



# VALUES AND ETHICS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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## THE TRANSLATION OF ETHICS FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION INTO VICE PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

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### Introduction

Teachers in Ontario, Canada, upon entering professional practice are required, as members of the teaching profession, to adhere to the ethical standards of the teaching profession in their commitment to students and student learning (Ontario College of Teachers, 2006). As set down by the Ontario College of Teachers, these 4 ethical standards are: care, trust, respect, and integrity. Further, there are standards of practice for the teaching profession which provide a framework for professional practice in Ontario describing knowledge, skills and values inherent in the profession, to which all members must similarly adhere. As members of the College, vice principals too are guided by both the ethical standards for the teaching profession and the standards of practice for the teaching profession (Ontario College of Teachers, 2006). In the course of their professional practice, vice principals are required to uphold these guiding ethical standards in their interactions and decision-making with all educational stakeholders (Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Rintoul & Goulais, 2010 in-press). Most vice principals, when asked, believe they live by ethical principles in their professional practice. It is this belief which makes vice principals feel they are making a difference and are truly serving student success (Rintoul & Goulais, 2010 in-press). As well, believing they are ethically motivated makes vice principals feel effective in the job, fuels their sense of self-efficacy and increases their job satisfaction (Marshall & Hooley; 2006; Nanavati & McCulloch, 2003).

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But how do vice principals know that they are acting in professionally ethical ways? What would that look and feel like? How are the 4 ethical standards of care, trust, respect and integrity translated into practice? How ethics are defined and translated into practice may be different for everyone. As well, the personal interpretations and understandings of any one practitioner are not static, but may change with years of job experience, and with the relative amount of hope or scepticism with which the practitioner views her/his work experience as well as the decision-making dilemmas themselves (Begley, 1999; Starratt, 2004). All decision-making has an inherent discretionary component (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005; Stefkovich, 2006). Ethical stances may also be affected by stress, and by certain trigger situations which may influence the practitioner to act differently. In times of stress, or in reaction to situations, individuals who may have learned ethical patterns of behaviour in adult life, can revert back to earlier patterns of behaviour associated with childhood. We are after all, products of our environment and the values of our society. The perceived severity of the situation under consideration may also influence the cognitive processes of ethical decision-making (Tuana, 2007). In this way, professional ethics is not only a grey area, but perhaps is also in a constant state of flux, being continually interpreted and re-interpreted by the practitioner (Begley, 1999).

Given this fluidity, how can we understand the processes through which ethical standards are translated into action? Such general interest questions and considerations served to create a backdrop and frame of reference for our study, and led us to the consideration and creation of our study purpose which was to use specific field examples quoted directly from our participants to demonstrate how the 4 ethical standards of care, trust, respect and integrity are translated into practice. We suggest that perhaps professional ethics can only be interpreted and translated subjectively. We further propose that, in the effort to act in a professionally ethical way in managing the day-to-day school-based dilemmas on the job (with scant preparatory training in ethical decision-making) vice principals use strategies of self-regulation to guide their ethical behaviour. Such self-regulation may involve interpretation and lessons derived from specific decisional challenges or dilemmas. These interpretations are not necessarily theory-based but rather experiential, learned in practice, on the fly, on the job – a job which is often complex and jampacked, full of ambiguity and often demanding time sensitive ethical decision-making (Armstrong, 2005; Glanz, 2004; Hartzell et al, 1995; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Vice principals become intimately familiar with a working environment in which there is not always enough time to reflect on their decision-making (Hartzell et al, 1995; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). These experiential interpretations or thought processes (Tuana, 2007) may act as sign posts, facilitating decision-making as both manageable and experience-based.

## **Methodology and Method**

Given the challenges and complexities of school-based decision-making, we wanted to investigate and understand how 23 vice principals translate into personal practice the 4 ethics of the teaching profession: care, respect, integrity and trust in the context of their schools and school communities. Our research strategies included qualitative case study approaches (Merriam, 2002) and in-depth personal interviews (Seidman, 2006) to investigate and understand (Anderson, 1990; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Seidman, 2006) the decision-making processes and perceptions of these vice principals. Taped interviews of approximately one hour in duration, semi-structured and interpretive in nature were more conversational rather than in response to questions from the interview guide (Anderson, 1990; Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 2006).

