This paper is a response to two recommendations for preservice training of school administrators proposed in the 1987 report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration: that greater attention be placed on discovering ways in which universities and local education agencies might collaborate more effectively in the preparation of educational administrators; and that administrative preparation programs include more opportunities for "clinical" approaches to learning. Accordingly, the status of administrator preparation in the United States is examined to determine the extent to which these potential improvements have been realized. The first part discusses existing barriers to collaboration between universities and local education agencies, including institutional territoriality, the absence of parity between partners, and the lack of staff time. After a brief discussion of attempts to increase clinical preparation, a tridimensional model of administrator preparation is presented. The three dimensions are academic preparation, field-based programs, and "professional formation." The latter conception refers to activities that help an aspiring administrator to synthesize his or her learnings through preservice mentoring, personal reflection, developing a personal educational "platform," understanding interpersonal styles, and personal professional development. The final section of the paper describes a recent program that incorporates many of these concepts, the Danforth Foundation Program for the Preparation of School Principals. Four pages of references are included. (TE)
THE PRESERVICE PREPARATION OF AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS:
RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

by

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In the current press to discover strategies to be followed in the improvement of the quality of schooling in the United States, a number of different reform proposals have been suggested. Throughout the 1970's, for example, considerable attention was paid to the analysis of specific processes and practices that were viewed as related to more effective student outcomes, usually defined as increased scores on standardized student achievement measures. In this regard, the work of researchers such as Rosenshine (1976), Berliner and Tikkunoff (1976), Berliner and Rosenshine (1978), and Edmonds (1979) in the United States, and Rutter and his colleagues in Great Britain have served as samples of the type of inquiry that sought to establish identifiable relationships between what goes on in schools and how well students learn. In more recent years, efforts to find more effective school practices have been led toward the reform of the preservice preparation of educational personnel. Current research activities strive to increase the effectiveness of educational programs available for children by focusing on the restructuring of institutions charged with the responsibility for preparing teachers and administrators.

The proposals for change included in the Holmes Group Report (Tomorrow's Teachers, 1986), with its sweeping suggestions for modifying university-based teacher preparation programs, have been viewed as the bases for a major break-through in the ways in which people are made ready to work in classrooms. Some objectives of the Holmes
Group Report merit a brief review here because of the ways in which they contributed to some of the suggested changes in administrator preparation that will be reviewed later in this paper. Case, Lanier, and Miskel (1986) listed the following characteristics of the Holmes Group proposal as the general thrust of the Report:

1. The Report displays the conviction that the knowledge base in the field of education has grown substantially in recent years, and it has also been improved; however, the results of these efforts directed to improvement are not represented adequately in either preparation programs or in practice.

2. The proposal reaffirmed the traditional belief that professionals should be learner-persons as well as competent professionals. To this end, the Holmes Report has suggested that a liberal arts undergraduate curriculum is essential to the full education of a college graduate, and the focus of one’s learning as a prospective teacher must be directed toward mastery of the content of the subject matter that is to be taught.

3. The Report gives importance to the clinical preparation of teachers. While suggestions that future teachers might best learn their craft by practicing it, this particular proposal suggests that clinical experiences must be understood as opportunities to acquire and practice analytical and reflective skills.

4. The proposal builds upon the belief that the complexity of teaching practice, the diversity of students to be served, and the concept of professional preparation must be combined with apparent future teacher shortages and needs for alternative approaches to career advancement are to serve as the basis for a truly differentiated view of professional educators.

The concepts embodied within the Holmes Group Report, while by
no means popular in many quarters have served to open a critical
dialogue regarding the ways in which American teachers are to be
prepared, with the assumption that attempts to discover new
approaches are the first important steps toward establishing lasting
forms of school improvement.

Shortly after the issuance of the Holmes Group proposal, the
University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), a
consortium of 50 large, doctoral-granting institutions across the
United States and Canada with programs designed to prepare future
educational administrators, chartered its own effort to review the
nature of administrative training at the preservice level. In 1987,
the Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational
Administration was published under the title, Leaders for America's
Schools: The Report of the National Commission. Although it has
been criticized by many who have felt that its recommendations were
not forceful or imaginative enough to suggest the type of sweeping
changes needed to bring about meaningful improvement in the
preservice training of educational administrators, the report did
contain a clear call for certain modifications and improvements to be
made in the ways in which individuals are prepared to assume
positions of leadership in schools. In this paper, two of the
recommendations made in the Report are selected for particular
emphasis. First, it was suggested that greater attention be placed
on discovering ways in which universities and local education
agencies might collaborate more effectively in the preparation of
educational administrators. The historic pattern of universities
assuming total, or at least the major, control over the preservice
instructional content, and the view that school systems are to be
passive receivers of people trained according to this pattern is
described as one that is no longer valid. Preparing individuals for
future administrative responsibilities has been described as
something that needs to be an activity mutually-shared by all those
who would be identified as legitimate stakeholders in the development of educational leadership.

The second recommendation we shall discuss is that administrative preparation programs must include more opportunities for "clinical" approaches to learning as part of the normal ongoing activities of preservice training. Clearly, the assumptions that a period of "learning by doing" before a person moves into a professional role for the first time, is alive and well in the field of administrator preparation.

In this paper, the status of administrator preparation in the United States is examined to determine the extent to which the vision of potential ways of improving the preparation of administrators, as suggested through the reform proposals described above, has been realized. An estimate will be provided of the probability of two major recommendations from the National Commission on Excellence being addressed. These two principal recommendations are the increase of efforts toward collaboration, and also the additional emphasis on clinical preparation. Second, a different conceptualization of the ways in which educational administrators might be prepared is provided. The paper concludes with a brief description of a current nationwide effort taking place in the United States supported through the resources of the Danforth Foundation which has been designed to improve the nature of administrator preparation.

Attempts to Find Collaboration

The very strong suggestion of the National Commission that the preparation of educational administrators must be the product of alliances formed between universities and local educational agencies appears at first to make a good deal of sense. But, is there a probability that the type of true collaboration envisioned in this proposal might be found? In order for this view to be achieved,
certain constraints to true collaboration need to be addressed. Neale, Bailey, and Ross (1981) identified these barriers as (1) institutional territoriality, (2) absence of partner parity, and (3) lack of staff time.

