

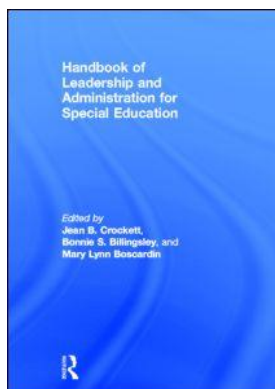
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Expanding the Leadership Framework

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Expanding the Leadership Framework

An Alternate View of Professional Standards

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Over the past 15 years there has been a marked evolution of professional standards and their implementation in response to the various iterations of education reform. The contributions of researchers and scholars, professional organizations, practitioners, and other stakeholders to the identification and development of professional standards contributes to their universal application beyond that of preservice training. The utilitarian application of professional standards provides a disciplinary framework for better understanding the complex field of special education leadership and administration, thus, guiding and enriching the work lives of preservice, novice, and experienced educational leaders and administrators of special education.

Although standards have been used to combat low quality and extend opportunity (Porter, 1993), it is important that they not be used exclusively at the expense of higher levels of professional practice and accountability (Darling-Hammond, 1989). In this chapter, professional standards for leaders and administrators of special education will be elevated beyond a basic discussion. The context of the literature base supporting both general and special education administration in the broader context of leadership paradigms and policy reform efforts will serve as the basis for discussion. As Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) noted, “leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (p. 3).

Educational leadership standards are only one mechanism for helping us better understand how leadership influences instructional practices and student learning, yet they encompass many areas of the profession deserving further examination. The relationship among leadership and instructional practices, student learning, technology utilization in leadership roles, collaborative forms of leadership, capacity building, and the preparation and continued development of leaders for special education are just a few of the areas that will be explored in this chapter. Research linking various aspects of leadership in special education to all those aspects of education that influence student learning is gaining traction in contemporary leadership research (Boscardin, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2004). Understanding the premises and assumptions of special education

leadership leads to interesting opportunities to cultivate collaboration between general and special education.

Considering Professional Leadership Titles and Roles

Without professional titles and roles, there would be little need for professional standards. Kern and Mayer (1970), Finkbinder (1981), and Whitworth and Hatley (1979) noted that one of the basic problems of the special education leadership position is the maze of various titles, labels, guidelines, and stipulations through which one understands the roles and functions of the position. Finkbinder noted that titles are an integral component to those assuming professional identities. Titles are symbolic, representing the ethos and culture that create the essence of the embodiment of a discipline or profession. Although most states use the title of director of special education or administrator of special education, there is some variation among the states requiring licensure/certification/endorsement.

Because of the confusion concerning the tasks associated with the role of administrators of special education and the knowledge base needed for leading and administering special education programs (Finkbinder, 1981; Kern & Mayer, 1970; Whitworth & Hatley, 1985), the Council for Exceptional Children (2009) published *What Every Special Educator Must Know: Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines for Special Educators* in an effort to reconcile the national titular and professional standard ambiguities that dictate licensing requirements and standardize role expectations. Preservice training anchored by professional standards and a predictable course of study is another mechanism thought to aid in the development of professional identities. Schulman (2005) has referred to a predictable course of study for a profession, such as medicine or law, as *signature pedagogies*. It is Schulman's (2005) belief that signature pedagogies are another component that contributes to strong professional identities.

According to Billingsley (2005), professional teachers and administrators who complete accredited preservice programs that prepare them well in their disciplinary area, and who then work in educational environments that continue to support evidence-based practices, are more likely to remain in their chosen profession and be more effective. Administrators of special education with strong professional identities are considered to be essential to ensuring the delivery of high quality evidence-based special education programs in increasingly inclusive schools. These leaders are the standard bearers, those who set expectations of what it means to be a professional. Without this model of professionalism, there is a risk of continued role ambiguity and erosion challenging identities. Titles, notwithstanding, the disciplinary underpinnings of special education leadership and administration, represented in the form of standards, are the foundation of the field and model of professionalism for leaders of special education.

