same perceptions regarding accountability regardless of whether or not their school met AYP.

The stakes for principal accountability relative to increased levels of student achievement are spelled out in the *No Child Left Behind Act* that mandates corrective action for schools that fail to make improvement. The primary result for a principal in a school that fails to make AYP is a significant decrease in the authority of the principal. Yet, principals in both schools that met and did not meet AYP expressed through open-ended responses that their authority was, at times, being compromised by directives "from above" with expectations to implement programs based on "test score performance."

The attributes of leadership effectiveness do not guarantee success, are not uniformly present in all leaders, and do not appear among leaders in any formulaic combination; however, all principals are held to the same standards. (Sergiovanni, 1995) The results of this research suggests that principals, whether or not their schools made AYP, did face equally changes in their work as instructional leaders. The next steps are to discover the finite nuances of these changes and to determine if these changes in practice make a difference.

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APPENDIX A

GEORGIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN COUNTIES WITH SCHOOLS

THAT DID NOT MAKE AYP FOR THE 2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR

County/ City	Number of Elementary Schools N=1038	Number of Elementary Schools not meeting AYP N=141
Appling	3	1
Atlanta City	64	5
Bacon	1	1
Baldwin	5	1
Bartow	11	1
Bibb	27	7
Buford City	1	1
Brantley	4	2
Bulloch	9	1
Camden	9	4
Candler	1	1
Carroll	9	1
Carollton City	1	1
Catossa	9	1
Charlton	3	2
Chatham	30	2
Cherokee	21	3

County/ City	Number of Elementary Schools N=1038	Number of Elementary Schools not meeting AYP N=141
Clayton	30	1
Clinch	2	1
Cobb	61	2
Colquitt	10	2
Columbia	14	2
Dekalb	80	5
Early	1	1
Emanuel	3	1
Evans	1	1
Fulton	48	5
Gilmer	4	1
Gordon	5	1
Grady	5	1
Gwinnett	49	5
Hall	19	1
Haralson	4	1
Jeff Davis	2	2
Jefferson	2	1
Johnson	1	1

APPENDIX A, continued

County/ City	Number of Elementary Schools *N*=1038	Number of Elementary Schools not meeting AYP *N=141*
Lumpkin	3	1
Meriwether	3	1
Murray	5	2
Muscogee	30	4
Peach	3	1
Putnam	1	1
Richmond	35	18
Rockdale	11	1
Rome City	8	1
Screven	1	1
Social Circle City	2	1
Stephens	4	1
Stewart	1	1
Tattnall	3	1
Taylor	1	1
Telfair	2	1
Thomaston-Upson	3	1
Thomasville City	3	3
Tift	8	2

APPENDIX A, continued

County/ City	Number of Elementary Schools N=1038	Number of Elementary Schools not meeting AYP $N=141$
Troup	12	3
Twiggs	2	2
Union	3	2
Valdosta City	6	2
Walton	8	1
Ware	6	2
Wayne	5	2
Wheeler	1	1
Wilcox	1	1
Wilkerson	2	1
Worth	3	2

Source: Georgia Department of Education

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY SURVEY

Part 1: **Demographics—Please check the appropriate response for each question that best answers that question.**

1. How many years have you served as principal? _____
2. Gender?   a. Male___   b. Female_____
3. Highest degree earned?
   a. Bachelor   _____   c. Specialist_____
   b. Masters _____   d. Doctorate_____
4. Number of Years at the Current Site? _____

Part 2:   **On a scale from 1 to 5, please circle your answer to the following questions.**