**Institutional Territoriality**

Each member of a collaborative arrangement has certain institutional loyalties and self-interests which demand attention. These loyalties are important because, in large measure, they serve as important indicators of the identity of an organization. In the preparation of school administrators, the members of the collaborative arrangement typically are the university with its need to generate courses and credit hours, and the local school district with its need to guarantee that administrative personnel will demonstrate skill in implementing stated local policies and procedures. This typically leads to scenarios in which universities are reluctant to "give up" any training activities to local schools based on the fear that doing so will rob the campus of students needed to fill the lecture halls and fuel the credit hour-driven process. Local school systems, on the other hand, distrust their university colleagues' ability to prepare individuals who will successfully defend and understand local policies and priorities. In addition, local educational agencies often simply see the preservice training of school administrators to be the sole responsibility of universities.

Before the dream of the National Commission regarding collaboration might be achieved, strategies must be discovered as a way to reduce the negative effects of institutional territoriality which has traditionally served to block mutual efforts. Universities need to share their traditional "turf" regarding training, and local educational agencies need to give serious attention to increasing their levels of trust regarding the efforts of university programs. One way of doing this might be for local schools to examine more critically their expectations concerning the roles of administrators to
assess the reasonableness of their beliefs concerning how people might best be prepared for those leadership roles. No one, either in the university or in any other organization, can be expected to prepare people for jobs that are, at best, vaguely defined.

**Absence of Partner Parity**

Neale, Bailey, and Ross defined parity as "the state or condition being the same in power, value, or rank" (1981, p. 45). While parity is a commendable goal, evidence suggests strong imbalances that have existed in the power relationships found between universities and local educational agencies, and these have served as barriers to true collaboration. Universities and local school systems have long had the tendency to control the licensing and certification processes found in most American states. A concrete manifestation of this phenomenon is found in the local school districts' long fight with universities over the issue of who might sign licenses and applications for licenses. Before true collaboration might ever occur, competition resulting from a lack of balance in power needs to be resolved so that universities, local school systems, and other partners involved in the preservice preparation of administrators would be able to appreciate unique potential in supporting leadership development. The conceptual model offered later in this paper represents an attempt to identify the special contributions of the various actors involved in administrator preparation.

**Staff Time for Collaboration**

Maintaining meaningful intraorganizational linkage requires investing a considerable amount of time and energy on the part of the people within an institution. In addition, the reward systems of both major partners in the preparation of future school administrators, namely universities and local school systems, do little to reinforce the value of developing ongoing sharing. University professors are rewarded (through the granting of academic tenure, promotions, and merit pay increases) in most settings by carrying out research,
publishing, and to a lesser extent, teaching their campus-based classes and engaging in university governance activities. They are not traditionally recognized for their efforts to develop collaborative partnerships with local school systems. Further, local school personnel are paid to teach children or administer schools, not to foster mutually-supportive arrangements with their colleagues at the university. Time is rarely made available to local school staff who wish to engage in university training programs, at least without the loss of a considerable amount of personal pay and removal from important instructional duties.

Collaboration will not result unless clear and consistent signals are provided by all potential partners to the effect that efforts to work with others will be openly valued and rewarded both financially and with sufficient time.

**Attempts to Increase Clinical Preparation**

The second major theme found in the recommendations of the National Commission relative to the improvement of administrator preparation programs is that more attention must be paid to increasing opportunities for clinical preparation. The clear assumption here is that one learns by doing, and that people will be best prepared to serve as educational administrators if they are able to participate in "hands on" activities that will enable them to play the part of the administrator before taking on that role in real life for the first time.

This emphasis on the need to improve administrator preparation with more opportunities for "clinical" (typically defined as "field-based") learning is not new. Periodic calls for the creation of more effective strategies to be utilized in assisting aspiring administrators to learn more about their chosen craft through participation in realistic, job-like learning experiences may be seen as one traces
the development of educational administration as a legitimate, academic field over the past 30 years (Dares, Forthcoming). Not only is there discussion of this concept in the academic community, but practitioner groups are also calling for reform through the use of more field contact for future administrators. As evidence of this, state departments of education across the United States have increasingly supported the need for would-be administrators to learn more about their future duties by spending time engaged in one or another form of practicum. In the last 15 years, the number of states requiring some form of internship or planned field experience as part of initial certification or licensure standards has increased from ten to 25 (Gousha, et al., 1986). The chart presented in Figure 1 shows the states which currently require some form of practicum as part of the initial administrative licensing procedures.

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FIGURE 1 HERE

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Many of the assumptions contained in the increased emphasis on the use of practical experience for the preparation of school administrators are based on the same types of arguments long-used to suggest that future classroom instructors need to engage in some type of formal preservice, in-school learning experience, normally referred to as "student teaching." As it will be noted later, there has been some recent serious questioning of the assumed value of this practice in teacher education. By contrast, however, similar discussions related to the use of practica to prepare administrators have not been nearly as lively, and comprehensive treatments of this topic in the literature, along with solid conceptualizations of field-based and clinical programs designed to prepare administrators have been rare. In short, while the belief expressed by the National Commission and
other reformers concerning the value of more intensive practical and field-based learning for school administrators appears to be a sound one, much more needs to be said concerning the ways in which these practices might be operationalized. It might be noted parenthetically here that one of the first places for this clarification to begin might be in the more precise definition of the alternative models that might be identified as "clinical experiences."

Further Impetus for the Reconceptualization

In addition to the reform reports already noted and which have called for rather broad changes to be made in some of the general practices associated with programs designed to prepare educational administrators, there is emerging another important source that may be used to guide future efforts to improve the ways in which school leaders are made ready for their jobs. The issue of the training and preparation needs of beginning principals is one that also has great relevance to understanding improvements in administrator preparation.

Relatively few research studies have been conducted regarding the issue of beginning administrators' needs during recent years. Among the investigations completed have been small-scale studies conducted in Great Britain by Nockels (1981) and Turner (1981), and doctoral research in the United States by Harrion (1983) and Sussman (1985). A common finding in these works, and also the study by Duke (1984), has been that the beginning year of the school principalship is typically full of a great amount of frustration and anxiety, and that preservice programs designed to prepare individuals for the role of the principal must represent cooperative efforts involving school systems, professional associations, and universities.