The Professionalization of Special Education Leaders

The development of special education leaders continues to be a dynamic process, characterized by ongoing revision and reconceptualization of models of professionalism as new research continues to inform the knowledge base. New ideas and leadership paradigms open the door for developing more far-reaching and comprehensive ways of thinking about leadership frameworks for special education as the field continues to expand. The form and function of leadership will change as new research emerges. For example, leadership recently has become more collaborative as it becomes distributive (Gronn, 2000; Mayrowetz & Smylie, 2004; Murphy, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, 2004), which in part is a function of a more democratic and pluralistic approach to leadership.

The examination of the research literature in the sections that follow provides an opportunity

to examine the development and evolution of special education leadership competencies, and creates an opportunity for consideration of how the competencies might be more broadly incorporated throughout the career span of leaders and administrators of special education.

The Emergence of Skill-Based Special Education Administration Requirements

Initial interest in the skills special education administrators might need to carry out the responsibilities of their roles began to emerge as early as the early 1960s. At the 1962 annual meeting of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), a committee was appointed to investigate (a) the training and experience expected of state directors and supervisors, and (b) the extent to which these expectations were being met in college and university programs accepting students under Public Law 85-926, which provided fellowships for advanced preparation of directors and supervisors.

Two years later, Milazzo and Blessing (1964) used P.L. 87-276, a law that emphasized the need for adequate preparation for administrators and coordinators of programs of special education in state and local school systems, as the basis for their investigation of the availability and content of training programs in institutions of higher education (IHEs) that included both colleges and universities. Affiliation with local, state, and national professional organizations related to special education was also an important aspect to being an administrator of special education (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964).

In a subsequent investigation, Brabandt (1969) found that none of the 98 veteran administrators responding to a questionnaire met the standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children or the requirements of the doctoral programs offered by the institutions of higher education. Most respondents had training as general educators or school psychologists, but were not specifically trained as administrators of special education. Despite institutions of higher education having programs accredited by CEC, only 2 of the 12 states participating in the study had certification requirements for administrators of special education, and 4 states had certification requirements for supervisors of special education. Only one state, as part of the certification process, met the CEC standards for administrators of special education. All 12 states required a general administrative credential.

Kern and Mayer (1970) and Marro and Kohl (1972) identified specific requirements that contributed most to the success of administrators of special education. However, many of the earlier studies did not investigate prior teaching experience (Prillaman & Richardson, 1985; Stile, Abernathy, & Pettibone 1986; Stile & Pettibone, 1980; Valesky & Hirth, 1992), practicum/internship requirements (Prillaman & Richardson, 1985; Stile et al., 1986; Stile & Pettibone, 1980; Valesky & Hirth, 1992), or continuing education requirements (Forgnone & Collings, 1975; Prillaman & Richardson, 1985; Stile et al. 1986; Stile & Pettibone, 1980; Valesky & Hirth, 1992).

Kern and Mayer (1970) and Finkbinder (1981) found that preservice training programs for special education administrators provided core administrative courses and field experiences delivered by special education faculty rather than following the practice of borrowing faculty from general education. Of the studies that did investigate specific requirements, these were in the form of course work, teaching experience, and degrees rather than specific competencies. The importance of previous teaching experience (Brabant, 1969; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964) and internships (Brabant, 1969; Finkbinder; Marro & Kohl, 1972; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964) to the training of administrators of special education was noted in these earlier studies. Other requirements included: a master's degree in special education, certification as a teacher in some area of special education, course work in educational foundations and educational administration, elective courses in psychology, guidance, and research methods, and practicum experiences (Kern &

Mayer, 1970). Brabant and Prillaman and Richardson (1985) suggested the need for: (a) a post-master's degree in administration which would include appropriate coursework in educational administration; (b) two or more years of teaching in special education; (c) an internship in special education administration; (d) cognate or support coursework in such related areas as personnel management, sociology, psychology, and organizational theory, and; (e) research experience.