Our participant sample of convenience (Seidman, 2006) is drawn from 5 different school boards in southern, central and northern Ontario, Canada. We wanted to include participants representing both genders, a broad age range, both experienced and inexperienced, and diverse settings. Twenty-seven potential participants known professionally by at least one of the researchers were invited to participate in one-on-one personal interviews of 45 minutes to one hour in duration (Seidman, 2006) about ethical decision-making. All who expressed an interest in the topic (23) were included in the study. All have been educators in Ontario for at least 7 years, first as teachers and presently as vice principals. All are from either the elementary or secondary panel of the public system. Included are both males and females. Both urban, from northern and southern Ontario, and rural (that is, neither urban nor suburban), from central and southern Ontario are represented. Eighteen participants are relatively experienced with 4 to 5 years in the vice principal role, while 4 are less experienced with less than 1 year, to just over 1 year as vice principal. One very experienced participant has been in the role for just over 7 years. They range in age from 31 to 44 years.

## **Data Interpretation and Analysis**

Emergent themes were derived directly from analysing participant data across all interviews (Seidman, 2006). We documented specific tales from the interviews (Merriam, 2002) showcasing difficult decision-making experiences, personal thought processes and self-reflection that vice principals used to translate the ethics of their profession into personal practice. In discussion, participants sometimes related specific events which they had undergone which they considered to be particularly important learning experiences. They told these stories in great detail and spent some time elaborating on the specific lesson(s) they took from them. Generally these were important understandings that helped to shape their practice or professional beliefs in some way. We noted that participants used specifically memorable phrases from the experience, for example, “don’t take this personally” to

capture and internalize the wisdom learned. These essential learning-capturing phrases, which we have labelled *self messages*, were repeated in participants' conversation suggesting they held personal symbolic importance. These self-messaging cues, such as "pay attention" appear to act as catalysts for vice principal action, facilitating the translation of subjective interpretations of care, trust, respect and integrity into their daily work experience. While our intent was to document how vice principal experiences demonstrated the translation into practice of the four ethical standards of trust, care, respect and integrity – we also noted that study participants tended to frame their commentary within more general experiential areas of concern, or guiding principles. Thus, vice principal stories, while providing experiential evidence of trust, care, respect and integrity in action, were further sorted into five general guiding principles which we deemed to be important to the participants in our study. We categorized these guiding principles as empathy, perspective, authenticity, self-reflection and timeliness. In order to stay true to the concerns of our study participants, we used these to frame their stories. What follows are examples, quoted directly, from these vice principal field interviews.

#### **EMPATHY**

The vice principals of our study referenced the centrality of empathy in their decision-making process and of the importance of understanding differing viewpoints, as well as the motivations, needs and desires of those with whom they interact, most typically students, parents, teachers and administrative colleagues. Empathy may be considered a necessary component of any personal theory of care-based ethics (Slote, 2007). Moral motivation, as Slote observes, derives primarily from an empathic response. One study participant commented that acting without compassionate understanding was akin to "making decisions in the dark". Vice principals in our study tended to agree that flawed decisions were generally caused by a lack of empathic concern for all involved parties.

A female participant in the secondary panel described a "pay attention" lesson which recounted a learning experience that became a strong reminder for her to listen carefully, and to assess her own motivations and assumptions. What follows is a story in her words.

When I sit down with a student in my office, I say to myself "pay attention." I want to hear what this student says and hear what he really means. I have to make sure I look beyond the nose ring, the tattoos, and pay attention to my own prejudice. I remember one time, a teacher had joked about this student being in jail. He went home, told mom, and the next day I had that in my office. The student told me exactly what the teacher had said. I found it hard to believe. I thought he must have it wrong, because I know the teacher is a very caring, individual. Maybe he was trying to get the teacher

in trouble. You see, I had already assumed that the student was wrong. I went to see the teacher, who told me (as I had expected) that, no, she hadn't said that. Then the teacher, student and I had a meeting. "Miss, you said ..." A light went off for the teacher, and she remembered. "Oh my god, I *did* say that, but that's not what I meant!" She started crying. She apologized. The student was uncomfortable, and accepted the apology. After the teacher left, I told the student how sorry I was for what happened. He said it was okay, but I knew it wasn't, because mom had told me how upset he was. But he was gracious enough to say he was okay. He wanted to help me end things well. Next day mom thanked me, and said what a difference it had made to her son. We couldn't fix what happened, but saying sorry did make a difference. Now, that student always greets me with a nod and a 'hi'. I think I have earned his respect. This experience is a constant reminder for me. Showing respect is so easy to say, but I really have to consciously do it in every situation.

