Leadership through Chaos and the Demand for Resiliency

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Introduction

In 2020, few could imagine the impact of COVID-19. In addition to the personal, social and economic repercussions that were continuously newsworthy events, the governmental response impacted the fabric of an institution that is notoriously slow to change, public education. Almost overnight, public school administrators and teachers were placed in positions in which traditional face-to-face teaching and learning environments were replaced by online learning environments with the expectation of continued meaningful learning. While the results of this "pivot" are primarily anecdotal, the institution of public education remained intact and was tasked with the improvement of content delivery in the fall of 2020.

Because of the recency of the event, we are somewhat limited in our understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on educational settings. A 2020 British study engaged teachers in narrative research and found six themes: uncertainty, finding a way, worry for the vulnerable, importance of relationships, teacher identity, and reflections (Kim & Asbury, 2020). Cheng et al. (2020) interviewed more than 100 representatives from community-based organizations to study public sector and community-based responses to the pandemic in China. While not all community-based organizations relate to public education, an essential outcome of their research that informs educational leaders is the importance of building trust and long-term capacity in these types of organizations (2020).

In this context, the researchers sought to understand the organizational dynamics that assisted and hindered this process, the leadership actions that moved learning organizations toward meaningful goals, the organizational process and procedural redefinitions that took place to support stakeholders through this change, and, most importantly, the researchers sought to give

voice to and understand the thoughts and experiences of various stakeholders involved in public education.

Context

One of the sobering takeaways from the international pandemic is the concept of new normal. Indeed, many were entranced with the phrase in its advent, but over the last many months, the phrase has become one about which people have grown tired or weary. In some ways, new normal is a lens through which one can look at an organization's culture. That is, to what extent do the values and beliefs that are collectively held by those who are invested in an organization succumb to force from without the organization in times of crisis? In other words, despite stresses placed upon an organization from its surroundings, how does an organization adapt to maintain its primary purpose and meet the needs of its stakeholders?

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), most contemporary organizational theorists view public schools as open and rational organizations. Utilizing this theory, one must understand that there is an interdependence between the organization and the environment. Hoy and Miskel cite Scott (1987) and discuss multiple connections between the organization and the environment that flows freely throughout the organization. To some extent, it is argued that the environment can be seen as a source of order within the organization. While this concept is easily applied in times of tranquility, times of chaos and upheaval in the environment provide a multitude of stresses on the stakeholders of an organization and its leadership in engaging in activities that are both purpose-driven and in harmony with the mission, values, and goals of the organization.

Duchek et al. (2020) argue that organizations must constantly operate in a "turbulent world in which unexpected events are omnipresent" (p. 387). In these turbulent worlds, organizations have been forced to have crisis management plans and crisis management teams. Because of the

never-ending list of possible crises, Paraskevas (2006) advocates that effective organizations create plans that are considered to be "co-evolving" within the organization (p. 892). That is, a "living" plan that adopts complexity principles and involves membership from a diversity of publics has a distinct benefit to ensure organizational resilience.

Leadership in a turbulent world requires an additional skill set. Clement and Rivera (2017) discuss the management imperative of not only coping with unfavorable environments but also adapting to what the authors refer to as "ecological adversity" (the environment). A proper lens through which to view the task, Clement and Rivera argue, is to include transformative change as part of the leader's role in addressing resiliency. A proper response to stresses within an organization is a leadership skill vital to an organization's ability to sustain its mission.

Whether meeting transformational goals or not, Sellnow (2012) researched the importance of instructional communication in crisis or chaotic situations (2012). According to these researchers, there is a meaningful connection between the relevance of instructional messages and the ability of the organization to restore order. Because schools are essentially education or instruction-oriented organizations, there is significant importance for personnel and stakeholders to understand and act upon new information. Cotta and Salvador (2020) tied organizational resiliency to the ability of personnel to integrate information and knowledge.

While the findings of Cotta and Salvador (2020) were found to be effective in organizations with more formalized job descriptions and roles that were clearly defined, schools tend to be less structured. The advent of Professional Learning Communities, teacher-leadership tracks, and other professionalization practices leads teachers and school administrators to blur the line between rank-and-file relationships and peer relationships. In a school environment, Margolis (2020) calls on teachers who are not in positional authority positions because of their malleable

roles to create the opportunity for meaningful professional learning and communication in times of chaos. The argument is that teacher leaders have the ability, because they are not in evaluative positions, to produce productive spaces in which others may engage in "productive complexity, agency, and systemic learning" (p. 397). Through this or a similar process, Kim and Asbury (2020) report that teachers use their professional learning to create a shared teacher identity to improve students' experiences and move the school toward a resilient outcome.