1=Strongly Disagree   2=Disagree   3=Somewhat Agree   4=Agree   5=Strongly Agree

1. The principal's vision guides the school program	1 2 3 4 5
2. I am spending more time in classrooms monitoring instruction	1 2 3 4 5
3. Communication with stakeholders is strained.	1 2 3 4 5
4. My faculty spends more time analyzing test data.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I spend more time analyzing test data	1 2 3 4 5
6. The central office provides support and training for implementation of HB 1187.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The central office provides support and training for the implementation *No Child Left Behind* mandates.	1 2 3 4 5
8. Accountability mandates have changed our focus on school improvement.	1 2 3 4 5
9. The pressures of accountability have increased my stress level.	1 2 3 4 5
10. Time constraints are one of the obstacles I face.	1 2 3 4 5
11. I have often thought of leaving the principalship due to accountability mandates.	1 2 3 4 5
12. Accountability has changed my role as the leader of my school.	1 2 3 4 5
13. Accountability has diminished my role as the leader of my school	1 2 3 4 5
14. Accountability mandates have affected staff morale.	1 2 3 4 5
15. Conflicting agendas interfere with the instructional program of my school	1 2 3 4 5

Part 3: **Please respond to the following questions (use the back of this sheet or attach a separate sheet of paper).**

16. How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?
17. What obstacles do you face as a principal while striving to achieve accountability mandates?

COVER LETTER

March 21, 2004

Dear Principal:

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Administration and Policy at the University of Georgia. I am seeking your assistance in a doctoral study entitled, *Perspectives of Elementary School Principals on Accountability.* The Principal Accountability Survey has been sent to two groups of principals in Georgia. The first group consists of 141 principals whose schools did not meet AYP in 2002-2003, and the second group consists of 141 principals whose schools did meet AYP in 2002-2003. The study examines the effect of accountability on principals' instructional leadership practices in light of accountability. If you have any questions about the study or survey please feel free to contact me at 478-xxx-xxxx.

The time required to complete the enclosed survey should be no more than 10 minutes. Participation is voluntary. Your participation in this study will be confidential and individuals will not be identifiable in the study's findings. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits from your participation because this is simply an assessment study and not a treatment study. Feel free to skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

Please complete the survey and return no later than April 17, 2004, in the enclosed envelope. If you choose not to participate, I am asking that you please return the blank survey. In the event I do not hear from you, I will follow up with a friendly reminder. Your participation will remain confidential and all responses will be kept indefinitely by the researcher and the researchers' Major Professor Sally Zepeda. Data will be retained for future use. The future use includes a study of principals across several states and data from this study will only be aggregated by states not by individual schools or school systems. Thank you in advance for participating in this research project that serves as part of my doctoral dissertation under the direction of my major professor, Dr. Sally J. Zepeda of the Department of Educational Administration and Policy.

If you have questions about the research, please contact me by mail or e-mail at the following address: Jacqueline D. Jackson, Principal, Appling Middle School, 1211 Shurling Drive, Macon, GA 31211, jjackson.appling@bibb.k12.ga.us, Office Phone, (478) 751-6751. You may also contact my major professor and Doctoral Committee Chair: Dr. Sally J. Zepeda, 706-542-0408.

Thank you,

Jacqueline Jackson

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, PhD, Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, GA 30602-7411; Telephone 706.542.3199

ACCOUNTABILITY MANDATES AND ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS FOR PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS MET AYP

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Met AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Testing** The role of the principal has shifted. We now must make AYP in order to show to state/ federal sources that instruction is taking place. There is less time to view the entire education process. The focus is making AYP passing CRCT. The mandates have not changed my role. As an administrator my role has always been focused on student achievement. What has changed is the way I look at instructional time. We do not want to waste a minute of instruction. I have had to deal with "test stress" for children and teachers on a much greater scale now that children will be retained for not meeting the standard. There are a lot of "threats: given to teachers if their students do not meet the standard. I have tried to place checkpoints throughout the year. So that we can assess where students are (skill-wise) so that we can do better job of accelerating the students toward skill mastery. I try to be more proactive instead of reactive. Much of our staff development, faculty meetings, etc., are driven by test score interpretation, standards, etc. Little time is left for individual school philosophies. More concern for details of testing and less for overall emphasis on instruction. The entire focus on educating children has shifted to the test.