The vice principal further noted that respect was a common topic of dialogue among her colleagues, and she spoke of her awareness that just discussing respect doesn't necessarily create respect. "It's funny, especially since we hear ourselves talking about respect all the time. It's so easy to assume that you are being respectful. Students are a wonderful reality check." This vice principal used this situation, and her self-message to "pay attention", as a constant reminder that kept her focussed on consciously demonstrating respect for students in the course of her work.

In a variance on the 'pay attention' notion, a male vice principal from an elementary school mentioned that following the required policies and procedures after a physical altercation meant that 2 students should have been suspended and sent home, but the dynamics of the conversations with one of the fathers suggested the possibility of physical abuse.

There's nothing on record but sometimes the hairs on the back of your neck go up when you hear the child say, "Dad's going to hit me when I go home." We just agreed to keep both children at school in the office. The 2 combatants spent a day or two working quietly in the office side by side and after it all they're friends again.

This vice principal acted empathetically, being careful to listen to his own internal messaging, to set aside the paper rules and practice the ethic of care (Stefkovich, 2006; Tuana, 2007) to keep these boys from further harm. "I understand how easily boys fight, but does it help anyone to have them roughed up when they get home?" The vice principal decided to "bend the rules" and say it wasn't really a fight by definition and kept them in the office for 2 days. "A boy in grade 6 and another in grade 7 staying

home by themselves for 2 days wouldn't have served any purpose." Acting with personal discretion to ostensibly down-play the severity of the incident helped the vice principal act in a manner that upheld his ethical belief to care for the students as he perceived best.

### **PERSPECTIVE**

Vice principals also spoke of the importance of understanding perspective in their decision-making process, and of altering their own view in order to better approach difficult situations. They mentioned the need to keep themselves in check, to distance themselves sometimes from emotional involvement, to move in essence 'from the dance floor to the balcony' (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002) to get a truer sense of the implications of possible actions.

One participant (secondary) referenced an awareness of the importance of perspective, through her self-message of "don't take this personally." She articulates her perspective thus.

I have to keep emotions out of it, so I can get away from the 'me' perspective, and focus on the student's perspective. This comes up particularly if I am under attack. For example – one difficult parent – his child could do no wrong, to suggest otherwise was to call him a liar, and everyone else involved should be severely punished. The parent who wants to exact an ounce of flesh. Most vice principals meet this parent within their first year or two. At some point in that difficult conversation I realized I had to step out of myself to be able to help that boy. He wasn't the one attacking me and he was clearly uncomfortable and dominated by Dad. I had to help him get through that meeting. He needed me to be calm, to smile encouragingly as that dreadful meeting wore on. So I just told myself, "hey, don't take this personally." I was talking with Dad and just trying to be an objective and caring adult. I can't do that if my emotions are getting in the way. So I just have to keep my emotions out of it.

Her internal self-messaging processes – accessed in this example through the simple mental reminder, "don't take this personally" – operated as a form of self-regulation which allowed the participant to balance her emotional involvement by maintaining a measured, objective perspective so that she could act from the position of a caring adult. Another vice principal (elementary) recounted an incident in which she made a decision that was not received favorably.

One teacher wanted some girls suspended for a week but the girls had never been in the office all year so I wouldn't suspend them. The girls were just sassing off to the teacher so it was an accumulation of small things. "The girls were on

the swings, they didn't bring the right shoes,"— that sort of thing.

As the vice principal recounted, "this teacher was one of those who always complains about not getting enough front office support." Although the vice principal knew this teacher would probably "bad-mouth her" she just tried to make an objective decision that was best for the students and all concerned, "I can't send someone home just because a teacher wants me to. This is not about me and currying favour with a teacher, it's about students." Perspective, or the lack thereof, is of critical concern to vice principals in their ethical decision-making. Mistakes in judgment were often ascribed to a lack of perspective. Through perspective, as Plato observed, "every sort of confusion is revealed within us. . ." (*Plato's Republic, Book 10, 602d*).