Resiliency comes as a result of an organization's ability to change as its environment changes. When the environment changes, organizational leaders must recognize early signs of the crisis or chaos causing the change. Teo (2017) alludes to this recognition and defines the leadership response as liminality – "a period when routines are disrupted, and new relational connections are made to allow members to adjust psychologically, emotionally, and socially, to activate resilience" (p. 137).

This period of liminality is essential in schools. During this period, Farnsworth (2016) advocates that participants can make connections with one another to expand their emotional intelligence. In the teacher realm, this is essential because teachers experience personal hardships that cause disconnection from their missions and public hardships as assessments of their efforts are often less-than-tolerant. In a period of liminality, teachers are given the ability to engage with professional colleagues and leverage those communications to transform teaching and learning practices and play a role in communal healing endeavors.

Purpose

Giving voice to and understanding the thoughts and experiences of various stakeholders involved in public education offers insights into organizational culture. In this article, we present perspectives of the experiences of stakeholders who interact with public educational

organizations on personal and professional levels in a climate that can best be defined as uncertain and chaotic. Of particular interest is the commonality of the various thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about different yet shared experiences through a global pandemic.

Discussion questions addressed educational and personal impact, related to education, of COVID-19. Questions altered to address issues related to each of the stakeholders. While specific questions were constructed to each of the stakeholder groups, common inquiries that supported discussion are below:

1. How has COVID-19 most significantly impacted your role?

2. How has COVID-19 impacted relationships externally in the school community?

3. How has COVID-19 changed or otherwise impacted communication with parents and the community?

4. How has COVID-19 changed or otherwise impacted relationships internally within the school community?

Research Design

This article reflects a qualitative approach to understanding stakeholder voices regarding experiences, feelings, and beliefs related to an organization during a pandemic. To ascertain insights about the stakeholders in the study that cannot be gained by simply interpreting statistics and numbers, qualitative inquiry was utilized (Lichtman, 2010). The qualitative data obtained in the study uncovered the participants' perspectives and experiences through their rich descriptions.

The particular method of research used included "in-depth interviews, and open-ended interviews" for the purposes of data collection (Patton, 2002, p. 4). The objective was to collect rich, thick depictions of how an organization adapts to maintain its primary purpose and meet the

needs of its stakeholders for later analysis, as well as the development of a detailed textual description of the findings (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 2002). The goal was to bring to life, to make real, to illuminate from stakeholders' perspectives, the experiences they went through adapting to a new normal after the international pandemic. The study focused on the perceptions of campus administrators, teachers, parents, and staff in particular.

Participants

Purposeful sampling was used. For purposive sampling, "researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population" (Berg, 2009, p. 50). Data were collected from school districts located across several states by graduate students in an administrative preparation program in Texas. In an effort to balance the respective voices of the stakeholders, 17 campus administrators, 17 teachers, 17 parents, and 17 staff were invited for one-on-one interviews. The selection of 17 representatives from each stakeholder group served two purposes. First, the study was designed to attempt to capture a robust description of stakeholder perception and experience. Second, data gathering was influenced by course pedagogy and the instructional desire to ensure that the graduate students had an opportunity to appreciate stakeholder perspectives of the connectedness between global, chaotic events and their influence on the educational setting. The rationale behind their selection was the importance of recording various experiences and interactions with reopening and sustaining resilient learning environments to reflect a holistic perception.

Procedures

In collecting data for the study, one interview was conducted with each of the 17 stakeholders in each of the four groups (campus administrators, teachers, parents, and staff). The goal was to create a candid conversation that addresses resiliency as they experienced it in depth. The

underlying assumption of the interviews was to create a permissive atmosphere that fostered a range of opinions and allow the participants to reveal their understanding from the interview questions.

