Indubitably, the fortunes of communities and their students rest on the economic and political contexts of their states and nation and, with the recent global recession, the world (Rivzi & Lingard, 2010). School leaders must be both economically aware and politically adept, because global economic and political conditions drain nationally and locally into schools and communities. Currently, the policies and discourses related to school accountability, educator evaluations, testing regimes, and competitive markets for schooling stand in stark testimony about political and economic influences on schooling (Reese & Lindle, 2014; Ryan, 2010; Theoharis, 2007). In fact, such movements signal what Lipman (2011) termed as the “new political economy” of education (p. 3). That is, the inextricable natures of the new economies of schooling and neoliberal political agendas framing educational reform have influenced the structures and content of U.S. leadership preparation programs. The purpose of this chapter is to map the landscape of these influences.

Background

Educational leadership preparation may have never recovered from Progressive Era reforms intended to depoliticize school governance. Paradoxically, attempts by “administrative progressives” (Tyack, 1991, p. 10) to disentangle school management and scarce resources from patronage politics might have expanded contentious dynamics among the more than “10,000 democracies” surrounding schools (Berkman & Plutzer, 2005, p. 2). More problematic is the sustained and erroneous Progressive Era notion that neutralizing educators’ political or human agency by professionalizing their roles would diminish politics in schools. Instead, the result is a seeming increase in school districts’ identification as micropolitical, closed systems (Stout, Tallerico, & Scribner, 1995; Tyack, 1991). Another consequence of this enduring myth of political neutrality is how it marginalizes school leaders into bureaucratic functionaries divorced from their political agency (Ball, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2008; Carpenter & Brewer, 2014; Lingard & Sellar, 2013; English & Papa, 2010). In current political and economic contexts, the interrelationship of global political, economic, and ideological processes shapes the environment (Lipman, 2011) into which leadership candidates enter and within which the preparation programs design curriculum and delivery modes. All community leaders must be aware of how these dynamics affect students, families, communities, and schools.
Organization of the Chapter

To address the economic and political contexts of school leader preparation, we reviewed research literature, media accounts, and policy reports related to educational leadership preparation. We required such sources due to the scarcity of empirical evidence concerning political or economic effects on leadership preparation programs, although we could find some speculation about contextual influences (e.g., Cibulka, 2009, McCarthy, 2015). Primarily, we focused on sources published after the global recession and postpublication of the first edition of this Handbook of Research on the Education of School Leaders (Young, Crow, Murphy, & Ogawa, 2009). Where appropriate, we contextualized recent literature on the economic and political contexts of schooling and the work of school leaders with seminal works on such trends and their origins. To focus the scope of our literature sources and analyses, we formulated two essential questions:

- What are the opportunities and investments in education and their implications for leadership preparation (i.e., the question of economic context)?
- What are the political (and policy) dynamics that affect school leaders’ work and the necessary associated knowledge (i.e., the question of political context)?

While we recognize there is a perspective that explicates a political economy of education reform (c.f., Anyon, 2005; Lipman, 2011), we attempt to disentangle those influences and intentionally explore their dynamics. We discuss each with our eye toward two potential areas of impact: (a) on leadership preparation programs in terms of structure and modes of delivery and (b) within leadership preparation in terms of content, standards, and emphases. This is to say, we do not dispute that economic arguments for competitive structures coupled with entrepreneurial stimuli closely link with neoliberal educational political agendas. Indeed, we acknowledge that these agenda spawn politics of capital and competition, which yield various forms of suppression and marginalization (Apple, 2013; Lipman, 2011). Nor do we dispute that market-based policies shape educational entrepreneurship through changing standards, resulting in new calculations for structuring competitive preparation programs. Instead, in this chapter we try to separate these two influences in order to spotlight questions and conclusions about the impact of these shifts on leadership preparation in the United States writ large.

