

Influence of Mentorship Experiences in the Development of Women Superintendents in Texas as Transformational Leaders

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Ten women superintendents in Texas were interviewed for this phenomenological narrative study to understand their mentoring experiences framed within transformational leadership theory. The research used a guided protocol to conduct face-to-face interviews. In this study, authors sought to answer questions about the influence of mentorship experiences on the development of women superintendents through intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. These experiences were then interpreted through a phenomenological approach and retold through narrative. We found that mentorship experiences contribute to the development of women superintendents as transformational leaders and also expose the need to align mentorship experiences of aspiring superintendents to established leadership theory.

Keywords: *Mentoring, women superintendents, transformational leadership*

Women represent approximately 75% of all classroom educators and 52% of public school principals (Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013; Snyder & Dillow, 2012). Yet, among school superintendents across the nation, women only represent 24% of these educational leadership positions (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2011). The contrast between the representation of women in the classroom and women as school district leaders suggests the need to continue to explore how women access and flourish in positions of leadership, especially the superintendency (Grogan & Brunner, 2005; Morrison, 2012).

There is no journey to leadership that is not without its difficulties (Rhodes & Fletcher, 2013). The literature reflects the many obstacles unique to women seeking the superintendency (Grogan & Brunner, 2005; Katz, 2006; Muñoz, Pankake, Ramalho, Mills, & Simonsson, 2014). Academic leadership programs do not tailor development opportunities to address the specific needs of aspiring women leaders (Petersen, Fusarelli, & Kowalski, 2008). In the absence of textbook models for the superintendency or programs designed to prepare women as educational leaders, mentorship becomes a critical component to the development and preparation of women superintendents (Muir, 2014).

Though researchers of women in educational leadership would indicate that women are underrepresented in roles of educational leadership, they also would tell us women are more prepared than ever to assume a superintendency (Brunner & Kim, 2010; Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; Snyder & Dillow, 2012). Without defined standards by which mentorship experiences operate between mentors and aspiring superintendents, much is left to chance as to what topics of leadership are addressed (Bynum, 2015; Muir, 2014). In addition to the lack of formalized or standards based mentorship experiences, women often find they are forced to enter into a mentorship experience with a male mentor as there is a shortage of women mentors or role models in the field of educational leadership (Katz, 2005; Sealy & Singh, 2010).

Theoretical Framework: Transformational Leadership

Bernard Bass expounded on the research of James Burns, which defined the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership (Leong & Fischer, 2011). Transactional leadership is based on the contingency of three factors, contingent reward and both passive and active management by exception (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Contingent rewards reinforce role and task requirements of the leader and followers. Passive and active management by exception involves the direct and indirect of monitoring by the leader for errors within the transaction (Bass, 1998; Zhu, Sosik, Riggio, & Yang, 2012). Key to the effectiveness of the transaction between the leader and follower is the economy of positive reward (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

The transformational leader is aware of the potential and needs of those who follow them (Northouse, 2015). There are four factors which impact transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). Northouse (2015) elaborated on the four factors of transformational leadership. Idealized influence or charisma is when the followers strive to be like the leader. Inspirational motivation, involves inspiring followers to take ownership in a common vision. Intellectual stimulation empowers follower to take risks and explore problems and their solutions. Northouse added that individualized consideration allows leaders to become intimate with the needs of individual followers.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the mentor experiences of female superintendents in Texas, framed within transformational leadership. For the purpose of this study, success was defined as a female superintendent who has served a minimum of one year in the position and who is recognized as outstanding by her own district, Educational Service Center (ESC), or by another professional organization. These women identified themselves as transformational leaders framed within the four components of Bass's theory of transformational leadership (1998). The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How was intellectual stimulation influenced through mentoring experiences?
2. How was individualized consideration influenced through mentoring experiences?
3. How was inspirational motivation influenced through mentoring experiences?
4. How was idealized influence influenced through mentoring experiences?

Literature Review

At least 75% of the nation's public school teachers are female (Snyder & Dillow, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2011). Bitterman et al. (2013) reported that 52% of all public school principals were female, of which 64% were elementary, 42% were middle school, and 30% were high school principals. Data collected as part of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) decennial study of American School Superintendents showed that of the 1,867 school superintendents surveyed, women represented approximately only 24% regardless of size of the school district (Kowalski et al., 2011). With 75% of women in teaching positions one would expect there to be more women superintendents (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014).