Another recent study of a much wider scale was the work by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) by Weindling and
Earley (1987). This ambitious work reviewed the characteristics of the first years of secondary school heads throughout the United Kingdom. Interviews were conducted of beginning principals, their teaching staffs, and their administrative superiors to determine the ways in which principals achieved success in their positions, along with the nature of frustrations felt by the novice administrators. The study examined such issues as the paths typically followed to the principalship, preparation programs, district support mechanisms, and relationships existing between the heads of schools and their management teams. Among the many very strong recommendations coming from this study was that beginning principals need to receive special consideration and support from their employing school systems if they are to achieve any great degree of success. Weindling and Earley noted that a major problem for heads has been isolation from peers. Accordingly, if improvements are to take place in preparation programs and the socialization of people to administration, some ways need to be found that may reduce this sense of alienation, beginning with the preservice training of future administrators.

In another study of beginning principals, Daresh (1986) interviewed 12 elementary and secondary principals in one midwestern state to determine their perceptions regarding problems that they faced on the job. He found that the concerns of beginning principals could be seen in three major areas. These were: (a) problems with role clarification (understanding who they were, now that they were principals, and how they were supposed to use their new authority); (b) limitations on technical expertise (how do they do the things that they are supposed to do?); and (c) difficulties with socialization to the profession and individual school systems (learning how to do things in a particular setting—"learning the ropes").

In general, most of the studies of beginning administrators have tended to find a set of similar themes that have obvious implications for the ways in which individuals might be prepared. For example, it
seems clear that "hands on" learning of administrative tasks and responsibilities are called for as a way to allow people to develop skill and confidence in their ability to do their work. Second, preservice programs need to stress the development of strong norms of collegiality within aspiring administrators so that there can be some changes that will occur once people get out into their first positions. Third, strategies must be developed to help people test some of their assumptions and beliefs concerning the nature of power, authority, and leadership well before they step into a principalship or some other administrative role. In short, enough is known about the problems faced by newcomers to the field of administration that certain steps may be followed in the improvement of administrator preparation programs for the future.

A Proposed Model for Change

As it has been suggested in various ways throughout the earlier portions of this paper, there is more than sufficient cause to suggest that some new ways to prepare educational leaders in the United States, if not in all settings around the world, might be proposed. There is an uneasiness, even some open dissatisfaction, for what is taking place in schools generally, and that has been reflected in the plethora of recent reform proposals. An increasingly common view of the ways in which existing problems in schools might be solved involves the redefinition of traditional educational roles and responsibilities, and also the existing images of professionalism for educators. These insights regarding potential improvement for schools have also been acknowledged in the arena of school administrator preparation, with the result being increased focus on such things as the development of more effective collaborative relationships between universities and local education agencies, and the increase of clinical experiences as part of administrative preservice preparation pro-
grams directed by universities. Coupled with all of these potential reform practices is an increasing recognition that first, many new principals will be entering the field for the first time during the next few years, and second, that there is a data base which currently exists relative to the special needs that beginning principals have in their jobs, and these factors might serve as the basis for the design of more effective preparation programs. Despite all of these observations, however, the general state of the art regarding how administrators are prepared in the United States remains remarkably unchanged.

In fact, in many cases, one might strongly argue that, because excellent educational leaders continue to be produced by much of what is currently taking place, a lot of today's practices "ain't broke," so "there's no need to fix it." It seems that any proposal for change regarding the preservice preparation of school administrators must be sensitive to the likelihood that some of what is now taking place is good, but also that it could all be much better with some deliberate modifications or additions. The purpose of the remainder of this paper is to explore the ways in which existing practices that are effective might be enhanced, and also to suggest that some things not traditionally included in preservice programs might be added. The result is the development of what shall be referred to as a "Tri-Dimensional Model for the Preparation of School Administrators." The three dimensions included in this model involve Academic Preparation, Field-Based Learning, and Professional Formation. Lortie (1975) recognized the fact that induction to a profession normally includes occupational learning of three types: (1) formal education, (2) apprenticeship, and (3) "learning by doing." In the next section of this paper, the argument will be advanced that people must be prepared for leadership roles in schools through equal attention to strong academic programs (Lortie's view of "formal education"), realistic guided practice in the field (the "apprenticeship" and
"learning by doing" phases in Lortie's description), and perhaps most importantly, through the formation of individual candidates as aspiring administrators who need to be able to cope personally and professionally with the ambiguities associated with the responsibilities of school leadership.

**Tri-Dimensional Model Theory Background**

Before going into detail concerning the various elements that make up the Tri-Dimensional Model, a few observations are in order concerning the theory bases for this perspective. This model is designed to address assumptions that serve as part of two distinct theoretical bases. These include experiential learning and adult learning.

**Experiential learning.** Experiential learning involves more than the simple concept of "learning by doing." Kolb (1984) is most often associated with this perspective, and he described the experiential learning process as an activity wherein knowledge is created by individuals through the transformation of experience. In this view, knowledge develops within the individual learner as the product of four distinct stages, concrete experience, reflective analysis, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Each of these four stages, shown as part of a cyclical learning process in Figure 2, are defined in the following ways:

1. **Concrete Experience:** Gathering basic information concerning a situation or problem to be solved.
2. **Reflective Analysis:** Analysis of the distinctive properties or characteristics of the situation or problem to be solved as a way to understand the key properties of the situation.
3. **Abstract Conceptualization:** The learner develops models or frameworks to be utilized in explaining the situation or problem.
4. **Active Experimentation:** The learner tests the explanatory
models developed in the previous stage against reality, or begins to implement the tentative solutions.

This conceptualization of experiential learning must be viewed as a cyclical activity because the learner moves progressively from concrete learning to increasing levels of abstraction and application which, in turn help the individual to return to new concrete problems and experiences and begin the process once again. It is assumed that most existing programs for the preservice preparation of school administrators tend to emphasize no more than the first two steps of this cycle. A more comprehensive effort to prepare people for leadership roles would necessarily include all four steps in this theoretical model.

Adult learning. A second conceptual domain which has clear implications for discussions related to the improvement of administrator preparation programs is adult learning theory. Applications of the constructs from this field have been noted as potential sources of program improvements related to the development of educational personnel by Cross (1981), Knox (1977), Daresh (1985), and Krupp (1988).