The Question of Economic Context

The first question assumes that the nearly four-decade assault on common schools as a form of bureaucratic government monopoly (e.g., Sugarman & Coons, 1980) is but one signal that entrepreneurs view education as a market frontier (Goldring & Schuermann, 2009; Kretchmar, Sondel, & Ferrare, 2014). This economic approach affects schooling and increases competition for the development of school leaders from university-based or grow-your-own district-based programs to nongovernmental organizations and online opportunists (Cibulka, 2009; McCarthy, 2015; Orr, 2011). As described herein, such a market-driven phenomenon focuses on productivity indicators such as student achievement (Cibulka, 2001; Rice & Schwartz, 2008). Yet, little evidence supports the notion that school-leader-pipeline opportunists will find leader preparation a lucrative enterprise; nor does their own promotional evidence exceed most traditional leadership programs’ descriptive, incremental studies and testimonials (Cosner, Tozer, & Smylie, 2012; Donmoyer, Yennie-Donmoyer & Galloway, 2012).

Further economic effects on the role of school leaders stimulate a view that schools are engines of community and economic development, which places higher expectations on school leaders’
participation in open systems of community decision making (Goldring & Schuermann, 2009; Khalifa, 2012). New economies introduce new reform actors and shift public values shaping discourse around how to structure school improvement (Carpenter, 2011; Debray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009; Kumashiro, 2012; Opfer, Young & Fusarelli, 2008; Scott, 2009). Consequently, such an economic perspective overlaps significantly with the political contexts of school leadership preparation.

The Question of Political Context

Our second question addresses the dynamic political and policy contexts of leadership preparation, which we argue originated in the sustained corporate advocacy movement since A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). This movement, and its ideological underpinnings, has buttressed the rise in federalism throughout four U.S. presidents’ terms in office (Cross, 2014; DeBray, 2006; K. Wong, 2008). The federal focus on educational accountability reverberates with implications for the development of school leaders (Cross, 2014; Debray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009). Despite the complexity of influences on student achievement, principals’ performance has faced increasing requirements, scrutiny, demands for causal measures, and sanctions (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012; McCarthy, 2015; Pounder, 2011). Arguably, this movement should be connected by the political agency of school leaders (Cranston, 2013; Knapp & Feldman, 2012). Nevertheless, mapping the landscape of the political and economic contexts of leadership preparation may show the relentless silences (and silencing) of educational leaders and the intentional design of preparation programs to enact these silences. In sum, what follows is an attempt to unpack the influence of a new political economy on leadership preparation.

Economic Context: Opportunities and Investments in Leadership Preparation

In this section, we outline major economic factors we argue may have major implications on leadership preparation—in quality, equity, and outcomes. While we acknowledge these economic conditions are born out of neoliberal policymaking, we focus on the effects (or potential effects) on leadership preparation programs themselves. We examine the convergence of two major forces: the economic recession of 2007–2009 and the proliferation of deregulation and privatization policies that have increased competition among organizations invested in preparing educational leaders. These two forces drastically changed the “game” for the traditional providers of leadership preparation—university-based schools of education (Cibulka, 2009; McCarthy, 2015). Below, we discuss the shifts in the economic context and the impact on higher education funding, as well as the introduction of a multitude of new actors in the leadership preparation arena. Both factors have influenced the structure of leadership preparation programs and, in many cases, their content. More importantly, both have introduced serious questions about access to the profession, what counts as leadership expertise, whose knowledge base is valued, and how university-based leadership preparation programs can stay viable.

Higher Education Program Funding

While educators have struggled historically with developing a professional identity in a feminized field, education colleges have grappled with their on-campus and external academic reputations (Blackmore, 2007; Boyer, 1990; G. Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Kowalski, Young, & McCord, 2011; Levine, 2005, 2006). Recently, some high-profile universities have eliminated or reduced the presence of their schools of education, such as the University of Chicago (Bronner, 1997) and Cornell University (Lang, 2010). Yet, many institutions remain financially yoked to schools and colleges of education.
due to the revenue raised via large enrollment numbers (G. Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Levine, 2005, 2006; McCarthy, 2015). In this model, while graduate-level programs are more expensive than undergraduate programs, local schools need teachers to maintain their professional licenses, and thus institutions of higher education need to offer a regional pipeline of steady graduate student enrollment (Darling-Hammond, 2010; McCarthy, 2015; Young, 2013).