The career pathway of women to the superintendency tends to follow a traditional path of being a teacher, principal, district office administrator and then a superintendent of schools (Brunner & Kim, 2010; Sampson & Davenport, 2010). However traditional, for a woman, the journey toward leadership is not necessarily linear (Hertneky, 2012; Katz, 2006). Brunner and Kim (2010) argued that women who aspire to become superintendents often hold degrees in education, curriculum and instruction or educational leadership. Consequently, women develop in their expertise as instructional leaders but often stagnate in the development of other leadership skills needed to access career opportunities. In fact, more men are appointed to the role of superintendent, even though the academic preparation of women for the position is more current (Glass, 2017). Over 12 years ago, Grogan and Brunner (2005) argued that women often plateau professionally as a mid-level administrator or as an assistant superintendent, often in curriculum and instruction. In addition, because they progress into leadership more slowly than men, women are older when they apply for and become superintendents. Women are often more likely to become superintendents in rural or small town districts (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

The Texas Education Code, Section 11.201 (a) (2015), outlines the duties of the superintendent. According to the Texas Education Agency, the superintendent certificate candidate must hold a master's degree, a principal certificate, complete a superintendent certification program, and pass the state superintendent exam. In Texas, school superintendents should possess competency in the following domains; Domain I: Leadership of the educational community, Domain II: Instructional leadership, and Domain III: Administrative leadership (Texas Education Code Sec. 21.046, 2015). The role of superintendent far reaches beyond the scope of professional competency it also encompasses, acting as a business manager or CEO,

instructional leader, communicator, political leader, and social activist (Björk, Kowalski, & Browne-Ferrigno, 2014).

Though prevalent in teacher preparation programs, mentoring programs are also being developed for school administrators and superintendents (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006). However, there are voids in the literature defining mentoring (Dawson, 2014). Ragins and Kram (2007) suggested that mentoring is a relationship between a more experienced mentor and a lesser experience apprentice with the focus of the relationship centered on professional growth and development. The growth and development aspect within the context of work is what makes mentorship different from other types of relationships.

Mentoring may be structured in different ways. Mentoring relationships may be formal when facilitated through an organization or leader preparation program (Muir, 2014). Bynum (2015) suggested they may also be informal as the result of a relationship among peers who aid one another through the collaboration of a project with supervisors or peers. Informal mentoring may better suit women who struggle with the traditional roles within formal mentorship, however, researchers have suggested informal mentoring can be just as valuable as formal mentoring for personal and professional growth (Gorman, Durmowicz, Roskes, & Slattery, 2010).

Copeland and Calhoun (2014) listed the attributes of a mentor as someone who is available to advise, direct or guide, protect, help one network, and connect their protégé with job opportunities. The greatest support the mentor often gives the protégé is time (Bynum, 2015; Grossman & Davis, 2012). Highly successful leaders do not always have the time required to give to mentoring relationships (Tolar, 2012). For today's new leaders, interaction with the mentor is often maximized through use of technology and social media (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Willingness to meet the unique needs of the protégé to further the mentorship experience emphasizes the intentionality of the mentor to support and in the selectivity of whom they mentor (Johnson & Ridley, 2015).

In educator development there are two facets of mentoring: career preparation and emotional support (Grossman & Davis, 2012). Mentoring that facilitates career development includes the introduction of the apprentice to networking opportunities they may not otherwise be afforded without the mentor, professional and political guidance, coaching in decision making, and the provision of safety from risky actions or decisions (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006). Many outcomes of mentoring for the protégé are evident in higher salaries, a strong sense of professional identity, career advancement, job satisfaction, and community (Johnson & Ridley, 2015).