There has always been a strong sense that adult learners have different learning characteristics than do children. Knowles (1970), generally viewed as a leader in the field of adult education, made an important distinction between *andragogy* (i.e., the art and science of teaching adults) and *pedagogy* (i.e., the art and science of teaching children). More important than this distinction in terms, however, is the fact that Knowles' work has pinpointed some important facets of adult learning that have implications for the preparation of
school administrators:

1. Adults will learn when the goals and objectives of the learning activity are considered realistic and important to the issue at hand.

2. Adults will learn, retain, and use what they perceive is relevant to their personal and professional goals.

3. Adults need to see the results of their efforts and have accurate feedback about progress toward their goals.

4. Adult learning is ego-involved.

5. Adults come to any learning experience with a wide range of previous experiences, knowledge, and skills.

6. Adults want to be the origins of their own learning—involved in the selection of objectives, content, and activities.

7. Adults will resist any learning experience which they believe is an attack on their competence.

8. Adults reject prescriptions by others for their learning.

9. Adult motivation is produced by the learner, and not from any external source.

These characteristics are meant to be understood along with the following important assumptions (Knowles, 1978):

1. As a person matures, his/her self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality to one of being a self-directed human being.

2. The mature person accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.

3. The readiness of the mature person to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his/her social roles.

4. The time perspective of the mature person changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his/her orientation toward
learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness.

These principles of adult learning serve as the basis of the beliefs that are at the foundation of the proposed Tri-Dimensional Model for Administrator Preparation because of the view that an important missing ingredient in the preparation of educational leaders has been an understanding of the unique characteristics of how mature individuals have unique learning needs. If these needs are not addressed, learning will simply not occur.

**Dimension II: Academic Preparation**

The traditional approach to preparing educational administrators has placed great emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge related to administrative tasks and responsibilities. The vehicle through which this knowledge is conveyed to aspiring administrators has been the university graduate-level course, at least in the United States. Depending on certain local variables, such as the requirements of state departments of education across the nation, universities offer those courses needed by individuals in order to meet minimum preparation standards. Consequently, courses in law, finance, computer applications, curriculum, and many other areas that are viewed as critical to the development of skills associated with effective administrative performance may be provided to those who seek professional licenses. In most instances, the courses followed by students in this way may or may not be applied to an advanced graduate degree (either a master's degree or a doctorate). While specific requirements vary greatly across the nation, people interested in obtaining administrative licenses in the United States are usually expected to complete between six and 15 courses in the field of educational administration at the post-baccalaureate level. In addition, all states have minimum requirements regarding the number of years of teaching experience needed prior to entering administration.
There are certain strengths and weaknesses that may be identified in relation to the academic preparation of educational administrators in the form of university-based management courses. Perhaps the most obvious value in this particular dimension of the model for the preparation of school leaders is that it represents an effective and efficient way that may be utilized to assist future administrators to develop strong conceptual appreciation and understanding of a rather complex and often ambiguous field of practice. While university courses are often criticized because they are not always tied very directly to the daily, practical needs of line administrators, the argument may be advanced that much of the daily life of an administrator is filled with the need to address complex conceptual issues and problems for which there may not be many clear, practical, "how-to-do-it" solutions. Further, academic preparation through traditional university coursework may be viewed as a way to enable individuals to comprehend basic facts, terms, and issues of important sub-elements of the larger field of administration, such as law, finance, personnel, and evaluation. Courses are useful in assisting people to acquire the basic "language" and knowledge base of their newly-chosen field. It is much more simple, for example, to learn the basic characteristics of how to provide due process to students in a brief lecture in school law than it might be from many other learning sources.

The traditional guardians of the academic preparation dimension have been members of the university faculty of educational administration. This would appear to make a good deal of sense in that there is a need for some group to focus its attention on the issue of knowledge-production rather than on knowledge-utilization. Those who live in the "Ivory Tower" of academe are able to engage in the type of inquiry that must take place in an environment not necessarily burdened by the "noise" and daily crises found in most schools. Some group such as a university faculty must have the time to look at
broader issues that go beyond the solution of problems in the "here and now," and the best way for these perspectives to be shared with the practitioner community is through the mechanism of the traditional university course.

The acknowledged value of university-based academic preparation serving as at least part of the preservice training of educational administrators does not obscure some of the clear shortcomings of this practice, however. While the case has been advanced here that academic preparation is an important dimension of administrator preparation, there are some problems. Perhaps the most basic of these is that, in most cases, the content of university management courses is based almost exclusively on the choices made by university faculty. The self-interests of the academic community, therefore, are not only primarily served, they are virtually the only priorities that are addressed. Rarely are clients (past, present, or future) consulted regarding the nature of what is to be taught through the medium of university courses. There is no attempt here to suggest that professors should make their curricular choices only through a consensus process. Rather, a value expressed here is that, at least to some extent, dialog between practitioners and academics might yield some important insights into the ideal content to be included as part of academic preparation.

Another traditional drawback that needs to be addressed before the academic preparation dimension of administrator preparation might be fully realized concerns the issue of "how" the content of university courses is presented for student learning. Not only is the traditional approach to the preparation of school administrators tied to the use of conventional university courses in educational management, but there is also considerable evidence to suggest that the instructional mode preferred throughout the academic world is the lecture, with its almost total emphasis on one-way communication from professor to students. If this large-group technique that causes
students to be passive and reactive learners is modified, it is likely to involve other forms that are largely classroom-bound. Rarely do university faculty incorporate learning activities that would enable students of administration to "taste" the reality of leadership in schools during their university courses. To be sure, some professors make serious efforts to expand their instructional courses by requiring students to interview practicing administrators, observe school board meetings, or conduct community surveys, or by inviting local practitioners to appear in classes in a type of "show and tell" arrangement. All of these efforts represent commendable ways in which efforts are made to make classes more relevant, but they are of true, lasting value only if they are tied in some thoughtful way to the instructional objectives of classes, and if follow-up is provided. If they are viewed as extra projects that are assigned to students out of some vague notion that they might be "good experiences," they may be much more valuable as ornamentation than they are as vital parts of student learning regarding educational administration.