The interview questions were inspired by the literature review concerning the impact of Covid-19 and its implications for social and economic practices, long-term outlook and hope, optimism, communication for emotional connections in schools. The interview protocol was piloted first with a group of three participants from each representative group. It was then revised to the degree to which the interview results support the proposed use of the one-on-one interview protocols. After piloting the interview protocol, a member check with the participants was done by asking them to review the interpretation of the interview data. The same process also was completed following the data collection and analysis. Throughout this process, peer debriefing was utilized by discussing and attaining feedback from the principals of the campuses included in the study.

To recruit stakeholders from each group for the interviews, contact was made using emails from all principals in the two urban school district campus principals to which 17 responded. In addition, the principals provided emails to their teachers, parents, and staff for the researchers to send emails to explain the study. Seventeen participants from teachers, parents, and staff who responded for inclusion were contacted, established a time, and provided information about the study. With regard to interviews, upon agreeing to participate, the researchers arranged Zoom meetings for the interviews and sought participants' informed consent for recording for later transcriptions and notes. Each interview lasted between 20 minutes to 30 minutes. The interviews were recorded in Zoom and were later transcribed. All of these steps were essential to

the qualitative research method, as well as the ethical treatment of study participants (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 2002).

While some level of analysis had begun at the inception of the interview process, the researchers took occasion to sort and categorize the findings in order to look for emergent themes and patterns (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 2002). The input of the participants was critical in providing a layered understanding of the perspectives of the participants. Field notes about the participants' physical actions, appearance, reactions, and overall demeanor throughout the interviews were taken.

Data Analysis

Once all interviews were completed, they were coded and organized. To analyze the interview data, brief descriptive summary statements were created arising from common categories (King, 2004). First, the responses were identified as units and then compressed into briefer statements in which the primary sense of what was stated was rephrased further into brief and overriding thematic statements. The data was then analyzed, and research questions were placed under data categories and themes to determine if there was enough information to substantiate the findings and make interpretations.

To continue further analysis, constant comparative method was utilized (Boeije, 2002). This process ensured accuracy since the information was not drawn from a single source or individual (Creswell, 2005). The analysis focused on interviews and comprehensive analysis of all data (Bogdam & Biklen, 2003). From this stage forward, categories and codes were generated and revised several times. Thematic summaries for each interview were created by carefully identifying issues and themes that subsequently emerged from the interviews themselves. From these summaries, it helped to continue to identify emergent themes. Next, the study extensively

analyzed the transcribed data, using various codes and sub-codes several times until similar themes came out repeatedly. The interview data was further analyzed to substantiate and confirm all evidence to support an emerging theme. This overall process ensured valid results because of the information being drawn from various sources (Creswell, 2007).

Emergent Findings and Themes

In response to our analysis process, several themes emerged among our participants. First, participants recalled events and challenges and provided vivid context to describe and detail their perceptions of the chaotic environments heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, they also revealed the feelings and emotions that each experienced through the multitude of challenges as the practice of "school" (and a great many of the roles and perceived responsibilities) was transformed.

Based on the analysis of the interviews, three primary themes emerged: (1) the importance of relationships, (2) the dichotomous aspect of communication, and (3) the utilization of a mindset that addresses "new tools."

The Importance of Relationships

Teo, in 2017 research, promoted the importance of leaders in crisis situations to communicate mindfully to encourage positive emotional connections among members of the organization. Our participants mirrored this concept. The perceived need to have communication that aided in relationship building was a common topic in several interviews. For example, one teacher stated it this way:

> I feel COVID-19 has impacted my role as a teacher, by taking on other roles to support my students. It has caused changes in the way instruction is delivered and the way, as a teacher, we need to be available to our students.

Another teacher referenced the affective demands for which teachers felt responsible by acknowledging how their role has expanded to include expectations to provide support with technology and counseling for students, families, and co-workers.

Campus administrators voiced similar thoughts about the impact of COVID-19 on relationships. The transition from a dimension that is traditionally considered a primarily face-to-face endeavor to one forced to move to virtual platforms was a concept that campus administrators often mentioned. Recognizing ,however, that the need to build relationships was even greater during the pandemic, one administrator acknowledged the challenge by noting, "I think that relationship building is so paramount and important. Even though COVID exists, that is something that we just had to adapt to and make sure we are on the forefront."

One of the responding administrators actually saw the impact of the pandemic as a positive regarding communication:

> The parent/teacher conference used to be the primary way we communicated with parents. Since COVID-9, school staff is using text, email, google sites, telephone calls, and zoom meetings to visit with a parent, and we can reach more than we have in the past.