Mentorship offers emotional support to the protégé by building a relationship of acceptance and trust, offering counseling and even friendship (Ragins & Kram, 2007; Sethna, 2014). Thus, new school district administrators need to be nurtured as they encounter the nuances of the role (Boerema, 2011). A successful mentorship should include building a relationship with someone of like values, who possesses experiences and knowledge, and who is willing to give in time and effort to support the protégé (Gilmour & Kinsella, 2009). The benefits of a mentor relationship are the same for both men and women, whether the arrangement is male to female, or female to female (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014). Over 20 years ago, Allen, Jacobson, and Lomotey (1995) found that men and women both prefer to have mentors from their own gender. Researchers still identify differences in outcomes of mentoring between males and females and those that only involve females; yet females continue to perceive having a female mentor as a means to have a role model who identifies with their experiences (Dunbar &

Kinnersley, 2011). However, one of the most impactful outcomes of women who are mentored is their decision to mentor other women in the career path (Morrison, 2012).

Methodology

The qualitative approach of phenomenological narrative approach was used to conduct this study. Phenomenology is the process of interpreting experiences through the first-person narrative (Moustakas, 1994). The approach of phenomenology magnifies the evolution of the research through developing phenomena (Simon, 2011). Complementing a phenomenological interpretation of experiences is the utilization of the narrative. The narrative approach draws out common themes embedded in the individual stories of the participants (Creswell, 2013)

The participants of this study consisted of 10 successful Texas women superintendents who were purposefully recruited to participate once the researcher identified that they met the criteria for the study. The women superintendents identified themselves as transformational leaders or aspiring transformational leaders framed within the four components of Bass's theory of transformational leadership. Specific criteria to participate in the study included the following:

1. Participants are current or past female superintendents in the state of Texas.
2. Participants have completed at least one year as a superintendent of a school system.
3. Participants self-identify as a transformational leader or aspire to being one.
4. Participants were recognized as outstanding for their positive contributions to education by an education-related entity.

The researcher conducted personal interviews with the participants. Interviews were audio recorded and scripted as suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Nine of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and one was conducted in writing via email. A transcriptionist transcribed each of the interviews. Each participant was given a pseudonym.

From the transcribed transcripts, multiple authors reviewed, described, classified, and interpreted the data. Multiple authors analyzed the transcripts of the interviews as recommended by Creswell (2013). First, the authors familiarized themselves with the data by listening to recordings of the interviews and reading the transcripts. The authors identified significant statements made by the participants to gain an understanding the experience of the participant. Significant statements were grouped, giving rise to themes from the responses of the participants. Both textural and structural descriptions were used to write about the experiences and the context of influence of the phenomena on the participant (Creswell, 2013).

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the mentor experiences of female superintendents in Texas, framed within transformational leadership. The major findings of this study are discussed and summarized by research question.

Research Question 1

The first research question was used to investigate how intellectual stimulation was influenced through mentoring experiences. A primary theme emerged: mentorship experiences give aspiring women leaders opportunity for professional exposure.

The theme of providing women leaders opportunities for professional exposure was

expressed by all of the participants. For example, Ms. Padilla shared how her mentor would have her come alongside him in the day-to-day operations of the school district. He would show her how to work through budget issues, have her attend regional superintendent meetings with him, helping her to “get a feel of who was who and what was what.” She spoke of the invaluable lessons she learned in just being allowed to be present in the professional circle of her mentor. She commented:

I almost feel like it found me instead of me finding it. He encouraged me to go to trainings and kind of getting a little bit of the bigger picture. I think about what it is like to be in a classroom, you know you have the blinder on and it’s just about your little corner of the building. Then you become a campus administrator and your view expands to that campus. You come to central office it gets bigger and when you sit in the superintendent’s chair you better have your head on a swivel. You need the full picture. He really just gave me the opportunity to see the big picture.

Professional exposure such as the opportunity to attend meetings, participate on committees and interacting with the school board provided participants with the hands-on experiences female superintendents need to prepare them for like experiences in the superintendency.

Dr. Condry shared how a superintendent she worked for as an assistant principal encouraged her to join a superintendent preparation program, he would be the one who would ultimately recommend her for the program setting her career path in a direction she would not have chosen for herself. She said:

I learned everything about [being] a servant leader from him. I was always a teacher leader but I was never a [transformational] leader until I met him. He was the one who nominated me for the cooperative superintendency program without my knowledge. I had been an assistant principal for half a year and I [didn’t feel that I belonged] in a Superintendent training program and he said, “You don’t have to be one but if you can get into this program, you are going to learn more than you ever would” and I am so glad he pushed me into it or I wouldn’t have done it.