Other criticisms of the reliance on university-based management courses to prepare administrators are found in the literature. Achilles (1987), in a paper submitted to the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, noted several typical limitations on existing administrator preparation programs and related coursework. Among other things, courses are not:

1. ...taken in any particular sequence.
2. ...differentiated for differing degree levels (M.A. or Ph.D.) or levels of administration (principalship v. superintendency).
3. ...designed within some unifying conceptual framework.
4. ...developed with an underlying reliance on learning theory (or perhaps any type of theory base), particularly adult learning theory.
5. ...closely aligned with desired outcomes, or coordinated with the work administrators do—or should do.

6. ...typically related to rigorous evaluation, either singly, or for their contribution to a total administrator preparation program.

No doubt, other objections and limitations might be voiced regarding the quality of courses used in many administrator preparation programs. But there are values to these forms of learning as well. The critical issue here is that, if traditional coursework is viewed as a way of addressing but one dimension of a preparation program model—academic preparation, in the terms offered in this paper—there is a likelihood that any limitations might be greatly reduced and the value of this dimension might be enhanced.

**Dimension III: Field-Based Programs**

As noted earlier in this paper, the current view appears to be that the improvement of administrator training in the United States depends upon field-based and experiential learning programs for aspiring administrators. From various sources, including the National Commission on Excellence (1987), Goodlad (1984), Cornett (1983), Achilles (1987), and Baltzell and Dentler (1983), among many others, comes a clear and consistent call for university administrator preparation programs to stop teaching about administration and, instead, direct attention toward helping people to learn how to administer schools. The suggestion in most of these proposals is for intense and meaningful internships, planned field experiences, and other forms of practice to be incorporated with increasing frequency in preparation programs. A suggestion to this effect offered by the Southern Regional Education Board (SERB) is fairly representative of many recent statements:

Colleges need to develop programs solidly grounded in theory, but which also include some practicality. Internships, offered
in full cooperation with school districts, are one solution.

There is, in fact, a strong tendency at present to move toward preservice preparation programs that are largely field-based in nature. A particularly interesting recent proposal offered by LaPlant (1988) included a view that universities should probably get out of the administrator-preparation business entirely and turn it over to their colleagues in the field. According to this view, universities should be places where people are educated, not "trained" or "prepared" in ways that practitioners are much better able to do. Of course, these may raise the logical question, "If practitioners are really better prepared to train people, why don't we always see better practice out in the field after people have concluded their university coursework?" Ultimately, such discussions may have the unintended consequence of further distancing university faculty members from their colleagues in the field.

The literature provides a fairly well-defined picture of what is typically meant by a "field-based" learning program in American preparation programs. Daresh and LaPlant (1986) reviewed descriptions of the characteristics of programs in more than 40 universities across the nation and discovered the following general features:

1. Typical field-based programs are not required of all students enrolled in educational administration graduate degree programs, but rather, only of students seeking a license or administrative certificate from an agency external to the university. When required, field activities most often occur toward the end of students' academic programs.

2. Most programs operate in basically the same fashion: Students are expected to register for an academic credit-bearing course named "Administrative Internship," "Planned Field Experience," or some similar title, spend anywhere from ten to 40 hours per week during a semester or quarter
observing a practitioner who, in turn, assigns the student some task or project to be carried out under his or her supervision.

3. Field-based programs normally provide academic credit, but student evaluation is of the Pass/Fail variety. Responsibility for evaluating student performance most often resides with the university faculty member who coordinates the practicum.

4. The university faculty-coordinator is usually the only faculty member in the department of educational administration who works with students enrolled in the practicum. Other than initial academic advising processes for some students, the majority of academic program faculty is not actively involved with supervising practice. In fact, in several institutions, the person responsible for supervising internships and planned field experiences is not a regular faculty member but, rather, an adjunct clinical instructor or lecturer.

5. The duration of most field-based experiences is normally dictated by the length of the university’s academic quarter or semester, and not on the time required to complete the assigned field project or experience.

6. Students who participate in the majority of internships or planned field experiences are not paid for their work in such settings. As a result, the majority of participants in field-based administrator preparation programs today are involved on a part-time basis while attempting to continue with teaching or other professional responsibilities in the same schools where they are engaged in their practice.

Assumptions that field-based programs are a way to enhance the quality of traditional academic programs seem to be well-founded. Such programs are ways for aspiring administrators to apply
theoretical learnings and develop their administrative competence. Field-based programs, in their ideal state, may be utilized to help people gain insights into the ways in which schools are actually administered, develop practical skill competencies through participation in a wide range of daily administrative duties, and apply knowledge learned in the classroom in a real-life setting. Field-based programs are ways for students of administration to witness the practicalities associated with running schools, particularly if they are able to work with talented administrators in the field who are able to serve as role models.

Despite the relatively persistent emphasis on the need for field-based programs to prepare administrators, however, some inescapable limitations derive from this form of learning, particularly if it is not combined with other models or dimensions of learning, most notably a strong background derived from academic preparation. In the field of teacher education, many authorities have questioned some fundamental assumptions about the value of the practicum as a learning device. From Dewey (1938) to the observations of Berliner (1984), Cruickshank and Armaline (1986), and Zeichner (1985), numerous cautions have been offered that field-based learning experiences may actually be viewed as "miseducative," and that they create cognitive and behavioral traps which close avenues to conceptual and social changes that may be warranted (Daresh & Pape, 1987). In short, field-based programs too often may serve to prepare people only for what is at present, not what might be in the future.

In his analyses of the nature of the work carried out by school principals, Peterson (1985) concluded that there are serious restrictions on field-based experiences as a way to prepare people to serve as administrators.

The principal's work...is complex and comprised of a wide range of demands and expectations. The content of learning of
necessity should cover most of this complexity...Principals, like other managers, must develop the necessary skills and knowledge...in order to run an effective school. Some of these can only be learned on the job while others are best learned in a combination of formal training and on-th-job-learning.

There is no effort here to suggest that field-based learning experiences should not be included in administrator preparation programs. To the contrary, the view is that they may be extremely powerful ways for people to learn about their craft. On the other hand, because of some of the limitations noted in this section, too great a reliance only on the practicum would be as unwise as attempts to prepare people for leadership roles only through academic coursework in university classrooms.