The next set of researchers introduced the idea that prior teaching and practica might be important to developing effective administrators of special education. Brabant (1969), Kern and Mayer (1970), Forgnone and Collins (1975), and Whitworth and Hatley (1979) investigated prior teaching and practicum experience requirements. Kern and Mayer identified the need for extending training through professional development programs for inservice administrators of special education. Continuing education, a recent addition to credentialing requirements for administrators of special education since the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001), was used to build and maintain the professional leadership knowledge and skill capacity.

The Emergence of Knowledge-Based Special Education Administration Competencies

Special education leadership knowledge-based competencies began to emerge in concert with discrete course work and field-based requirements of the mid-1960s. Milazzo and Blessing (1964), using the input of university faculty, identified the following competencies in their research, though did not refer to them as such:

- (a) knowledge of federal, state, and local functions and responsibilities in special education;
- (b) supervisory and/or administrative experience; (c) an understanding of preservice and inservice educational activity; (d) community public relations experiences related to special education; and (e) involvement in direct services to one or more types of exceptional children.

(p. 133)

It could be argued that these are not competencies applied to licensure candidates but requirements for program content and delivery. That is, they indicate program inputs rather than outcomes expected of candidates.

The following recommendations made by researchers for training administrators of special education are better aligned with competencies: (a) a common core that covers the broad aspects of exceptionality, such as child growth, development, and psychology of the exceptional child (Kern & Mayer, 1970; Marro & Kohl, 1972; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964; Prillaman & Richardson, 1985), and effective special education placement (Marro & Kohl, 1972); (b) curriculum and methods in an area of exceptionality (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (c) remediation of learning difficulties (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (d) internships in settings with normal children and in an area of exceptionality (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (e) advanced statistics and research design (Kern & Mayer, 1970; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (f) advanced seminars in special education (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (g) research and publications (Kern & Mayer, 1970; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); and (h) electives (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964).

More advanced training recommendations included knowledge of: (a) general education administration (Kern & Mayer, 1970; Marro & Kohl, 1972; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (b) general education and supervision (Marro & Kohl, 1972; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (c) school law (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (d) school finance (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (e) administration and supervision in special education (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964); (f) personnel management (Prillaman & Richardson, 1985); (g) organizational theory (Prillaman & Richardson, 1985); and

(h) field work in special education (Milazzo & Blessing, 1964), in addition to a focused internship in administration and/or supervision of special education (Kern & Mayer, 1970; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964; Prillaman & Richardson, 1985).

None of the studies equated the acquisition of competencies with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for qualified leaders of special education. Instead, there appears to be a tacit assumption that the completion of a certain set of pre-specified requirements indicates that candidates have acquired the capacity to practice in the field. The expectation is with advances in the field, experiences that are paired with research-based knowledge will contribute to skill acquisition and induction into the field of special education leadership and administration in a way that cannot be achieved with course work alone. The development of evidenced based leadership practices provides a foundation that can be used to support improved instructional practices by teachers and educational achievement of students (Boscardin, 2007, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Influences of Policy on the Development of Professional Standards

Since the proliferation of school reform reports in the early 1980s, a sustained effort has been undertaken to fix, restructure, and rethink the American educational enterprise. The phrase *school reform* is a common reference to any proposal for change in public school policy and/or its operation. The connection to learning in the past has been limited to trying to better understand the connection between what teachers teach and what students learn (i.e., Educate America Act, 2000; No Child Left Behind, 2001; Teachers for the 21st Century, 1986; Tomorrow's Teachers, 1986).

In the 1970s, the first wave of top-down reform called for competency-based education, performance contracting, school-wide accountability, academic excellence, and legislated learning, an example of the latter being the federal publication entitled *What Works: Research about Teaching and Learning* (U.S. Department of Education, 1987). Barth (1990) regarded the top-down model as being too unwieldy and too complex for any one individual to address.

The second wave of educational reform was characterized by a bottom-up or grass-roots approach, with strong emphasis on processes, but not on outcomes. This wave of educational reform embraced the sharing of responsibilities and leadership in schools in order to infuse and develop a variety of leadership roles (Barth, 1990). Outcomes, while important, were not central to this second wave of reform.