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Met AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Testing** I am pressured to deal more with test scores and less with children as people. Federal and state government specialists believe that successful testing will result in successful schools. While I strive for academic excellence, I also strongly believe in the concept of teaching children. Accountability related to one-test forces many to teach to a test instead of teaching to students. It has made me more aware and I push ways to increase our test scores. **Data Analysis** I am more focused on data driven instruction and on providing appropriate professional development to our staff. I am very conscious of staff morale and how to maintain it. I am data driven and everything that we implement at the school is research based. Made me more aware of data use. Made me focus on test taking more closely. It does encourage me to be in the classrooms more, assess student data more, and focus on training for the teachers more. It has bought focus to our school improvement plan for academic achievement. It's made me pay more attention to the teachers' use of data analysis for planning instruction.

Appendix D (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Met AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Paperwork** I spend too much time on bureaucratic paperwork. More paperwork, more frustration. System mandates have required more paperwork, which has caused my position to put more of the instruction leadership aspects on my instructional specialist. I feel as I do more paperwork and attend more meetings instead of being with my students. **Time Constraints** Less time to work with day-to-day functions of the school **Pressure** They have added pressure to my role. However, I feel accountability mandates are needed. Principals need to expand their learning curves. I have to put more pressure on teachers. **Stress** Stress levels are higher among teachers and students. The students are stressing out over the test. The stress and pressure has taken some of the pleasure of my role because I love to be in the classroom and I have much less of that now. We get conflicting information from the state dept. All the time depending on who you talk to. The central office is confused also. The teachers are frustrated and parents are angry. **Role as an Instructional Leader** They have forced me to focus on smaller subgroups rather than on general school improvement efforts. I have to take a more active role in instructional leadership-meet with the teachers more, conduct staff development, and training.

Appendix D (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Met AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Role as an Instructional Leader** I have become an expert in reading instruction and in curriculum implementation, so my job is spent 70% of these with 30% left for everything else. Made it easier for me to promote academic programs. Made it seem that my evaluation as a principal is based on test scores. Made it necessary for me to reassure good teachers. I am more aware of what is needed for AYP success. I am more aware of teaching styles. It has given me more time to be an instructional leader. Focusing every minute in instruction and student achievement. My work has not changed because we have held ourselves accountable long before these mandates. The focus is taken away from learning. The flexibility for professional creativity to lead in projects promoting learning for students is diminished. Red tape (increase) interferes with instruction, planning, and classroom observation. Prior to HB 1187, I was involved in curriculum decisions and active in planning for grants, textbooks, etc. My role has not changed drastically. I feel that we are focusing so much on accountability issues that we sometimes overlook good, solid instruction. My expectations are higher for all students.

Appendix D (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Met AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Role as an Instructional Leader** Because of the various reports and meeting required, I feel that my visibility has diminished significantly. I am not able to get out of the office as much as needed. I have always been a "hands-on" principal and very mandates involved. The mandates have ensured that we focus on the right things. **Lack of Support** I'm sure each county is different, but here there's no stability in polices and procedures for meeting accountability. The money rules the procedures, even the state. **Low Parental Involvement** Have monitored attendance more closely and sent letters advising parents of excessive absences incurred by their children. Also, having to notify parents of 15-day limit.

APPENDIX E

ACCOUNTABILITY MANDATES AND ROLE AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS FOR

PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS DID NOT MEET AYP

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Testing** Accountability does not bother me; it is the labeling of failing schools of certain subgroups that do not meet expectations. There is a cloud of negativity that seems to impact everything I/we do. Parents are suspicious and afraid. Teacher morale is low. Our excellent school reputation is tarnished. Nothing seems to matter except test scores and attendance. **Data Analysis** Analyzing test data, curriculum/program shifts to match testing. It has prompted me to spend more time analyzing our test data for our instructional strengths and weaknesses. I analyze data and use the results to help teachers prepare instruction. We utilize assessment more in the classrooms and not so much as evaluative grades. We utilize the Brazosport Model for decision-making and school improvement. The principal can no longer be the manager He/she must be teacher, leader, coach mediator, problem solver, analyst, and student. The principal must shift his or her focus toward effective teaching and learning, monitoring the process, collecting and analyzing the data, and instructional planning.