**Dimension III: Professional Formation**

The most important dimension of administrator preparation is the one which is rarely addressed in a very direct fashion in most existing programs. This dimension will be referred to throughout this paper as "Professional Formation," and it will deal with those activities consciously directed toward assisting the aspiring administrator to synthesize learnings acquired through other sources, and also develop a personalized appreciation of what it means to be an educational leader. As the literature on beginning administrators has indicated, a major problem faced by the novice is a lack of understanding concerning what leadership, authority, and power mean on a very individual level. Professional formation may be a way to address this problem.

At least five specific elements may be viewed as component elements of Professional Formation. These are preservice mentoring, personal reflection, platform statement, appreciation of alternative styles, and personal professional development.

**Preservice Mentoring.** Ashburn, Mann, and Purdue (1987) defined
mentoring as the "establishment of a personal relationship for the purpose of professional instructional and guidance." It is an accepted practice that has been noted as a part of the developmental process in many professional fields. As Schein (1978) noted, the concept has long been utilized in business organizations to denote such diverse images as "teacher, coach, trainer, positive role model, developer of talent, opener of doors, protector, sponsor, or successful leader." In fact, the current literature suggests that mentoring needs to be understood as a combination of most, if not all, of these individual roles (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986). Thus, the practice of mentoring is a crucial one to be included as a component of experiential programs. Mentors are needed to help neophytes in a field find their way and make sense out of what is happening around them in an organization, and also what may be going on in their personal lives. As a result, there is considerable potential to be found in applying the concept of mentoring to the formation of school administrators.

Mentors are different from the types of role models that may work with aspiring administrators during formal field-based learning activities described in Dimension II. Kram (1985), for example, notes that other terms that might be used to describe developmental relationships in work settings might include "sponsorship," "coaching," "role modeling," "counseling," and "friendship." Shapiro, Haseltine, and Rowe (1978) suggested that there is a type of continuum of advisory relationships that facilitate access to positions of leadership in management fields. On one end is a "peer pal" relationship, and on the other end is the true mentor relationship, of the type envisioned here as an important part of the Professional Formation Dimension (Merriam, 1983):

Peer pal -- Someone at the same level as yourself with whom you share information, strategy, and mutual support for mutual benefit.
Guide -- Can explain the system but is not usually in a position to champion a protege.

Sponsor -- Less powerful than a patron in promoting and shaping the career of a protege.

Patron -- An influential person who uses his/her power to help you advance in your career.

Mentor -- An intense paternalistic relationship in which an individual assumes the role of both teacher and advocate.

The types of developmental relationships described above tend to focus on the business-related concept of finding relationships that are designed to foster career advancement. Similar perspectives are offered by many others, including Dalton, Thompson, and Price (1977), Anderson and Devenna (1980), and Van Vorst (1980). The type of mentoring envisioned as a critical part of preservice administrator Professional Formation deals more with the concept of finding individuals who will assist individuals in surviving their initial induction to the field.

In that capacity, individuals may begin to work with students of administration to "show them how" to do things that are associated with their jobs. As a role model, for example, a person may be consulted by a future administrator as a way to learn a way to construct a master schedule for a school, in the way that an apprentice may learn from a master tradesman. On the other hand, a mentor goes beyond this function by serving as a person who is more inclined to prod the student to learn how to do something according to one's personal skills and talents. In short, a mentor is likely to raise more questions than provide answers to the person with whom he or she is interacting.

Among the responsibilities and characteristics that may be suggested as ideal for those who would serve as preservice mentors in an administrator preparation program are the following:

1. Experience as a practicing school administrator, and
recognition of effective performance in that role. (In this regard, the characteristics of an ideal mentor would be the same as those of a person who might serve as a role model in a traditional field-based activity).

2. Demonstration of generally-accepted qualities of positive leadership (i.e., such features as a sense of vision and the ability to communicate with members of the organization).

3. Ability to ask the "right questions" of the administrative candidates with whom they are working, and not just give the "right answer" in all cases.

4. Acceptance of "other ways of doing things," and avoidance of the tendency to tell protégés that the only way to do something is "The way that I've always done it."

5. Expression of the sincere desire to see protégés go beyond their present levels of performance, even when that may mean going beyond the mentor's own abilities.

6. Ability to model the values of continuous self-improvement, learning, and reflection.

7. Awareness of the political and social realities of life in at least one school system. (Again, this would be a characteristic of a good field-based role model as well).

8. Comfort with the task of working with the developmental needs of adult learners.

Preservice mentoring is a critical responsibility, and most of the rest of the preservice process should be related to this role. Consequently, a person who would serve as a mentor must possess the deep desire to serve in this capacity. Mentors may serve as role models in traditional field-based programs, or they may not be called upon to work with candidates in skill development. Traditional field role models, however, are not always appropriate mentors, and no confusion should be made between these two very distinct jobs. An ideal arrangement for preservice mentoring would involve the careful match-
ing of individual candidates (proteges) with mentors. There would be a one-to-one matching based on analyses of career goals, interpersonal styles, learning needs, and perhaps many other variables that might be explored prior to placing mentors with candidates.

**Personal Reflection.** A second very important part of the professional formation dimension would be the development of skills related to personal reflection that would be used to guide administrator performance. Reflection about one’s performance in a professional role is a rather simple concept to define. As Posner (1985) observed concerning the use of reflectivity in student teaching, people would benefit greatly from their experiences if they had the opportunity to prepare for and think about those experiences before and after they occur. This theme has long been championed by Schon (1983) who has advanced the concept of reflection as a guide to action in many professions. Again, the concept is simply stated, namely that the effective, reflective practitioner would be the person who realizes that, before he or she tries to solve problems, it is critical to think about the nature of the "right" problems to be solved.