The effective schools movement was marked by an implied causal relationship between school practices and student learning (Edmonds, 1983; Lezotte, 1981). During this era, researchers began to question the criteria used to determine school effectiveness. The criteria were in the form of standards that addressed leadership, teacher, and school traits and characteristics but were silent on student learning outcomes.

Era of Standards-Based Accountability Educational Reforms

The most recent era of educational reform, driven by a federal mandate referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001), ushered in the era of accountability for student and teacher performance unlike no other educational reform movement. Expectations for student achievement and teacher performance are higher now than at any other time in history, and scientific research and public policy have become potent influences on the practices of educational leaders. How the link between leading and learning is established will depend much on how the field engages in the utilization of evidence-based practices, including the identification and use of scientifically-based instructional practices.

The purposes of NCLB (2001) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) are antithetical even though both laws have an achievement orientation as the centerpiece. NCLB addresses school large scale school improvement and IDEA mandates the development and provision of appropriate individualized educational programs for students with disabilities. In 2002 policy makers indicted the system used to implement special education for placing process over results and bureaucratic compliance above student achievement, excellence, academic, and social outcomes (President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002). In addition, the President's Commission cited a lack of highly qualified teachers and heralded the NCLB legislation as the "driving force behind IDEA reauthorization" (p. 7). However, two critical questions remain: Will better alignment between the *systems* of special and general education provide *students* with a greater opportunity to learn, or will blended systems result in diminished opportunities for students with disabilities to receive the individually appropriate instruction they need to grow into productive adulthood (Boscardin, 2005)?

IDEA 2004 builds on NCLB by emphasizing increased accountability for student performance at the classroom, school, and school district levels. The changes in IDEA 2004 are significant and include changes in the qualifications of instructional personnel and the approach to instruction itself. All special education teachers must be licensed in special education and meet the highly qualified teacher (HQT) requirements of NCLB. The use of instructional strategies and methods must be grounded in scientifically based research.

School Reform Limitations

School reforms initiated by NCLB (2001) and IDEA (2004) have led to increased accountability for ensuring high quality instruction, improving adequate yearly progress (AYP) for students with disabilities, and monitoring their progress in assessments. These emphases have significantly affected the duties, roles, and functions of all school administrators, including directors of special education programs. Administrators are also responsible for certifying that all students are taught by highly qualified teachers who use scientifically-based instructional practices, that students have access to and achieve in the general education curriculum, and that adequate resources support teaching and learning (Boscardin, 2004; DiPaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003).

These reform efforts for the most part have been silent on the role of leadership and its connection to student success. Yet, administrators are expected to interpret and put into place school reform efforts in a timely manner regardless of their own preparation to do so. When schools do not achieve their adequate yearly progress goals, the contribution of leadership to positive student performance is the first to be scrutinized. States now are on the cusp of considering new ways to evaluate the connection between leadership behaviors and student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). The link between leadership behaviors and student achievement, as defined by Leithwood and colleagues, is inclusive of all student populations, although no specific reference is made in their research to students with disabilities.

These simultaneously occurring national policy initiatives require that special education administrators be well versed in the knowledge and skills that are brought to their practice from complementary disciplines. Becoming an effective special education leader for the 21st century requires that administrators work collaboratively with teachers, parents, other school administrators, and policymakers to bring resources, personnel, programs, and expertise together to solve problems of practice for all students.

Professional Leadership Standards for Administrators of Special Education

Professional standards provide a policy framework for the knowledge and skills thought to be important to the foundation of professional identities. National standards emanate from pro-

professional educator organizations with input from federal education agencies and university researchers. These national standards are then considered by states as they develop state licensure requirements. One way to assure that this standard is met is through the adoption of professional standards. The federal statute and the regulations of IDEA 2004 no longer refer to directors of special education and there is no specific reference as to what constitutes a highly qualified director of special education. One interpretation is that the federal government has left this decision to individual states.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), Council for Exceptional Children Professional Standards Committee, and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) have been interlinked and aligned to provide administrator education standards with a well-integrated set of expectations and outcomes upon which to base practice. For example, the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Institutional and Program Requirements are aligned with INTASC and NCATE Standards to provide special educators with expectations and outcomes that are linked to those in general education. CEC and NCATE have joined together to develop special education administration leadership standards that provide guidelines for creating a vision, accountability mechanisms, flexibility, and options, with supported by disciplinary research.