In Teo's 2017 research, resilient organizations experienced a liminal or transitional period during which leaders and stakeholders purposefully engaged in influencing the formation of new connections and new networks to enable collective meaning-making and sense-making.

Similarly, our respondents engaged in activities to bridge the gap between standard operating procedures and maximize the potential of the new environment. One teacher summed up this role as one that morphed and included "interwined aspects of meeting the students' needs and communicating immediately and intentionally with parents." Another teacher asserted changes that came with the pandemic were actually beneficial suggesting the changes required innovation and creativity situated in the importance of the student and teacher relationship.

School administrators had similar experiences. One discussed the transition in thinking this way:

> It sounds kind of weird, but I think it's helped us. It forced us to think about different ways. We don't have the traditional PTA meetings in the library, or we don't have the back-to-school night kind of stuff. I think it has helped us. We've required our staff to make more personal contacts than they would have. I think the way we revamped homeroom has helped. I know we still have a lot of work to do on that, but that's a bridge that we hadn't been doing.

Another administrator focused on the possible positive impact on parent participation in events. This respondent suggested that parents will be able to leverage accessibility that is intrinsic to virtual meeting spaces and would not be limited by traditional practices that require physical presence. Consistently, those parents who may not be able to attend in person can still participate in school events.

A third administrator addressed relationships with other public-sector organizations during the pandemic and how those relationships assisted the community:

> I can't tell you how many times, because there were strong relationships with the police department or police chief or the faith-based organizations, that literally all it

took was one email to the eight or nine faith-based organizations that we hosted every

year to say, "Hey, we have a family in need."

The concept of the importance of establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships with

employees and stakeholders was echoed throughout the interview responses.

The Dichotomous Aspect of Communication

Effective communication in times of a pandemic is a nearly impossible task. However, in a 2020

Norwegian study, Christensen and Laegreid found that a key lesson learned from the

governmental control of the virus was attributed to two things: its ability to make meaning in its

communications with the public and the high level of trust Norwegian citizens have in the

government. This, of course, is not the case globally.

According to Jin (2010), there is no systematic or integrated approach for understanding how

various stakeholders experience facts and events during a crisis. The volume of information

about the seriousness of COVID-19 impacted the affect of various publics. Zhao (2020) states a

growing body of literature regarding the social construction of crisis, and a methodology needs

to exist for crisis communications with specific goals. Because of this, forms of communication

sent to stakeholders and the public are open to various interpretations and emotional responses.

Any individual's effect on coping strategies, emotional responses, and cognitive appraisals is

deemed to be highly differential. Because of this, communication experiences among the

stakeholder groups that were interviewed tended to have a substantial impact either positively or

negatively.

On the positive side, campus administrators tended to see the pandemic as an opportunity to

improve communication. An underlying message in the administrative responses is the concept

of a long-term outlook related to organizational resilience. Ortiz-de-Mandojana (2016) argues

that resilience is best assessed through long-term outcomes (financial volatility, sales growth, and survival rates), typically over a 15-year period. While the assessment factors do not easily translate to the public education setting, the concept that leadership needs to focus away from short-term dilemmas is worthy of consideration.

Andersson (2019), in another study, defined resilience with a similar eye toward long-term goals. His definition includes risk awareness, cooperation, agility, and improvisation, analyzed through a longitudinal qualitative case study. With that lens, administrator comments about communication deemed positive tended to mention factors such as a growth mindset, creative solutions, and rethinking tools. As an example, one of the respondents reflected on how COVID "forced" administrators to rethink educational processes with emphasis given to desired outcomes – learning. Another school leaders shared:

> COVID 19 has brought to light the importance of effective communication with the community; building positive relationships with the communication won't just happen. You must strategically plan how you will create opportunities to engage and communicate with the community- weekly newsletters, videos, dojo, Facebook, parent meetings, celebrations at the campus, etcetera.

Other comments such as "I think it's helped us. It forced us to think in different ways," and "We had to develop creative solutions – to change the way we 'do' school" provide an additional basis from which to understand this mindset. This led to feelings of optimism from some administrators. One administrator stated:

> The good news with COVID, actually I take that back I think COVID has helped in a way because we've had to figure how to communicate through so many virtual channels, and we just did a parent survey and actually most of them when I asked

them what the best way, method of communication they want emails. So we've been, when we send, for example, my weekly letter that I send to parents, it goes through a phone call, it goes through an email, it goes posted on our webpage, it gets shared out on social media, and it goes, like we do little highlights of it on … news, so there's so many methods for parents to look at. So that's been cool because like our … news has been like a community thing trying to bring it together.