In the preservice preparation of educators, there has been a consistent recent call for adding reflection as a component for teacher candidates. As noted in the earlier discussion of the limitations of field-based learning activities, such opportunities are not likely to achieve their promise if they are not guided. In an analysis of some of the drawbacks to student teaching, Beyer (1984) observed that teaching candidates often learn negative behaviors in the field because they are prone to engage in "uncritical acceptance" of what they see. The same danger, of course, exists in training programs for administrators who may see wholly unacceptable or even unethical practices being rewarded "in reality." Reflection, particularly if directed by a sensitive mentor, is a way to encourage the aspiring administrator to make critical judgments.
about the appropriateness of activities witnessed in the field. Referring again to Beyer (1984),
Experiences which promote uncritical replication of observed practice are antithetical to the purposes of education itself. Promoting activities...which generate such perspective is, thus, contradictory to some fundamental purposes of education as this is often understood.
Developing reflective skill is one important way to develop a sense of questioning regarding the value of certain practices and assumptions seen in the field, and this is a critical part of developing a professional identity.
Questions that may guide the process of personal reflection and help a person to focus on a sense of what leadership is all about might include any or all of the following:
- What have I seen out in the field?
- How does what I have seen fit my personal view of what my life as an administrator will be?
- Why is what I have seen important?
- What have I learned?
- What do I want to know more about?
As the aspiring administrator proceeds through practical experiences that are followed by a period of reflecting on answers to questions such as these, it is believed that he or she will develop a much deeper understanding of administration. Another benefit of this process may be that personalized reflection may also result in a person's making a deliberate decision not to go into administration after all. That, too, would be a desirable outcome in that it may reduce the number of people who pursue leadership roles out of "accidental" more than by design.
The way in which the concept of personal reflection might be integrated structurally into an administrator preparation program would be through an expectation that administrative candidates keep a kind
of diary, or reflective log in which they may regularly write down their personal responses to some of the questions listed earlier. Writing these observations down in a formal way is important because it develops one's skill at articulating important personal beliefs that may be of use if recalled in the future.

**Educational Platform Development.** Another important ingredient in the professional formation dimension is the preparation of a formal statement of one’s own educational philosophy, beliefs, and values. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1983) referred to this as the development of a personalized educational platform. In their view, every professional educator is encouraged periodically to take the time to review personal stances about important educational issues. A person would state in a very straightforward manner the ideas that he or she espouses, in a way similar to the platform statements made by candidates in a political campaign. The major difference would be that the educational platform would be designed to communicate a person's deepest and truest attitudes, values, and beliefs about education, even if these were contrary to sentiments of people "in the public."

Sergiovanni and Starratt suggested that an educational platform might include personalized responses to ten major issues:

1. The aims of education.
2. Major achievements of students.
3. The social significance of student learning.
4. The image of the learner.
5. The value of the curriculum.
6. The image of the teacher.
7. Preferred kind of pedagogy.
8. The primary language of discourse to be used in learning situations.
9. Preferred kind of teacher-student relationships.
10. Preferred kind of school climate.
Clearly, there are no correct or incorrect answers to any of these issues. However, the process of spending time to think through, and actually write out, personal interpretations of each of these items would seem to have a number of advantages, particularly for the person moving into a new professional role. For one thing, preparing a platform statement helps in the process of professional formation by enabling a person to recognize some of his or her strongest beliefs (and perhaps unwanted biases) about professional education. Some of the responses to the ten areas will come about much more quickly than will others. It is likely that these areas represent concepts where there is the strongest personal allegiance to certain values. The basis of these may be truly viewed as "core values," or "non-negotiable" issues to the individual. A second value in this type of activity is that it may alert the individual to probable conflicts that may lie ahead in a professional career. In addition to individual platforms, all organizations also possess, at least implicitly, strong value statements and "philosophies." When a person has a deep understanding of his or her personal platform, it may be possible to tell in advance where sources of conflict are to be found in future relationships with organizations. It will never be possible to avoid these conflicts, but understanding the exact source of value disputes should assist most individuals in finding more effective ways of dealing with institutions.

An activity recommended as part of the professional formation dimension of administrator preparation would be to expect that every aspiring administrator take the time to articulate as clearly as possible a personal educational platform in the way described here. Further, there is also considerable value in sharing this platform statement with others, perhaps a preservice mentor or other colleagues who are part of an administrator preparation program. This sharing process is helpful in enabling others to gain insights into one’s behavior and, perhaps even more importantly, causing the
individual to be as clear as possible about the nature of personal values and beliefs.

**Understanding of Interpersonal Styles.** Another aspect of professional formation deals with the development of an appreciation of different interpersonal styles in others, and how those differences relate to one's own style. A critical skill that is needed by every successful administrator must be an appreciation for individual differences, along with a recognition of the ways in which those differences may have a profound impact on the administrator's ability to exercise his or her own preferred style of behavior. This is important in several specific areas in which the school administrator must work. Among these are in relations with staff and students, the formation of teams (both teaching and management), and in school-community relations. All of these settings (and many others not listed here) make demands on the administrator to be sensitive to the dynamics that take place in organizations when people behave differently from one another.

Merrill and Reid (1981) suggested that the appreciation of personal styles is a basic step in developing more effective performance in any role. Their work is based on a number of fundamental assumptions:

1. People perform most effectively in a positive relationship.
2. A mutually productive relationship is an asset that one needs to work at to maintain.
3. The modification of one's approach in order to improve an interpersonal relationship does not constitute a lack of sincerity or a Machiavellian desire to manipulate. Quite the opposite, it demonstrates respect for another person's right to be unique.
4. One of the greatest insights in life is the mature recognition that others are at least as important in the greater scheme of things as oneself.
5. Developing a wide variety of skills and techniques for handling interpersonal relationships is a desirable objective.

6. A certain amount of effort is required to develop new skills, and this effort is good in the sense that it represents a type of intense personal growth.

7. Those things that are out of one's control may be attributed to any source one desires, but controlling what can be controlled— one's own actions— need not contradict one's beliefs and personal platform.

In many ways, the suggestion that aspiring administrator would do well to learn how to appreciate and understand their own and others' interpersonal styles is an important complement to the idea of the platform development. Here, the future administrator develops an understanding of the ways in which his or her values must relate to other platforms that will be found in organizations. It is suggested, therefore, that an administrator preparation program would do well to include formal training in the analysis of interpersonal styles and psychological types.

Among the types of activities that may be included as part of this emphasis on the analysis of interpersonal and other styles might involve the use of such inventories as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers, 1962), or a learning style instrument such as Kolb's Learning Style Profile (1976).

**Personal Professional Development.** The final component of the Professional Formation dimension is the articulation of a statement regarding one's personal professional development. This represents the activity of putting all of the insights gathered from the first two dimensions (Academic Preparation and Field-Based Learning) together with insights derived from the activities of preservice mentoring, personal reflection, platform development, and the appreciation of styles into a single, coherent action plan. It is at
this point that the aspiring administrator is encouraged to indicate where he or she believes that additional work is needed in order to become a more effective administrator. This is where one of the greatest potentials of professional formation—the synthesis of learning—may occur. In addition, the most desirable objective of any learning activity, namely the acceptance of the control over learning by the learner, may take place in this activity. As a result, this may truly be seen as the conclusion of a preservice preparation program because it is at this point when the future administrator is "cut loose" from the program and told that he or she must plan and take responsibility for learning what will make sense throughout a professional career.