Appendix E (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Paperwork**

Paperwork

My expectations remain extremely high-with or without the accountability mandates. I now have to ease the worry of faculty members and continue to model a positive outlook. There is a a lot of paperwork.

Rather than implementing a plan for reform and serving as the instructional leader of my school, I spent the first month of the school fielding AYP cells from parents. I also drafted a lengthy appeal for which I received a one-sentence reply. I also spent 3 months drafting a restructuring plan with guidelines that changed frequently.

Paperwork, meetings—not enough time to be instructional leader.

Time Constraints

I spend more time behind the computer and less time with students or staff.

Demands on my time have adversely affected my role.

I have less time to observe in classrooms. I have much more documentation to do.

Endless meetings with *NCLB* support staff, endless paperwork-*EIP*, Title I, *NSSE* improvement plans, *NCLB* improvement plans, and school council questions.

Less time to complete needed assignments.

I have to answer to places that take time. We wrote a restructuring plan that required a trip out of town and lots of work just to complete the document. I know it was to help focus the purpose of the school, but it didn't work that way. We have lots of staff wanting to leave as they feel we will be restructured and they might lose their job.

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Time Constraints** Less time in classrooms. Accountability mandates haven't changed what we do that much. We were already doing many of the things that were mandated, it just forces us to spend a lot of our time writing plans or take time from importance tasks. Time out of the building has increased (meetings/trainings associated with *NCLB*/ school improvement) more directives from central office and others, which impact time. **Pressure** More pressure to meet AYP…less time to spend with students. More pressure on staff. More pressure, my time for management (physical operation) of the school has diminished. Better time management. Assigned duties are more closely thought out. Increased pressure to achieve AYP; increased time spend on seeking resources to address areas of weakness; increased time spent on instructional strategies that work. Spend more time on paperwork. More meetings. **Stress** The stress of improving test scores and attendance affects the entire school climate. Student attendance is not something we can control, however, when attendance is down, we are labeled failures. Even though they have added more stress, I think our focus is more on helping our at-risk students.

Appendix E (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Stress** Accountability measures tying your hands and beating your with a stick. Added stress mostly. I have always been the instructional leader of the school and continue to be. We continue to analyze the many assessments we have in place. The mandates have caused more stress, paperwork, and lower teacher morale. A heightened level of stress and frustration. **Role as an Instructional Leader** The role has changed to one of mentor and facilitator of change. More staff meetings are spent focused on data analysis, instructional focus, and book studies. I'm retiring. I can no longer face my wonderful staff and present one more program I'm suppose to believe in. Local superintendent chose a "scripted" reading program for K-5 schools. I must oversee teachers reporting (testing) timed drills in reading into a database. The mandates are a part of a system to ensure that students require the instructional quality that our tax dollars pay for. Accountability has made me take a greater role as the instructional leader. I find myself conducting staff development meetings with the teachers. Also, attending more team planning to be sure that teachers have a clear understanding of accountability. It keeps me in tune to how we're meeting the needs of our students. It has helped me strengthen my involvement with curriculum and instruction. The focus is on instruction.

Appendix E (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Role as an Instructional Leader** I love the mandates because they focus my attention and priorities on what really counts- student achievement. Attendance mandates and expectations are unrealistic and unfair. Accountability should be academic achievement only. Accountability has not greatly impacted teacher morale or my role as an instructional leader. My role has always been focused on student achievement. Now, I have to focus on specific areas that include attendance, percentage of students taking tests, and achievement of various groups as opposed to all students. I have a more active role. Mandates make you better. They provide a direction- a check and balance system. Accountability has forced me to become much more involved in the instructional area whereas before principals in general could be more of a manager of the school. I value more time spent visiting classrooms and working with new staff. Veteran teachers are leaving rapidly. New folks must be trained. Too much paperwork — stuff that does not improve students learning or achievement. I have to spend more time addressing issues that are in reality not associated with improving instruction. No at all. I have always held high expectations for student achievement and diligently provide support to meet and exceed goals.