Standards or domains are defined by knowledge, skills, and disposition statements or objectives. Some of these domains among the various accrediting organizations are well-aligned while others are organized differently. In this section, three sets of standards will be discussed; two sets of U.S. leadership standards, one for general education administrators and one for special education administrators, and one set of United Kingdom leadership standards for headteachers.

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) are two primary professional organizations responsible for the accreditation of administrator preparation programs, and thus the joint set of standards they have adopted play a crucial role in preparation program design and implementation. The ISLLC leadership standards for general education administrators have undergone several revisions since their inception. Like most standards, during their metamorphosis, the standards have been reoriented moving away from a process focus toward performance based measures.

The ISLLC 2008 standards provide the basis for evaluating the entry-level functions, as opposed to knowledge and skills, of educational administrators. In addition to guiding how practicing administrators should be evaluated as they progress toward expert performance, practice standards were established to aid with the development of professional career plans and to guide the professional development of leaders as they progress toward expert performance (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2008). The intent was for the ISLLC 2008 standards to have far-reaching applications, yet not be limited to governing accreditation of institutions of higher education (IHE). As stated in *Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008* published by the CSSO, policy standards serve as a "foundation, states can create a common language and bring consistency to education leadership policy at all levels so that there are clear expectations" (p. 5).

MCATE/ELCC and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) have adopted the language of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. The six ISLLC standards include:

- Standard 1: Setting a widely shared vision for learning;
- Standard 2: Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
- Standard 3: Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
- Standard 4: Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
- Standard 5: Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and
- Standard 6: Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts.

The Administrator of Special Education 2009 Standards

The Professional Standards for Administrators of Special Education developed by CEC with the sponsorship of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) identify the knowledge and skills that characterize competent leaders of special education. In this section, the differences between the 2003 and the 2009 Administrator of Special Education Standards will be dissected. The 2009 revalidation represents a major departure from the 2003 standards. Like the ISLLC 2008 standards, the 2009 CEC standards for administrators of special education were designed to set policy and vision, not prescribe a particular brand of leadership practice.

The 2003 Administrator of Special Education Standards were comprised of 7 of the 10 standards designed for first time licensees, otherwise known as an initial license candidates, and had very little to do with administration as they were primarily teacher focused. Three of the 10 standards (instructional strategies, learning environments and social interactions, and language) were deleted since they pertained to classroom instruction rather than leadership. Subsumed under the following seven remaining standards were 49 knowledge and skill statements (refer to the CEC Redbook, 2003):

- Standard 1: Foundations (philosophical, historical, and legal)
- Standard 2: Characteristics of Learners (human development, principles of learning)
- Standard 3: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Evaluation
- Standard 4: Instructional Content and Practice
- Standard 5: Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment
- Standard 6: Managing Student Behavior and Social Interactions
- Standard 7: Communication and Collaborative Partnerships
- Standard 8: Professionalism and Ethics

The new standards (CEC, 2009) differ significantly from the 2003 standards, in that, they are leadership focused and performance-based, in addition to having been elevated from the initial beginning level to the advanced professional level. Unlike the earlier standards that guided initial licensure and were more teacher-oriented, the language and approaches suggested by these advanced standards are grounded in the special education and general education administration knowledge traditions. The revised and validated performance-based standards for Special Education Administrators at the Advanced Level (2009) include 42 knowledge and skill statements (refer to the CEC 2009 Redbook) embedded within six standards that address the following:

- Standard 1: Leadership & Policy
- Standard 2: Program Development & Organization
- Standard 3: Research & Inquiry
- Standard 4: Evaluation

- Standard 5: Professional Development & Ethical Practice
- Standard 6: Collaboration

The national standards (CEC, 2009) describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for administrators of special education to effectively execute the functions of their jobs and they form the foundation for professional identities, as well as provide a framework for ongoing professional development. Before acquiring the advanced leadership competencies, leaders must demonstrate acquisition of initial knowledge and skills. While it may appear that instruction, assessment, diagnosis, evaluation, planning and management of the teaching and learning environment, and the management of student behavior and social interactions are overlooked; this is not the case, as these are still a part of initial licensing. Instead of being a single step process, leaders must now sequentially demonstrate initial then advanced sets of knowledge and skills to be an effective leader and administrator of special education.