Teachers also focused on communication as an important outcome from the pandemic. Many felt that the impact was something that could be defined as a positive. One teacher reflected on how anxiety about goings on at the school increased their attention to what was communicated and how frequently communication occurred. This respondent noted that communication was actually a way to lessen anxiety.

Parents also had powerful feelings about communication that were both positive and negative. Some felt strongly that the pandemic added to the quality of communication between school and home. One parent called COVID-19 a positive "game-changer for communication" and noted that they received more communication from their child's teachers than in any previous academic year. She expanded on this by asserting the communication actually contributed to what felt like "natural" relationship building with individuals at the school.

 This certainly was not everyone's experience. Another parent saw communication from the school differently by highlighting volume and repetition. This parent shared that "Teachers are sending so many emails and messages, it gets to be frustrating, because I get a repetition of the same information. It feels like they don't communicate within themselves and bombard parents with too many emails."

Still, other parents saw communication as an area in which school personnel needed to improve. For example, one parent lamented the concept of not having "class time" to interact with the teachers and be relegated to utilizing emails, phone calls, and text messages to exchange information. "I feel like there is no communication. Before I was able to ask the teacher at pick up how my kid did that day. Now there is none of that because of the online format."

Another parent saw communication as impeding the learning process:

> Suppose my child has a question about an assignment. In that case, they either have to email the teacher for help and wait for a response or wait until tutorial time to help move forward with an assignment, raising the student's stress and anxiety. It wastes valuable learning time being "stuck."

Regardless of source, respondents felt strongly about the importance of effective communication through the weeks and months of the pandemic.

A Mindset that Utilizes New Tools

As stated above, organizational resilience refers to the ability of an organization to respond productively to change and create opportunities out of disruptive challenges (Witmer, 2016). In a 2021 publication, Pew Research indicates that one possible positive outcome of the pandemic is that the quality of workplaces, health care, and social activity (including education) will improve due to technological enhancements. This concept helps couch the third emergent theme from the interviews: the improvisational mindset of utilizing technology to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

Across the interviews, stakeholders discussed various technology and communication tools and how those tools augmented communication, generally positively. Most prevalent was the concept of virtual meetings taking the place of face-to-face interactions. Several parents alluded to the

ease of the virtual platform. For example, one parent shared that "we still talk via email with teachers and we had the virtual home visit. It did not change significantly. Instead of in-person meeting, we do virtual home visits now." Administrators discussed the transition to technology to enhance communication. One principal remarked that "oddly, Zoom can lead to more personal communication. It seems that there is less distance between us." Another commented that the pandemic did not so much change communication generally; rather, it impacted the vehicle for communication.

Some parents were very open about the utilization of technology and the integration of the technology in the teaching and learning process. For example:

> His teacher messages us through the mobile app with assignments due and what our children should be learning right now. The support we are getting from the district is excellent. They have taken care of the whole situation. Our students were issued an iPad when they have paper lessons. There is a contactless drive-through and the teacher offers drop-offs.

Other parents were less enthusiastic:

> With our daughter, it has been a bit of a nightmare. There are so many apps and screens and toggles she has to make. It would be so helpful if the school would consolidate things and make it easier to navigate.

The latter comment was found in sentiments shared by a number of parents. Specifically, those parents highlighted struggles with the navigation of new tools and new technology. In the same way that teachers' roles became more complex, parents also found the need to play new roles including but not limited to the role of an IT expert.

The need to communication through technology at all times sometimes left parents feeling trapped by the technology or the lack of feedback from teachers through the technology. One parent characterized this feeling by sharing "It has become hard to communicate with some teachers because they never answer their phone or return your email. This COVID-19 has been frustrating me as a parent in communicating with my daughter's teachers."

Reinforcing this idea, another parent lamented the challenges of using a virtual meeting space to communicate with teachers.