Appendix E (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Question	Responses
How have accountability mandates affected your role as instructional leader?	**Role as an Instructional Leader** I am forced to concentrate on technical problems to fix things rather than on adaptive problems. Adaptive problems are what we are faced with, but the time limitations force me to use only technical fixes. I have become more of an instructional leader. In my earlier years as principal, I was less involved in the curriculum and more of a manager. It has caused me to continue what I was already doing as an instructional leader adhering to the America's Choice Design. We need to be more accountable. It makes me more aware of what I need to do as a leader.

APPENDIX F

OBSTACLES FACED BY PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS DID MET AYP

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Time Issues	Lack of time to do an excellent job with all the multitude of other interruptions
	Time, money, parents not having a clue about what we have to do with their children to meet mandates. People distancing themselves from the problems. Politics.
	Time issues and low achieving students that do not qualify for special education services.
	Time constraints and teacher morale are critical issues. We have spent countless hours with curriculum mapping. As soon as we have it refined, standards and textbooks change. It is also difficult to prepare adequate situations when funding system is not consistent and the ability to prepare for the next school term is difficult due to test results not being ready.
	The data that could help is too slow in coming. The impression is that schools are failing kids, which isn't true.
	Need for more administrators to handle issues during the school day.
	Lack of time to "get it all done"!
	Time constraints and money issues
	Times and deadlines; trying to keep staff morale boosted; and explaining reasons to parents, students, and staff that I do not necessarily understand clearly.
	Finding time for needed training, being taken away from doing things that need to be done.

Appendix F (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Time Issues	Time issues; some mandates too rigid (i.e. Testing MIID students on grade level); socioeconomic issues (i.e., education is a low priority for many of our families)
	Time is an obvious constraint. Beyond time constraints, lack of clarity from the Department of Education about mandates and AYP causes frustration.
	Spending too much time focusing on testing
	"Constant" AYP. How do you reach the goal with changes? Obstacles-time, personnel, space.
	More demands and less time. It's difficulty to put greater demands on elementary teachers who have less than 2 hours a week planning time. We also need to ensure parent accountability
	I spend too much time on bureaucratic paperwork.
Attendance Issues	
	The rules continue to change and evolve. It's like hitting a moving target. Attendance mandates are requiring vast amounts of energy and time. This is definitely taking away our focus at the local level. Lack of funding to achieve the requirements. Lack of leadership from the state DOE.
	Mandates such, as attendance percentiles in which we have no real control over is frustrating. It would also be great to have consistent data (testing) from one year to the next so that we could better track progress.
	The constant change in accountability requirements. The lack of awareness that other factors affect students, factors that have to be addresses regardless of accountability such as attendance, neglect, etc.

Appendix F (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Attendance Issues	We have struggled with low attendance and the problem with the mindset of the parents who are responsible for getting children up and to school. When we send attendance letters, they get offended very easily.
Exceptional Children	At my school the greatest problem is getting help for my slow learners (IQ 85-75). They seem to be able to handle the K-2 curriculum, but struggle with the 4th/5th curriculum. They don't quality for special services, yet are behind the general population because they require more time to learn the concepts. The most unfortunate thing that I see is the fact that we are glad to see "slow learners" move to another school. We need to see children as children not as a number that score against our school population or "sub-pops".
	The major obstacle is the attempt to bring at least 60% of special education students up to grade level. It is shortsighted, discriminatory and in violation of IDEA.
	ESOL-having to teach English as well as subject matter to newly arrived immigrants.
	Special education children will never meet the goals, especially the MI's and MO's.
Low Parental Involvement	Public perception and community facts. No parent component-everything is left up to the school as to improve student achievement.
	Parental involvement, student discipline, and helping teachers deal with students in poverty.
	Parents' perception that attendance is not important.