This finding is consistent with the literature that these invaluable experiences provide an environment where the developing female superintendent can utilize leadership skills not necessarily taught in superintendent preparation programs (Brunner & Kim, 2010).

Research Question 2

The second research question was used to investigate how individualized consideration was influenced through mentoring experiences. We found that female superintendents were able to gain in their capacity for individualized consideration by learning how to recognize the needs of their employees, how to make connections with people and show compassion as leaders, and how to encourage those they lead to grow professionally and personally.

Recognize the needs of their employees. Being able to recognize the needs of the employees assists the transformational leader in maximizing the talents of their staff while creating opportunities for them to engage in professional development that not only propels the employee but undergirds the overall vision of the school or district (Dawson, 2014). Building capacity through professional interactions and relationships can be the platform by which the transformational leader drives change. Dr. Macias used the valuable lesson of making connections in order to move the team forward. In her first year as a superintendent, she was

approached by a teacher in the district and the connection with the staff that unfolded set the tone of her superintendency. She said:

I'll never forget a teacher my very first month here that told me, "I can't believe you said hi to me" and I said, "Goodness what do you mean?" She said, "Our other superintendents would walk right by us and never say hi." I said I'm so sorry you were treated that way. There were some horror stories. There was another teacher that asked me if we were going to have the air conditioner turned on because you know some elementary teachers, they're starting to come already and they said, "Are you going to allow us to turn on the air conditioner?" I thought she was joking and I said, "What do you mean"? The teacher said, "Well, we either have to work really late at night and really early in the morning because we are not allowed to have the air conditioner on during the summer." I said, Oh, my gosh, that's crazy, you turn it on and crank it up."

Make connections with people and show compassion as a leader. Dr. Macias shared a poignant story of how she learned the importance of interpersonal relationships from one of the very first leaders she looked up to as a teacher, her campus principal. She shared:

Picture me like a little puppy dog following around my principal at that time wanting to be on every committee I wanted to do everything she could possibly throw my way. I did it for her and she was a different type of person. I never really knew if she liked me or not or if I just annoyed her and that's why she allowed me to do things. Later on, I found out she did like me. She was a very, I don't want to say tough, but just very serious, never showed emotion. I am touchy feely; I like to hug everyone on the first day; that was not her. She rarely cracked a smile but that was not going to cause me to give up. It was like two years before she wrote me a handwritten note that said "thank you." I think I still have it.

How to encourage those they lead to grow professionally and personally. Participants noted how they were encouraged to grow professionally and personally. However, in some instances, even the absence of this had a strong influence on the participant. For example, Ms. Sheppard explained that the absence of a leader who took interest in her professional growth has resulted in a very intentional approach in the recognition and development of her own staff. She shared:

I appoint people to leadership roles, sharing the wealth, and then get out of the way. Trusting people when they try new ideas and letting them "fly or fly in to the wall" is an important thing. And guess what? They usually fly and I learn my old ideas may have been outdated anyway.

Research Question 3

The third research question was used to investigate how inspirational motivation was influenced through mentoring experiences. The following themes emerged from the participants in this study: (a) mentoring experiences helped them to gain an understanding of the need to lead through inspirational motivation, (b) fostering a sense of purpose in others, and (c) being a resource helping others excel. Findings for this research question were in agreement with Weatherly (2011) who noted the up and coming transformational leader may aspire to be like their mentor hoping to exhibit similar inspirational attributes like being a strong instructional leader, demonstrating fiscal maturity, or political savvy when interacting with board members.

Mentoring experiences helped them gain understanding of the need to lead through inspirational motivation. One of the most compelling stories of inspiring others was revealed by Dr. Wang. Dr. Wang was a retiree who had volunteered to come out of retirement to lead a small 1A school district, with an approximate enrollment of 300 students PK-12. Dr. Wang recalled being told early on in her career when she attempted to enroll in an administrator preparation program, that perhaps she would be better suited as a school counselor as the likelihood that a school district would hire a female administrator was very slim. Dr. Wang explained what disheartened her most when thinking about that time in her career was that she did not even attempt to question the forced redirection of her career path. She said that she accepted that women were not meant to be educational leaders.