Since 2008, media reported various state legislatures’ and governors’ threats (many following through on these threats) to cut funding to public higher education systems. As a result, a significant portion of higher education funding in state appropriations vanished, rationalized away by recession effects (A. Wong, 2015). Whatever the reason, the response of state universities has been to raise tuition. As of May 2014, Mitchell, Palacios, and Leachman reported that 48 states spend less per student than they did prior to the recession. Among the states’ funding projections, trends predict an elimination of state funding for universities within 30–40 years, cuts that would impact most programs within any given state university (A. Wong, 2015). Although this estimate did not address leadership programs specifically, the forecast does not bode well for professional programs that may be forced to seek outside partners.

In response to these downward funding trends, universities have increased tuition, posing a major obstacle in the recruitment stages of educational leadership preparation. In a University Council for Educational Administration white paper, Hitt, Tucker, and Young (2012) listed reducing the “financial burden of leadership preparation” (p. 3) as a leading recommendation for recruiting strong candidates for professional programs. This recommendation presents a conundrum given the financial stresses on state universities. In particular, educational leadership preparation programs face a quandary in terms of the suggested selective recruitment coupled with enticing candidates with lower tuition, yet institutional pressures to maintain high enrollments for tuition revenue.

The Economics of New Actors in the Preparation Arena

As Cibulka (2009) foreshadowed, universities may be losing their monopoly on leadership preparation. This vulnerability among professional schools of education is exacerbated by the declines and changes in funding structures. However, while universities may be suffering changes to state funding, a significant number of new actors have entered the leadership preparation arena. The convergence of the economic pressures on universities and the proliferation of deregulation and privatization policies have opened up a market for leadership preparation providers.

First, universities are partnering with school districts on in-house leadership development programs. These programs are considered possible ways of reducing costs to students (Hitt et al., 2012), as well as a way to grow leaders from within. Interestingly, another trend joins schools or colleges of education in partnerships with other on-campus divisions. For example, education schools may partner with business schools to offer blended or joint degrees (Cibulka, 2009), such as the University of Virginia’s Turnaround Leaders program (Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education, n.d.), the Harvard Business School (n.d.) Public Education Leadership Program, and the Rice University Education Entrepreneurship Program (n.d.). Such partnerships may allow leadership preparation programs to rebrand themselves as preparers of educational entrepreneurs, signaling an alignment with the neoliberal reforms promoting an education market of specialized schools and schools of choice.

A second major consequence of the convergence of funding cuts, deregulation, and privatization is the increasing presence of what Scott (2009) dubbed “venture philanthropists” (p. 106) in the leadership preparation arena. Charities and nongovernmental organizations such as The Gates Foundation, The Broad Foundation, The Donald and Doris Fisher Fund, and others invest in leadership preparation by funding not-for-profit organizations, such as the National Institute for School Leadership, which in turn prepare school and district leaders for K–12 schools. A decline in support of universities
and the growing number of organizations and institutes providing leadership preparation outside the university has intensified the competition for enrollees into such programs. Arguably, as a potential outcome of neoliberal reform, this dynamic has the potential of diversifying the pool, at least in terms of professional experience. However, pressures to increase enrollment numbers may counter efforts to recruit the most qualified candidates.

**Economies of Access and Place-Bound Constraints**

Not unlike PK–12 organizations, many university-based programs have pursued the use of new media and online delivery platforms to recapture enrollments lost after the recession. Some have even intensified international initiatives along these same lines (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2009; McCarthy, 2015). However, programmatic outcome measures are tied to graduates leading within the states in which they are licensed (e.g., National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2011a, 2011b). Ostensibly, the standards movement of the 1990s led to an attempt by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO, 1996) to promote national standards and perhaps some state reciprocity for increasing mobility of excellent school leaders. While many states have relaxed licensing requirements, states still maintain their own requirements, endorsements, and modified national standards for school leaders (Adams & Copland, 2005). The pressures of new instructional technology may loosen the place-bound nature of most aspiring school leaders, perhaps conflicting with narrow state-based licensing practices and influencing changes in program curricula.