Appendix F (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Low Parental Involvement	Parents having students in school and on time and the problem of lower functioning students mastering skills.
	The main obstacle is dealing with parents. Seldom do public schools get the support of parents when disciplining their child for behavior reasons.
Low Morale	Staff morale, community understanding and input, elevating teachers' expectations, "mandating" differentiated instruction, and time management.
	The biggest is apathetic parents or those who don't understand what it takes to ensure achievement for their children.
	Teachers not wishing to change teaching techniques or belief system regarding what students can or cannot do.
	Making sure that the implementations of our school's reforms are carried out by all teachers. Some teachers do not "buy-in" to change.
	Ways to motivate staff
	Morale, stress, money
	Being careful not to overwhelm teachers
	Keeping teachers focused on QCC and their new responsibilities. For instance, the grade 3 tests, is now for promotion. Who is here to follow up? When our year is over, I'm out of the building for the summer. No more volunteer hours for me or my staff.
	Low morale
	Cutting teacher slots

Appendix F (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Funding	Cuts in our funding has increased our class size at a time when it needs to be lower for instruction of at-risk students; Cuts in resource; Responsible for too much.
	Shortage of resources
	Not enough money, no planning time for elementary teachers, not enough office or support personnel.
	Budget restraints; High number of socio-economically deprived students
	Lack of resources
	No funding mandates
	Some initiatives such as lower class size, which would have helped have been abandoned. Less money has mandated cuts in personnel, which will eventually affect test scores. Others areas over which we have little control, such as attendance, take energies and focus away from academic achievement.
Management Duties Conflicting with Instructional Duties	Being able to find the time to stay in classrooms where I could be more beneficial improving instruction.
	Need for more administrators to handle issues during the school day.
Stress	Teacher stress
	Some areas are difficult to make improvement-attendance and special education. Changes and lack of flexibility add to stress for all. Lack of sense of fairness adds to stress.

Appendix F (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Meet AYP

Obstacles Faced	Responses
Stress	Working to maintain a non-stressful environment
Bureaucracy	I would definitely have to say bureaucracy! Jumping through too many hoops to get things done! I would prefer that people in education make the rules and mandates.
	Things beyond the control of the school and/or system that have a huge impact on the school.
	Drives a wedge between the school and community. Perception is reality in politics.

OBSTACLES FACED BY PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS DID NOT MEET AYP

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Obstacles	Responses
Lack of Time	I cannot provide planning time for my faculty. Personnel resources and specialties are not there to solve this problem. We need more staff to help with students who are in the bottom quartile.
	Our school is a Title I school. We are already on the Needs Improvement List, and we have less time to prepare for accountability.
	The biggest is time, It is not possible without an assistant who is on the same page as you are and because I have that this year and didn't last, I feel we can make it as a school. (Having a good team-leadership)
	Time constraints, funding, and the "moving targets" for achieving AYP. Our state department puts very little thought into choosing indicators to meet AYP requirement.
	I now must schedule every moment of my day to meet the demands of the job.
Attendance Issues	We do not have enough control over school attendance to be measured by that. Student mobility is also an obstacle, as well as parent attitude.
	Last year, we missed AYP due to attendance (2nd indicator). I will not be surprised if we don't meet our achievement objectives this year because my role as instructional leader has been greatly diminished.
	Attendance is a big issue for us; parents are not held accountable, the school is.
	Attendance mandates and expectations are unrealistic and unfair. Accountability should be academic achievement only.

Appendix G (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Obstacles	Responses
Exceptional Children	Mandates are unrealistic/lack common sense example-Special education/ESOL passing CRCT, test construction, and attendance out of our control, etc.
	Under the current law, MI special education students have to take the CRCT on the same level as their peers who are in regular classes. For example, we have a fifth grader who is in the full-time MI class and functions on a first grade level, who is expected to pass the fifth grade test.
	Expecting special education kids to be equal to their peers.
	The requirement for special education and ESOL students for CRCT are unrealistic.
	Comparing scores from one year to the next when students are not the same. Trying to raise scores by 3 points each year (e.g., 77 to 80). We can only go to a certain point. Assuring that 95% participation rate in all subgroups.
	According to AYP-we is not a "passing" school due to the one EIP subgroup of free/reduced. The information regarding this group two years previously was not required at the state; therefore, our central office did not transmit the numbers for that year.
	No school population-34% Hispanic and growing (K is 40%). Knowing what a "one-day, one test" mindset is what we are judged on and not the total school program. This is the first year that we have not made AYP. Being a K-2 school, we are not given "the opportunity" to give the CRCT (which we did fine on in 2002). We were judged on our EIP program, but not given guidelines until after the AYP list came out. Only two K-2 schools in the state made AYP. We were told not to change anything for 2002-2003 after 2002 scores were so late getting back.