Eventually Dr. Wang would come to lead as a school principal, in what turned out to be a convenient happenstance. In her words, “I happened to be in the building, I happened to have my mid-management certificate, and the principal of the school happened to be dismissed that day.” She had no experience leading a school, and her only hope was that the school board president believed she could do the job. She said that she now understands the value of inspiring future leaders by encouraging them that they can indeed become principals and superintendents.

Fostering a sense of purpose in others. Fostering a sense of purpose in others was mentioned by several of the participants. For example, faced with the decision of her next career step, Mrs. Millies stood at a crossroads that many leaders face not knowing which direction to go. She called upon a colleague for help. She was connected with a professional life coach. For Mrs. Millies, the concept of life coaching was foreign to her yet she knew this decision would impact her career for the long term, she took the leap and reached out for help. She said:

I had a friend who was a superintendent who worked with me in [another district]. We talked and I'd call her about stuff so she told me to call this coach. She's a coach who coaches principals in turn around environments. She had done some work with [our district] on coaching, what coaching means, so I'd known her a little bit. I just sat down with her and she did something with me that I hadn't done before which was super important. One of the things she started with was, pick your top five values, go on the web look at list of 500 values and pick, not one, pick five! She said, when you have values and the environment you're in is not matching those values then you feel unbalanced.

Mrs. Millies had been talking to her about the superintendency. She was curious what her options were as an assistant superintendent and general counsel for the district. She wondered if she should select general counsel because there were three positions at the time. She shared:

They were very different types of positions. One was a superintendency, one was a general counsel position, one was a deputy superintendent position and so she was helping me identify what was it that I really wanted. What about the situation I was in was incongruent with my five values? That was a really great exercise. I had never done that before. That has been super valuable to me.

Being a resource helping others excel. The women superintendents in this study gave many examples of helping others find purpose by helping them to excel at where they are now. Dr. Macias stated she hoped those she leads see her as a servant leader as part of being a transformational leader. She expounded on her desire to lead through service when she said:

I would hope that people would describe it as a servant leadership type. My philosophy has always been that I will not be successful if my principals aren't successful. I try to walk a fine line of support but not micromanaging. That is certainly something I have

worked on for years because I just like to get in there and do it and there's times when I've had to really reflect on my thinking that getting in there is helping them, when the staff is thinking, Wow! She must not trust me or why doesn't she just let me do this. So now I really work at backing myself up but still letting them know that I'm here to support, to help, but trusting them to do their job.

Dr. Macias emphasized that she shares with the staff in an effort to help them meet their goals. She tells them, "I'll only be successful if you get your goal, so I'm here to help you get your goal. So my goal is to really help people achieve in life."

Research Question 4

The fourth research question was used to investigate how idealized influence was influenced through mentoring experiences. Participants emphasized that mentorship experiences influence the capacity of being a part of a community. Emergent themes included: (a) the practice of sharing and promoting a vision with others, (b) leading by example, and (c) building a culture of trust and confidence. Findings for this question supported Bass (1985), who argued the successful mentorship experience promotes a leader to reach beyond their own strengths. Bynum (2015) further emphasized that they invite others into their circle of leadership allowing the talents of others to contribute to the direction of the school district.

Sharing and promoting a vision. Sharing and promoting a vision was emphasized by several of the participants. For example, Dr. Bays demonstrated a unique strength in her ability to allow others to be a part of casting the vision for the district. Where some school leaders might feel insecure, she found confidence in knowing she leads with a talented team of educators and business people. She did not just play the role of being a superintendent, but learned from her peers as much as they learned from her. The difference is that she shared the spotlight with others as they shared and promoted the vision.

For Ms. Sheppard, sharing and promoting a vision has proven to be successful. She said it well, "I learned to delegate. There is no way one person can do all of it and those around us appreciate the recognition of being given a leadership role. So in the words of Disney's Elsa character, I learned to "let it go." Her humorous take on sharing a vision undergirded this "must have" attribute of leadership in order to share anything you have to be willing to "let it go," not by the wayside or out of control, but instead into the hands of those around you to carry forward who share the vision.