Not all states that require endorsement/certification/ licensing as an administrator of special education fully incorporate the CEC administrator of special education standards into their state credentialing requirements. The standards that are least frequently included as state credentialing requirements are collaboration, and research and inquiry (Boscardin, Weir, & Kusek, 2010). This is understandable in a field that demands proficiency in laws and regulations, particularly laws that require strict procedural compliance, ongoing program evaluation, and annual accountability for student progress as measured by statewide assessments.

International Standards

International standards can be used to affirm and lend perspective to national practices in the United States. The National Standards for Headteachers (2004) in the United Kingdom influence the work of school administrators and headteachers. Headteachers roles are similar to those of administrators of special education, i.e., partially supportive and partially administrative. “The Standards embody three key principles, namely that the work of headteachers should be: learning-centred, focused on leadership, and reflect the highest possible professional standards” (National Standards for Headteachers, 2004). The UK Department for Education (2010) has also produced a companion document for headteachers and other administrators to provide additional support. Taken together, these documents provide guidelines for headteachers and other administrators as they lead programs for all children. Of particular note is that these standards are “used to identify the threshold levels of performance for the assessment framework within the National Professional Qualification for Headship” (National Standards for Headteachers, 2004, p. 5).

In the United Kingdom, teachers who aspire to be headteachers go through an extensive professional development and assessment regimen in order to qualify for a license. The standards include the following domains:

- Shaping the Future
- Leading, Learning, and Teaching
- Development of Self and Working with Others
- Managing the Organisation
- Securing Accountability
- Strengthening Community

These standard domains have much in common with the six ISLLC (2008) and CEC Administrator of Special Education (2009) domain areas. Differences occur with implementation. The United States has left the adoption of standards and accompanying assessments to individual

states since education is constitutionally a state function. As such, some states have adopted the national standards and others have modified and adopted state specific standards for their practicing educators. Only four states require that prospective administrators of special education pass licensure exams (Boscardin et al., 2010).

Comparing and Contrasting Standards

Using the three sets of leadership standards presented in the previous sections, it is possible to visibly see the similarities and differences (see Table 3.1).

The revised and validated Administrator of Special Education at the Advanced Level (CEC, 2009), the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC Standards (2008), and the National Standards for Headteachers (2004) are guided by six standard/domain areas. These sets of standards are strikingly similar in the areas of leadership and policy, program development and organization, professional development, ethical practice, and collaboration, yet differ noticeably in two domain areas, research and inquiry and accountability. Based on further review of the ISLLC standards, evaluation is addressed in two of the knowledge and skill statements rather than set apart as separate domains. Explicit or implicit mention of research and inquiry as they relate to educational administrative leadership is absent.

The standards use different and in some ways more explicit wording to capture the policy and leadership dimension. The use of shaping the future captures the dynamic nature of policy formation and leadership. Leading learning and teaching, development of self, and working with others captures the instructional leadership and professional development responsibilities. While strengthening the community can be accomplished through varied methods, collaboration would seem to be the primary strategy. Accountability leaves no doubt regarding the outcome of evaluations, whereas that level of clarity is absent in the Administrator of Special Education and ISLLC standards.