Appendix G (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Obstacles	Responses
Exceptional Children	We were placed on the AYP (not passing) list because of lack of information. We made progress with every other subgroup (and we moved 10% of free and reduced students out as well-it was just not documented at the state level). This year we will not be "graded" on EIP, but we will be graded on CRCT test results for the 1st and 2nd grade. It is unfair that the criteria for "passing" for primary schools has not been consistently analyzed due to state irregularities in the testing department. This makes my job of dealing with accountability next to impossible.
Low Parental Involvement	Too many legislation mandates on the school and as a principal not enough on the people we serve. There needs to be more consequences for those parents who are not concerned about attendance and tardies.
	Some obstacles faced are: low performance on test, school attendance, discipline, and apathy or parents and students.
	The one major obstacle is getting faculty, staff, students, and community to believe that we can achieve although we are in a poverty stricken area, with single parents, non-working, low educational, and attainment levels. Although, we have all these great things against us we still can achieve.
	We must work harder at reaching parents of non-achieving students and we also need to work harder on attendance. Teachers are reluctant to use research based instructional strategies. Some teachers don't want to change, even though their methods have not proven to be successful in the past. We now focus on QCC standards and leave off a lot of things that are not tested. I am retiring at the end of this year after 37 years in education. My health and my husband's health are the reasons for retiring. All of the required changes make it easier for me to leave.

Appendix G (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Obstacles	Responses
Low Parental Involvement	The biggest problem we face is preventing non-instructional issues such as discipline and lack of 100% parental support and staff conflict.

To mention a few:
• CRCT test administered-while local recreation department starts ball. Students not getting enough rest.
• Families who do not value high standards
• More legal issues with children-custody guardianship-Who's taking care of the children?
• Poverty, students with weak language vocabulary development
• Conflicting philosophies-CRCT-2hrs/day—too much for 6 year olds |
| **Low Morale** | Morale of staff becomes a priority

Keeping the staff focused. Keeping morale up.

Motivating teachers and staff to leave their comfort zones and take a more collaborate, data driven role in providing effective instruction.

Staff morale—money.

Parental involvement of low-income students is minimal. |
| **Funding** | Shortage of funds. Mandates have their place but not effective if they are not funded.

My school is "on the list" yet I have given less personnel for specific support services. No funding tied to NCLB mandates.

I have no assistant principal or facilitator to assist me with performing my many duties. |

Table Appendix G (continued)

Open-ended Responses of Principals Whose Schools Did Not Meet AYP

Obstacles	Responses
Funding	Money, Hispanic population 2002-5%, 2004-39%, teacher training, transit students
Conflicting Programs	Conflicting programs-Learning Focused Schools (Max Thompson), Voyager, REA Grant, Guided Reading Program, America's Choice-all dramatically opposed programs I am to implement and get graded on. I just can't do it anymore. It's criminal to children. Managing a "scripted" reading program. Enforcing uniform policies set by the local BOE.
Highly Qualified Teachers	High staff mobility in an inner city school. It's difficult to have highly qualified teachers when staff development has to be repeated for each new group. Sometimes it feels like we are on a treadmill moving but not getting anywhere. Trying to be sure we are following all guidelines. as a principal finding highly qualified teachers in special education, art, music, etc. Keeping morale of teachers and staff. Lack of funding for mandates. Incompetent teachers, politics, contentment with the status quo, providing quality professional learning and support.