While Personal Professional Development Planning might be seen as the culminating activity of a preparation program, it should be woven in as a continuing part of a solid preparation sequence. From the beginning of a candidate's first university courses in administration, there should be an explicit statement of the need to accept personal responsibility for translating the course content into individual action. In fact, each of the three dimensions of the model presented here may be seen as simultaneously occurring to what goes on in the other dimensions of the model. Professional Formation must be taking place while Academic Preparation is going on, and Field-Based Learning should be taking place to enhance Academic Learning and clarifying Professional Formation. The simultaneous nature of these three dimensions is depicted in the diagram shown in Figure 2.

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FIGURE 3 HERE

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Throughout the previous section of this paper, a three-dimen-
sional model for the preservice preparation of school administrators was described as a way to address more directly some of the shortcomings that have been identified in traditional preparation programs. The most significant departure from conventional approaches was the addition of the Professional Formation concept.

In the final part of this paper, a recent program designed to take into account many of these concepts in the improvement of administrator preparation programs is briefly described.

Danforth Foundation Principals' Preparation Program

The Danforth Foundation of St. Louis, Missouri was founded in 1927 as a national philanthropy and is dedicated to enhancing the humane dimensions of life. Activities of the Foundation traditionally have emphasized the theme of improving the quality of teaching and learning, and recent funding has been directed toward the improvement of school leadership as a way to achieve that theme.

In the Fall of 1986, the Foundation announced a new initiative designed to support innovative programs that would prepare future school principals in ways that would be more effective than traditional approaches, and more sensitive to changes in American society at large.

The result of this initiative was the announcement of an effort known as the Danforth Foundation Program for the Preparation of School Principals. It is currently being implemented in its first stage at Georgia State University, the University of Alabama, and The Ohio State University, and plans exist for the Program to be extended to five additional institutions for the 1988-89 academic year: The University of Houston, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Oklahoma University, the University of Washington, and Indiana University at Indianapolis. The Program embodies a number of
assumptions concerning needed modifications in the procedures utilized to assist aspiring administrators to become better prepared for future leadership responsibilities, and from the beginning, there has been an effort to address critical problems identified in the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, the need for increased collaboration between universities and local school systems and greater opportunities for experiential learning. These views have, in turn, led to the acceptance of certain assumptions about the ways in which administrators might best be prepared for the future:

1. Aspiring administrators must be held accountable and responsible for their own learning.
2. Collegial support is crucial to future administrative success.
3. Individual goal-setting and action planning by aspiring administrators is viewed as a central feature of professional development.
4. A wide range of alternative instructional activities should be available to assist people in learning because people learn in different ways.

These assumptions lead quite naturally to an approach to the preparation of administrators that makes use of many of the features of the Tri-Dimensional Model described in this paper. Mentoring, field-based learning, reflection, and personal professional planning and development all are naturally merged with strong academic preparation as a way to encourage a more complete view of the ways in which administrators for the future are to be prepared. Each of the participating universities has taken steps to find ways to address these basic principles and assumptions of the Danforth Program. The concepts described throughout this paper, while similar to those of the other institutions, represent the ideas which drive the effort of The Ohio State University. During the next few years, as candidates
in this program assume positions of leadership in schools, follow-up research will be carried out to determine whether or not this approach to administrator preparation will achieve its promise. To date, two sources have been tapped to determine the apparent success of this approach to administrator preparation. A recent formative evaluation instrument was distributed to the 18 individuals who currently serve as the candidates in this program. The results of this survey have indicated that, of the various learning activities that represented all three facets of the Tri-Dimensional Model and which have been followed by Danforth Program candidates, the activities which have received the most favorable review to date have been those classified as part of the Professional Formation Dimension. Specifically, aspiring administrators have indicated that their contacts with mentors have been the most important part of the program at this point.

A second source of evaluative data has been the observations of candidate performance by university faculty who have worked with the students in their traditional courses (i.e., Academic Preparation). The consensus among professors who have seen candidates in their classes has suggested that, to date, candidates participating in the Danforth Program which makes use of the Tri-Dimensional Model demonstrate a notably higher degree of diagnostic assessment, both of their own performance as well as the institutions in which they work, display more apparent reflectivity in their thought processes, show greater responsibility for their own learning, and exhibit a refined developmental process showing integrative and connective thinking and learning. The general feeling seems to be that these characteristics are highly desirable characteristics for individuals who are pursuing administrative careers. Whether or not these same behaviors are carried out on the job, or whether or not any more effective performance will result will need to be reviewed at some point in the future. The Program,
however, seems to be headed in a positive direction.

Summary and Conclusion

In this paper, a review of the present practices associated with the preparation of American school administrators was offered. In general, it was noted that current practices have received a considerable amount of negative criticism, most notably because of the fact that present approaches do not provide for sufficient collaboration between universities and local educational agencies, and also because they lack a serious clinical component. Although these criticisms may indeed be valid, there was some reservation expressed concerning the adequacy of these suggestions as ways of truly refining administrator preparation. As a result, the majority of the paper was devoted to the description of a Tri-Dimensional Model to be followed in the future preparation of school administrators. The three dimensions of this model included academic preparation, field-based learning, and a new concept not traditionally offered to aspiring administrators, the dimension of professional formation. This third category included such practices as the use of mentoring, reflective practice, personal platform development, the understanding of alternative styles, and personal and professional planning in a formal sense.

The paper concluded with the observation that the logic of the Tri-Dimensional Model has served as the basis of thinking for a new Program to Prepare Principals that has been funded by the Danforth Foundation and carried out at The Ohio State University, among other institutions across the United States.
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FIGURE 1. States requiring field experiences or similar forms of practica as a specific feature for initial administrative licensure or certification.
FIGURE 2. Illustration of the cyclical nature of Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning.
FIGURE 1. Diagram representing the Tri-Dimensional Model of Administrator Preparation.
REFERENCES


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