The evolution of professional standards and their implementation comes mostly in response to the various iterations of education reform policies, in conjunction with the contributions of professional organizations, experts in the field, and multiple stakeholders. Through review and inclusion of related standards, it is possible to expand the knowledge base and practices so as

Table 3.1 Side by Side Comparison of the Special and General Education Administrative Standards

<i>Administrators of Special Education at the Advanced Level (2009)</i>	<i>Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC (2008)</i>	<i>United Kingdom National Standards for Headteachers (2004)</i>
Leadership & Policy	Effective Management Influencing Policy	Shaping the Future
Program Development & Organization	Shared Vision for Learning Developing a School Culture & Instructional Program	Leading Learning and Teaching Managing the Organisation
Research & Inquiry Evaluation	(Not a separate domain area but included in knowledge and skill statements) Securing Accountability	
Professional Development & Ethical Practice	Ethical Practice	Development of Self and Working With Others
Collaboration	Collaboration	Strengthening Community

to enrich the professional lives of preservice, novice, and experienced educational leaders and administrators of special education and lead to improved learning outcomes for students.

Beyond the Standards: Contemporary Considerations for Special Education Leadership and Administration

The initial validation of the Administrator of Special Education (2009) standards commenced with a review of the literature (Boscardin et al., 2009). The evidence for each of the six domains is anchored within three sources: (a) theory or conceptual literature, (b) research literature, and/or (c) practice literature. The theory/conceptual literature emphasize theories or philosophical reasoning derived from position papers, policy analyses, and descriptive reviews. The research literature is predicated on methodologies that address questions of cause and effect, and that researchers have independently replicated and found to be effective. The practice literature is derived from professional wisdom, promising practices, and model and lighthouse programs.

Researchers identified 42 new knowledge and skill statements that were supported by literature from one or more categories. While none of the statements from the 2003 Administrator of Special Education standards were retained in their entirety, certain conceptual aspects were represented in the new statements. The number of references associated with each of the domains appears in Table 3.2 (Boscardin et al., 2009, p. 74).

Although the theory/conceptual literature had the highest number of overall citations, the research literature did not differ significantly in the number of references. The practice literature consisted of the fewest citations. The majority of citations for leadership and policy and the professional development and ethical practice standards were found in the conceptual/theory literature. The research citations dominated the program development and organization, research and inquiry, evaluation, and collaboration standards. The practice references, for all but one standard, research and inquiry, was associated with the least number of citations. In many ways, this suggests a strong theory and research orientation in the field.

The earlier literature (Finkbinder, 1981; Kern & Mayer, 1970; Marro & Kohl, 1972; Milazzo & Blessing, 1964; Prillaman & Richardson, 1985; Stile et al., 1985; Stile & Pettibone, 1980; Valesky and Hirth, 1992; Whitworth & Hatley, 1985) and more recent reviews and investigations (Boscardin et al., 2009; Crockett, Becker, & Quinn, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2004; O'Brien, 2006; Waters et al., 2003) in concert with the various sets of standards reveal a broader context for envisioning special education leadership. The standards and literature base combine to challenge notions about how to best situate the leadership dimensions of special education at the domain level.

Table 3.2 Frequency of References by Standard

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Literature/Theory-Based Evidence</i>	<i>Research-Based Evidence</i>	<i>Practice-Based Evidence</i>
Leadership & Policy	95	41	33
Program Development & Organization	29	65	18
Research & Inquiry	10	20	11
Evaluation	27	31	16
Professional Development & Ethical Practice	53	36	24
Collaboration	15	17	8
TOTALS	229	210	110

Using the literature sources and standards cited in this chapter and the earlier work of Boscardin (2011), it is possible to identify and further expand domain areas for the leadership and administration of special education. The result is nine domain areas that include: (a) leadership, policy, and school reform; (b) economic and resource management; (c) context for leadership; (d) instructional leadership; (e) evaluation of educational programs and program outcomes; (f) research and inquiry; (g) professional development and human resources; (h) collaborative leadership; and (i) technology (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Special Education Administration Leadership Domains by Focus and Source