Fiscally austere times impinge on school leadership preparation as practicing school leaders address impact among students, families, and communities. University-based leadership preparation programs face restrictive economic pressures while responding to increasing demands for more diverse candidates who possess insights into the social and political dynamics that exist inside and outside of schools. What remains a question is whether creative measures to meet the demands of economic pressures in fact result in high-quality, diverse, equity-oriented educational leadership candidates as promoted by those concerned with the dynamics of student and community contexts (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2009; Goldring & Schuermann, 2009; Kim & Sunderman, 2005; Marshall & Oliva, 2010; Valenzuela, 2004). In other words, who is benefiting from the changes in program structure and the changes in program content?

**Political Contexts: Dynamic Policy Forces**

When scarcity arises, competition increases, and thus the central dynamic of politics, conflict, occurs. From policies on poverty to special education, public education has suffered a long history of underfunding despite massive mandates. As an example, neoliberal reforms aimed at restructuring urban centers and their schools change the nature of educational politics and “reshape social relations and social identities” (Lipman, 2011, p. 10). In this section we explain how market-based politics have shifted toward a focus on educators’ performance and the subsequent influence on and in leadership preparation programs and credentialing.

**Market-Based Politics**

Over the course of the past 40 years, public policies have been largely reshaped by the ideals of market-based liberalism and the discourses of globalization (Rivzi & Lingard, 2010). Thus, during an era when the United States has labored to remain financially viable in a globalized economy, policymakers have reframed the educational reform debate by promoting educational policies as the necessary vehicle to ensure economic security (Ball, 2001; Carpenter, 2011; Cibulka, 2001; Rivzi & Lingard, 2010). Although the values of democracy and equity imbued in educational
policy have not completely disappeared, they are often eclipsed by neoliberal discourses of efficiency, accountability, and competition (Cross, 2014; DeBray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009; Hess & McGuinn, 2002; Rivzi & Lingard, 2010). Consequently, the ability of school leaders to advocate for the specific needs of their school communities are constrained by the standardization of curriculum, the centralization of inputs, and public pressures triggered by a continued focus on high-stakes accountability (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013; Carpenter & Brewer, 2014; Cranston, 2013; Starr, 2011).

The standards guiding the practices and preparation of school leaders were released and twice revised within this same neoliberal discourse. Unveiled in 1996, and revised in 2008 and 2015, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards offer guidance for leadership preparation programs by highlighting the “foundational principles of education leadership” (CCSSO, 2015, p. 6). The most recent iteration of the ISLLC standards (CCSSO, 2015) is currently under revision, and the subsequent revision conversations have yielded substantial protest concerning the omission of the advocacy of school leaders in confronting social justice issues of race, ethnicity, gendered identities, and other identities (Superville, 2015). The 2015 draft of the ISLLC standards is founded upon seven core standards, each with a supporting subset of functions intended to guide states’ efforts in identifying the leadership qualities essential for principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders (CCSSO, 2015).

While the most recent version of the ISLLC standards is a noteworthy departure from previous versions, one of the most significant changes is the 2014 scrubbing of the principal’s role as a political advocate. Specifically, Standard 6 of the 2008 ISLLC standards tasked school leaders with “promoting the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context” (CCSSO, 2008, p. 18). Yet, the 2015 draft removes any mentioning of politically oriented language. This omission may narrow bureaucratic expectations and beliefs about how school leaders collaborate with families and communities. In a competitive preparation environment, it will most certainly influence the curriculum of preparation programs—especially those espousing fast-track programs.

The exclusion of political advocacy is particularly problematic in an era where the livelihood of principals is determined by academic achievement as measured on standardized assessments. For example, persisting achievement gaps represent a political and social dynamic that require politically savvy principals. If such a gap is treated as a mere technical problem, subsequent responses may induce unnecessary conflict. Another signal that these matters are political is the scarce amount of empirical research on measuring statistically valid relationships between individual student achievement measures and principal effectiveness, despite the press for doing so (Fuller & Hollingworth, 2014). The lack of research in this area is troubling, considering principal evaluations are situated within accountability frameworks that may actually be reproducing educational inequities (Gay, 2007; Kim & Sunderman, 2005; Theoharis, 2007; Valenzuela, 2004).