Leading by example. Most of the participants mentioned the influence superintendents have by leading by example. Ms. Padilla gave some insight as to why she leads by example. She noted:

I think that my staff would say that I lead by example and that is one of my strengths. You know, last year was my first full year as a superintendent so I just spent a lot of time during in-service just talking to them. You know I went through the process of explaining to them I came here out of necessity but I am here because I want to be here. It was kind of a full circle thing. One of the things I shared with them is, I am never going to ask you to do something that I wouldn't do. I am going to work harder than I will ask you to work. I think they see that, I'm always around. I mean I go over and help with the car line at the primary school.

Building a culture of trust and confidence. Dr. Condrey recalled what her mentor taught her about the need for transparency to build trust. She responded that her superintendent

always was honest and acknowledged how important it is for the faculty to “own” what happened in the district. She said that his advice was “you just can’t criticize people who own things.” For example, to encourage them not to be complacent, he had built such a strong culture of trust and confidence that he could talk with faculty regarding district scores that other districts wish they had but it was not perceived as criticism. The district was 90% White and 100% economic advantaged. She recalled that he would say that 90% was just not “good enough. . . in other words, we suck.” Her mentor superintendent would tell faculty not to be proud of themselves, after all, their students should be going to Ivy League schools. Because of that culture of trust, he was able to “push, push, and push.”

Conclusions and Implications

Based on the findings from this study, there are several suggested conclusions. Overall, the study findings support other researchers who have found that mentorship experiences do indeed influence the development of female superintendents as transformational leaders (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; Young & McLeod, 2001). Mentoring experiences provide opportunities for the aspiring transformational leader to work cooperatively with others learning to lead teams, analyzing fiscal data, and garnering the political relationships they will have with board members and the professional community of educators and district leaders (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014).

Mentorship experiences enhance the intellectual stimulation of the aspiring leader by providing a professional model the leader can reflect upon when influencing the intellectual stimulation of others in their leadership (Bynum, 2015). In addition, the success of the mentorship experience is closely tied to the relationship between the mentor and mentee and consequently, the relationships a school district leader builds with the stakeholders in their learning community strengthen their effectiveness in the role (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011). For some leaders, the mentorship experience is a source of inspirational motivation. The up and coming transformational leader may aspire to be like their mentor hoping to exhibit similar inspirational attributes like being a strong instructional leader, demonstrating fiscal maturity, or political savvy when interacting with board members (Weatherly, 2011).

Another suggested conclusion is that as important as it is for the transformational leader to learn what to do, it is equally important to learn what not to do. Fostering a sense of purpose for the female superintendent requires overt acts of demonstrating leadership from behind the desk of the superintendent. Others are inspired to see their leader roll up their sleeves and work shoulder to shoulder with them, rather than issue mandates and edicts. Highly visible becomes more than being the superintendent seen in formal meetings; instead highly visible may mean the superintendent is seen picking up trash in and around the football field helping staff prepare for a football game. Thus, the transformational leader and mentor advocates and makes available the tools and resources for his or her staff to be successful and makes himself or herself accessible to the masses (Bass, 1998; Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Lastly, a suggested conclusion based on the findings of this study is that the successful mentorship experience promotes a leader to reach beyond his or her own strengths suggesting that both the mentor and the mentee gain from the mentor experience. Mentors invite others into their circle of leadership allowing the talents of others to contribute to the direction of the school district (Bass, 1985; Bynum, 2015). Thus, mentors and mentees are able to identify with those they lead opening the relationship to trust and confidence and ultimately positive progress (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006).

We make the following suggestions for implications for practice to provide ways that mentorship experiences could be tailored to more positively impact the professional development of female superintendents as transformational leaders. There should be an intentional alignment of mentorship activities within the four components of Bass's theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1998). Superintendent preparation programs should also require formal mentoring experiences aligned to the four components of Bass's theory of transformational leadership. These mentorship experiences should be mandated as part of the first year superintendent contract and should require evidence of the development and growth opportunities beyond that of a checklist signed by the mentor and mentee. We further suggest that job descriptions for the position of superintendent should reflect roles and responsibilities demonstrating utilization of transformational leadership strategies. In addition, administrator resources could be made available that provide scenario examples of administrative strategies incorporating the four components of transformation leadership.

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