### **AUTHENTICITY**

In times of demanding decision-making, vice principals spoke of the importance of knowing and being themselves, that is, being authentic by acting with humanity and conviction from core personal values (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Rintoul, 2010). One participant called this the sense of "being real", of "maintaining integrity." When queried about maintaining integrity our participant vice principals noted that it involved a sense of "truthfulness" and "personal accountability" in their decision-making processes. Integrity they believe also involves the idea of "being real," "realizing, or attempting to achieve," and "internal consistency of beliefs and values." As one female secondary school principal observed,

You just have to be real. I have to think about what I'm doing and know why I'm here, and really have that sense of conviction, and that helps me in times of indecision. I have to live what I believe, act the way that I believe, walk the talk. The hardest part of this is admitting when I'm wrong and I've made a mistake. But, when I do that, most people are supportive you know? They appreciate the honesty I guess. I find many parents are appreciative that I don't pretend to know everything. Then I have to make myself talk about my mistake with some critical friend, so I can learn from it and move on.

A secondary school male vice principal noted, "It's not just for yourself, so you can live with yourself. But if people see that you are living with yourself – 'yep, I've got to suck that one up and move on, and here's what I learned' – and you really mean it, then you send a message that you're not even thinking of." In another instance, a female participant from the secondary panel used her inner messaging as a reminder to 'keep first things first', and to work from personal values. She thoughtfully added,

In this job it really is what you make it. I need to remind myself often, particularly when I'm feeling

the pressure from other stakeholders, that I create my job. I decide how it affects me and what I give priority to. I have to shape the vice principal role in ways that work for me. I define my role by the approach I take. I can focus all day on 'the skippers,' or I can focus on the students who are in class and how they are learning. Sometimes focussing on good behaviour encourages what I want to see, and discourages what I don't want to see.

In our view, these secondary school vice principals demonstrated a belief in the importance of authenticity, and of working from personal convictions. In the grey area of daily practice, however, vice principals sometimes find their beliefs and values challenged. For example, in another case, a parent had been keeping a 11 year old child home from school for almost 50 percent of the school days. The female elementary school vice principal tried constantly to get this child in school but the parent just kept, as she said,

throwing up roadblocks- "I think he has Scarlet fever, he's been throwing up all night and I've just changed the sheets; his temperature's so high I can't take him to the hospital." She always had some reason to keep him home but if the child had really been that ill he should probably have been in a hospital permanently.

The vice principal knew that "morally, legally, and ethically we should have gone to court and charged the parent- have lawyers and everything but I still have not called the attendance counsellor." She is still hoping that this mother will comply and get the child to school. "Perhaps the mother just has a case of being overly protective." The vice principal feels that if she reports this transgression to the attendance officer "it's going to be a big court case and they'll charge the parent. Is that in the student's best interest? When he turns 12 they can charge the boy. I'm not comfortable with either of these possibilities." She keeps hoping this predicament will somehow resolve itself but thus far a solution she can live with has yet to be found.

In another field story, a male vice principal from the elementary panel reported an incident in which a student of a northern school came without socks in mid winter. He wanted to go out for recess and said he was "fine." The vice principal called home to tell mom that her son was inadequately dressed. The mother felt her son "would be fine" with just his snow boots but the vice principal was not comfortable with that response, saying,

I wouldn't want my son out in that freezing weather with no socks. I kept him in. He wasn't happy. Don't we have a duty to protect students? Even in spite of parents' wishes? These students are in our care. This parent made a poor decision I just couldn't endorse.

The vice principal felt he was acting ethically to care for this child as best he could even if it meant defying parental wishes. We would argue that his response was authentic in that he made a decision that he considered appropriate for this child as if his own.

In yet another example, a female vice principal in secondary school had a teacher on staff whose own child was very ill and would soon die. She offered this poignant tale.