**Politics of Measuring Educator Quality**

Historically, researchers have struggled to isolate the specific skills needed by school leaders to directly influence student achievement (Grisom & Loeb, 2011). One of the primary difficulties is that principals, while proven to play a critical role in student success, often have an indirect influence on student achievement (Fuller & Hollingworth, 2014; Grissom & Loeb, 2011). Many scholars consider this value to be greater in schools considered to be chronically low performing (Branch et al., 2013; Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). Yet, despite the empirical relationship between principal effectiveness and student test scores, federal programs such as Race to the Top mandated that school leaders’ evaluations significantly reflect student performance on state assessments (Carpenter, Diem, & Young, 2014; Dunlap, 2011).
With a failure to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Obama Administration established an executive finesse of ESEA (Cross, 2014). By 2010, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan unveiled *A Blueprint for Reform*, which extended initiatives within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Mathis & Welner, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The explicit inclusion of principal effectiveness language in the *Blueprint* provided a preview of how Race to the Top and the newly revised School Improvement Grant program of 2009 would push states to prioritize issues surrounding evaluation of teachers and school leaders based on state student assessments (Dee, 2012). Specifically, as one of its four central priorities, the *Blueprint* placed an emphasis on “improving teacher and principal effectiveness to ensure every classroom has a great teacher and every school has a great leader” (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). This legislation altered the educational reform environment by amending the regulatory structures of federal educational policy via input from a select number of persons outside of the Department of Education while excluding the typical legislative consultation (Carpenter et al., 2014; Cross, 2014). These conditions led to a second wave of Race to the Top and associated initiatives such as Investing in Innovations as a means of covert deviation from the spirit of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Cross, 2014).

Because of Congressional inaction and the Obama/Duncan regime’s willingness to exercise power in a vacuum, the U.S. Department of Education issued calls for ESEA Flexibility, otherwise known as waivers from certain assessment requirements (Cross, 2014; Dunlap, 2011). Not only have the ESEA Flexibility Waivers skirted the legislative branch, allocations have been made directly to local districts, effectively circumventing state educational, executive, and legislative authorities (Cross, 2014). The waivers require states to explain plans for the following four principles:

- **Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students**
- **Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support**
- **Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership**

For school leaders, ESEA Waivers Principle 3 (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, 2014, 2015) raised the stakes on their performance evaluations with a mandated formulaic weighting of student achievement in measures of educator effectiveness. These increasing pressures on leaders have yet to be implemented, and thus the implication for leadership preparation may be premature to assess.

**Certification Policies and Access to the Profession**

States retain authority in determining who can be a school leader, and such requirements vary in nuanced ways (Cibulka, 2009; Roach, Smith, & Boutin, 2010) with an insufficient connection to research-based practices (Adams & Copland, 2005). Among the states, alternatives to state licensure for school leaders have been proposed (Broad Foundation & Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2003; Cohen-Vogel & Herrington, 2005). Two states, Michigan and South Dakota, have disengaged university-based preparation from the licensing process, while other states have vacillated with such disengagement (Cibulka, 2009; Cohen-Vogel & Herrington, 2005; McCarthy, 2015). The claims about the effectiveness of alternative programs suffer from many of the same methodological challenges as university-based programs (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012; Donmoyer et al., 2012). Despite such experimentation, national professional standards of leadership practice have been “integrated into state and district principal professional standards and into many preservice, inservice, and other programs” (M. Clifford & Ross, 2011, p. 3). Patently, the relatively recent implementation of entrepreneurial ventures into leadership preparation suffers a lack of independent evaluation due to the infancy of such programs.
**Enduring Political and Economic Trends and Questions**

School leaders and their communities must confront persistently value-laden and politically fraught questions, “such as what should be included in the curriculum, what kind of knowledge is worth transmitting, what should be taught and untaught, and what hidden curriculum is meant to be delivered” (Zhao, 2014, p. 1). The diversity of school communities ensures that different answers to these questions may be equally legitimate, nevertheless hotly debated (Stout et al., 1995). Educational leaders’ work rests on the nexus of these debates, and consequently they require adequate preparation to guide schools and communities through the deliberations to alternatives and answers to such issues (Ehrensal & First, 2008; Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Khalifa, 2012; Knapp & Feldman, 2012; Kowalski et al., 2011; Miron, 2008).