This type of frustration led to thoughts about how parents might be better prepared for continued integration of technology:

> I think there should have been several "How to" videos for parents and students on Canvas. This remote learning system is all new to parents, and we could have used more help on how to help our students. I say this because teachers use different approaches in Canvas. Some use modules, some use pages, some just use the calendar. All this makes it difficult for parents.

Discussion

There is little doubt that the impact of the pandemic on public schools will last for many more years. Expectations about the definition of teaching and learning, assessment, and the integration of technology, as well as the culture of the public school are topics that have received attention in public and educational circles. The three emergent themes from the interview responses in this study provide cultural building blocks for leaders to consider when guiding and directing the activities, values, and goals of their schools. Andersson (2019) discusses the notions of power distribution and normative control as key factors in creating a sense of preparedness for unexpected events. The caveat in this discussion is the alignment of the distribution and control

to organizational goals. When considering a changing definition of relationship between school and community and the proliferation of technological tools to redefine communication, school leaders are wise to focus on these key cultural descriptors, especially in light of the vulnerability of public institutions to chaotic events.

Teo (2017) addresses leadership tasks in the formation of networks that become resources that aid in organizational resilience. These networks are inherently relationship-oriented and therefore serve as social, emotional, and cognitive resources for those in the organization. It is clear in the interview responses that certain organizations communicated better, engaged with their stakeholders more effectively, and had more successful outcomes than others. In many ways, these outcomes can be attributed to the leaders' approaches to the three emergent themes. This can be summed up by one principal's response:

> I've had a lot of one-on-one conversations with parents who I've never spoken to before. Also, during the quarantine period I put my email out a lot (and continue to do so) and parents are starting to utilize their access to me more and more via email for all kinds of reasons. It is a lot to keep up with - but I relish the opportunity for the parents to come directly to me with their concerns.

To couch these themes in existing research, Witmer and Mellinger (2016) utilized the framework of resilience to identify six themes that equipped private sector organizations to successfully adapt to the chaos or conflict that accompanied funding changes. Those themes included: commitment to the mission, improvisation, community reciprocity, servant and transformational leadership, hope and optimism, and fiscal transparency. In several ways, the emergent themes from this research align well with the Witmer and Mellinger framework of resilience.

An important aspect of the three themes is that they have an intertwined nature, especially in our current technologically savvy environment. Utilizing the new technologies to effectively communicate with parents and other stakeholders, school leaders, teachers, and other personnel both move the larger organization toward common goals and establish and maintain relationships that are vital to a healthy culture. In this way, schools become more resilient through daily practices rather than a systematic approach to adaptation. Witmer (2016) advocates for utilizing resilience as an embedded process in leadership, and not an outcome of external events. When this happens, schools have the capacity to respond seamlessly to external events and remain focused on achieving organizational goals. In many ways, a focus on resiliency in leadership practices may be the conduit through which schools engage in continuous growth, assessing the effectiveness of practices and the impact of those practices on goals. One principal summed up the pandemic experience with this suggestion:

> We've learned that some of our new ways are better than the old ways, and they need to remain. We've also realized what is most important and what is fluff. We've never had to deal with many of these circumstances, so the stress and the work demand are a lot. But the outcomes have alleviated a lot of work in other areas, so there is a bit of a balance.

Recommendations

The depth, breadth, and nature of crises experienced navigating COVID-19 are certainly unique. The need for school leaders to prepare for crisis while sustaining and building relationships at a diverse variety of community intersections is not. Findings from this study contribute to a better understanding of both our recent disruptive and chaotic experiences with COVID and support efforts to build resiliency needed for future events that challenge our work as educators.

For both practitioners and preparation programs, an emphasis on the identification and daily practice of activities that are tied to organizational resiliency is warranted. For practitioners, the emergent themes provide a lens through which one can view administrative decision-making and practice. Effective two-way communication that meets both school and stakeholder needs plays a major role in establishing and maintaining meaningful professional relationships. Moreover, a culture that values and properly utilizes the positive aspects of modern technology (e.g.virtual meetings, open two-way communication, etc.) functions to invite and give ownership to many stakeholders.

For those in leadership preparation, there are similar takeaways. The extent to which candidates are not only aware of, but expert in utilizing various methods establishing and maintaining effective communication with stakeholders is related to the health of the culture that the candidate will lead. Learning activities designed to engage candidates in effectively utilizing new technologies through leadership tasks are essential to prepare candidates for the very real expectations that await them in our public schools.

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