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Source</i>
Context for Leadership	Building an inclusive vision, culture, order, discipline, & situational awareness, creating an environment that maximizes learning	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Kern & Mayer (1970), Marro & Kohl (1972), Prillaman & Richardson (1985), Waters et al. (2003), Leithwood et al. (2004), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin, et al. (2009)
Leadership, Policy, & School Reform	Inspiring others, applying the laws & policies, managing organizational systems & processes, & engaging in meaningful strategic planning	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Waters, et al. (2003), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), and Crockett et al. (2009)
Economic Resource Management & Leadership	Creating fiscal equity, linking budgets to educational goals, managing systems & processes	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Waters et al. (2003), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), and Crockett et al. (2009)
Instructional Leadership	Pedagogical knowledge & application, building learning communities	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Kern & Mayer (1970), Marro & Kohl (1972), Prillaman & Richardson (1985), Waters et al. (2003), Leithwood et al. (2004), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), and Crockett et al. (2009)
Evaluation of Educational Programs & Program Outcomes	Assessment of learning outcomes, evaluation of program effectiveness, monitoring, decision-making, judgment	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Waters et al. (2003), Leithwood et al. (2004), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), Crockett et al. (2009)
Research & Inquiry	Publications, research design, data analysis	Brabant (1969), Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Kern & Mayer (1970), Boscardin et al. (2009)
Human Resource Development & Supervision	Professional values & ethics, commitment to ongoing personal & professional development, staff hiring, retention, supervision, & evaluation, intellectual stimulation, rewards, affirmation	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Marro & Kohl (1972), Prillaman & Richardson (1985), Waters et al. (2003), Leithwood et al. (2004), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), and Crockett et al. (2009)
Collaborative Leadership	Interpersonal, relationships, community building, communication	Milazzo & Blessing (1964), Waters et al. (2003), Leithwood et al. (2004), O'Brien (2006), Boscardin et al. (2009), and Crockett et al. (2009)
Technology & Information Systems	Data gathering and analysis, data warehousing, data sharing, technology assisted instruction, communication infra-structures	Crockett et al. (2009)

The nine domains noted in the above table each capture different, yet important, interdependent aspects of leadership. The leadership and policy foci capture the substantive and procedural aspects of leading. The foci of instructional leadership are on the important pedagogical components of leading that advance student learning and instruction. The foci of collaborative leadership are on the interpersonal, relational, community building complexities of leadership. Economic resource management and leadership represent an area of leading where the foci are on matters of equity, adequacy, efficiency, and access in relationship to providing instruction and promoting achievement, all of which are assessed through the evaluation of educational programs measured through program outcomes. With professional development serving as a catalyst for growing the organization, affirming values and ethical behaviors that contribute to personal and professional development and intellectual stimulation are critical and rely on research and inquiry capabilities. The domain not represented in the standards and literature, except for Crockett et al. (2009), is technology and information systems.

This leadership framework for leading and administering special education, while still emerging, demonstrates that there is an evolving body of knowledge that supports the disciplinary work of administrators of special education. Next steps would entail identifying how the discrete knowledge and skills associated with these special education leadership domains contribute to improved instruction and higher levels of achievement for students with disabilities (Boscardin, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2004).

As teaching, learning, and assessment systems that support the education of all students become more complex, all school leaders will be integral to designing, evaluating, and analyzing programs intended to support students with disabilities and their families. Leaders will be asked to create new, more effective solutions, and to work in innovative, collaborative ways to assure student achievement and success. As the leadership framework continues to expand by merging with the various sub-disciplines of educational leadership, possibilities for a shared leadership lexicon may emerge that better links visions with missions for educating students with disabilities.

Summary

The standards-based accountability reform movement has captured our imaginations about the possibilities for linking leading, teaching, and learning, connections that require further investigation. Evidence regarding what leaders of special education do makes a difference in the lives of students with disabilities and their families as pressures on resources mount, priorities and opportunities shift across career stages, and changes occur within systems. Standards are not singular in their purpose and function, rather, they serve multiple functions and act as a catalyst for identifying the knowledge and skills needed by leaders administering special education programs at varying career stages. While the development of national standards communicates the importance of leadership in special education, one would also hope that the professional standards communicate that special education leadership makes a difference.

As the roles of leaders evolve, one constant remains. Professional standards will continue to evolve and contribute to the development of the field of special education administration and leadership. What leaders of special education do to make a positive difference in the academic outcomes for students with disabilities and their families deserves deeper examination.

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