Irrefutably, the U.S. education system is the globe’s most decentralized. As a result, more than 10,000 separate boards of lay citizens must wrestle with the political consequences of answering tough and highly politicized questions (Berkman & Plutzer, 2005; Ehrensal & First, 2008; Fowler, 2013; Kowalski et al., 2011). Often, board members have direct economic impact in their communities as they control millions of jobs (Maeroff, 2010). Despite a relentless three-decade attempt to simultaneously federalize and privatize this vastly diffuse and underresourced enterprise (Cibulka, 2001; Miron, 2008), the most enduring condition remains the Progressive Era’s legacy of neutralizing school leaders’ political agency through a professionalizing agenda (Cibulka, 2009; Plank & Boyd, 1994; Tyack, 1991). In the mid-20th century, McCarty’s dissertation at the University of Chicago revealed that professionally oriented superintendents tended to churn through districts, whereas more politically savvy superintendents sustained their tenure (McCarty & Ramsey, 1971). These findings have been robust into the 21st century (Bjork & Kowalski, 2005; Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2011). Arguably maintaining one’s own job cannot be the sole measure of successful school leadership, and thus leadership preparation must attend to the fact that high rates of school personnel turnover lower student success (Branch et al., 2013; Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Grissom & Loeb, 2011; Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). The current attempts to nationalize school leaders’ licensure with a “laser-like focus on student learning” (CCSSO, 2015, p. 3) likely narrows aspiring school leaders’ potential and willingness to navigate the deep political and economic turbulence surrounding schools.

The political and economic contexts—the political economy—of leadership preparation produce the same dynamics affecting schools and students, as well as their families and communities. Therefore, the potential answer to the overall question of how these contexts affect leadership preparation conflates with questions about what school leaders must know and be able to do to navigate effectively their schools’ and students’ political and economic contexts, and how such learning should be structured. Trends such as increasing privatization and competition, both among PK–12 schools and leadership preparation programs, as well as increasingly narrow and depoliticized content expectations of leadership candidates, pose researchable questions, if not merely an uncertain future for the field.

**Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, we have highlighted the interplay of political and economic shifts that we argue have influenced leadership preparation. The economic contexts of higher education and PK–12 schools and the policy context shaping the work and expectations of educational leaders combine to produce powerful pressures on and in leadership preparation programs. Understanding that these combined forces represent a new “political economy” of education fueled by a neoliberal discourse, we parsed our answers across two questions, one focusing on the economic conditions and the other on historically specific political dynamics. Arguably, these answers reflect a scarce empirical base, as well as an emerging and still thin body of literature projecting how contexts of leadership preparation programs shape program content. In sum, economics and politics influence both the structure and the content of leadership preparation programs.
What Are the Opportunities and Investments in Education and Their Implications for Leadership Preparation?

The global recession as well as globalizing market forces constrained our answers to this question. The recession effects tightened already scarce resources for university-based preparation programs while simultaneously engendering higher productivity demands on traditional high-enrollment programs. Whether such a phenomenon influences market forces that create a space for foundations and not-for-profit organizations to exploit the field of leadership preparation remains an open question. The theory that privatization of leadership preparation creates a healthy competition improving all programs has not been answered definitively by the school-leadership-pipeline entrepreneurs. Furthermore, only recently have university-based programs upped the ante with indicators of quality and alumni impact (Hitt et al., 2012; Orr, 2011; Pounder, 2011).

What Are the Political (and Policy) Dynamics That Affect School Leaders’ Work and the Necessary Associated Knowledge?

Two literatures project answers to this question, school politics and policy histories. School politics literature establishes a consistent history that the foundational structure of U.S. education’s diffuse system spawns a contested terrain of value-laden, critical deliberations—otherwise known as politics. The political reality of schooling conflicts with narratives of an apolitical professionalism. Such tensions surface repeatedly in questions about leadership preparation knowledge and practices. School policy literature establishes a decades-long record of both centralizing and privatizing influences on schools with attached consequences for leadership preparation. While the centralizing policies generate politics of resistance and change, privatizing influences provoke politics of competitive advantage. In the answer to this question, the research gaps may stem from an unwillingness to examine leadership preparation for its political dimensions.

References


The Political and Economic Contexts