'Joe' is a very good teacher with wonderful teaching practice, very curriculum -oriented but he doesn't go within 6 feet of his students and wears a mask in class. He doesn't touch any papers from students for 2 days, the classroom door must be closed, the filters must be on, all this so he doesn't carry home any germs to his little girl. He doesn't go to staff meetings. If his daughter is ill he must take off days without pay. He can't use *his* sick days because *he* isn't sick, it's his daughter who's ill, not him. Every day I go down the hall to make certain he is actually in the class even though he is very careful about calling if he won't be there. Sometimes I just take over his class rather than have him lose a day's salary. I should not do this and my principal just appears not to see. By the letter of the law he should have to take all this time off without pay. Where is the humanity in that? Even with a note from his doctor saying he is incapable of teaching on those days when his daughter is dangerously ill does not sway human resources at the board.

The vice principal, in this incident, recounted how she almost became "ill just thinking and talking about this whole sad dilemma." She could not understand why the teacher's own union would not be "going to bat for this poor fellow." Together with her principal she went to the Director who agreed to help 'Joe.' She is unclear yet what that 'help' will look like.

As evidenced here, ethically-acting vice principals will sometimes subordinate board rules, as well as teacher and parental desires, to the over-riding personal interpretations of care, trust, respect and integrity. In these tales from the field, personal conviction can often trump system rules and concerns of others in authentic decision-making.

### **SELF-REFLECTION**

Vice principals in our study considered the opportunity to reflect on their daily practice to be an "essential component" of their ethical decision-making processes. Through reflection, vice principals conveyed to us that they were always considering if they made the right choice, if they missed certain possibilities, or if any options were overlooked (Branson, 2010). Self-reflection was described as a "gut check" by one secondary school vice principal reporting that she knew she had made a mistake if she couldn't stop thinking about a decision she

had made. Her decision kept returning to the forefront of her thought processes because, she believed, something about her decisional response wasn't sitting well with her. Participants also used journal writing as a method of capturing their self-reflection. Another participant explained her self-messaging.

I know it's a balancing act. I can never do it all, I can never satisfy everyone, and I'll always make mistakes. Sometimes not everything can be fixed. There's one boy I have completely failed this year. I have been trying all year to get him back to school, and he's not here, and nothing I tried seemed to work. So what do I do? I have to be okay with that or I would freeze up and not be able to act the next time, and you always have to be ready to act. So I have to consciously tell myself to 'stay balanced' and to do what I have to do to stay balanced. I can't be a good leader or make good decisions if I'm all over the map. I have to make sure I make time to relax, that I spend time with friends, and to do those other things that aren't my job, that refuel me, so I can keep doing what I do here. You know, the job teaches you that. It's not that I care less about the kids, it's that I have to care about me too. It has to be a balance.

In another interview from the field, a female secondary school vice principal spoke of striking a balance between school and home in terms of establishing student rules of behaviour. "Promiscuity is an issue with many of the girls at her school. We cannot and should not handle this alone, so we call the parents in. They are very, very grateful that they are asked to be involved." Apparently the previous administration had been very top down in its approach.

This has happened, this is what we're going to do, no discussion. We're not like that. We want the student to learn, we're not about punitive action. We're trying to make it a learning experience. How can we make this work so it doesn't happen again, so we tend to invite the parents and keep them on board? We're not counsellors, nor a treatment facility, so we want parents actively involved. It's not about us, but the student and the family.

This vice principal did not see the behaviour of the students at her school as necessarily the problem but rather lay much of the blame on the program itself and how the teachers were running it. "Children are very active hands-on learners and are being forced into rows of desks with paper and pencil tasks. Attention spans are gone and misbehaviour escalating." She believed that it was time "to reconsider how we were facilitating learning" that a new behaviour plan was in order including strong parental involvement as a priority. "Most parents want their children to grow up to be good people."

## ***TIMELINESS***

In their field tales, secondary and elementary participants spoke of time constraints as a central issue of the vice principalship and a limiting factor in everything they do. They also spoke of timeliness as an essential component of ethical decision-making. One elementary school participant observed that he appreciated being able "to take time to consider options, or to allow heads to cool." He spoke of having a desire to deal with behaviour situations in a judicious and timely manner, but also of the desire to allow time for due consideration of all options, so that a good option was not missed. Another secondary school participant related the issue of time and timeliness to the ethic of trust, particularly in terms of his relationships with students, and explained his 'don't give up on me' lesson, reiterating,

Time is always an issue. It's a juggling act throughout the day. I'm constantly readjusting priorities, even as I walk from one hallway to the next. I'm always asking, who or what needs me most right now. The students know I'm busy, but they also know that I take notes. I carry a notepad with me everywhere. I note everything that I want to come back to, every question, every name. Maybe I haven't had time yet this week to get to that 'skipper' that I've seen out there on the smoking bench for the past three days in a row at about this time. Yesterday he waved at me and smiled. He is what I call a skipper-with-reason. He wants my attention. He's saying 'don't give up on me.' He knows sooner or later we will be having a long talk in my office. He trusts me. He's waiting me out.

In this case, the vice principal used his awareness of time to frame his concern for maintaining an ethic of trust in his daily practice. In yet another example, a vice principal from the elementary panel believes it is important to give herself "time and space." Her response is carefully considered,

At this point in time I haven't beaten myself up over decisions I've made. I try to be very methodical. I indicate that I'm going to have to think about this, a half day, a few hours, overnight. I'll let you know maybe next day because I'm going to have to go to bed at night and sleep through the night. Depending on the degree of severity of the incident, a decision can take hours, days, even the best part of a week. And I tell everyone that- be it students, teachers, parents. I won't be rushed. I try to take time now so not to regret a quick decision later.

In one incident involving a hasty decision, this same vice principal recalled that although the principal had said he and she would hire a Long Term Occasional (LTO) teacher from the supply pool, the principal just went ahead and hired a current supply teacher as an expedient way to get

past the task. Several weeks went by and the principal remarked to her, "This teacher is really floundering. I shouldn't have jumped the gun and hired him. I didn't take enough time and just got carried away." Although it was the principal's error the vice principal was supportive and said "I'll work with him as it's just for another couple of months." The principal declared, "This guy will not be back in the fall. I'm sorry I didn't take the time to have you in on this hiring decision." The vice principal hoped that this judgment error was "a one-time thing" that the principal would not make again. She said that she and the principal "make a pretty good team, we are in sync, we seem to have the same morals and ethics and vision for the school."

### Discussion

The decision-making examples cited, provide real-world interpretations of the professional ethics of care, trust, respect, and integrity, as they are translated into practice by a selection of vice principals from 5 Ontario Canada school boards (Ontario College of Teachers, 2006). As well, our vice principal participants, as they gained on-the-job experience (Armstrong, 2005), often made reference to specific, signature episodes to reflect on as a means of translating otherwise abstract ethical values (Begley, 1999; Tuana, 2007) into subjective reality. Vice principals translated individual stories into bite-sized, very personal 'self-messages,' such as "pay attention" to capture an essential ethical learning point of the original episode. We have documented storied evidence from our participants employing self-messaging markers to achieve an empathetically-based decision (Stefkovich, 2006; Tuana, 2007). As such, these personal messages were rooted in their minds as important lessons from the context of daily on-the-job personal practice. This messaging process allowed them to alter their perspective to coincide with lessons already learned experientially and to re-align themselves with their basic beliefs and values, in readiness for action within the ever-shifting contextual reality of ethical leadership (Begley, 1999). In their pursuit of authentic leadership practices (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Rintoul, 2010), the messages informed the way vice principals proceeded, helping them to connect, direct and interpret action in light of ethical values. Another strategy employed by the vice principals was self-reflection which served as an on-going personal review of decisions made (Branson, 2010). Although the words each participant used around timeliness were varied, the essential message was the same- take whatever time is necessary to make care-filled decisions (Stefkovich, 2005). Participants reported that when determinations were not aligned with five the guiding principles were have articulated here, the circumstances and resolutions kept recurring as troubling motifs running through their thought processes.

### Conclusion

The vice principals in our study related stories from practice and shared their ethical decision-making processes

around these five general guiding principles that, in our view, demonstrate empathy, perspective, authenticity, self-reflection and timeliness through a self-reflective process we have termed *self messaging*. In this way, self-messaging serves as a kind of moral compass in the highly contextual and changeable world which defines the vice principalship. We recommend that further study in ethical educational leadership might explore the subjective, interpretive nature of the 4 ethical standards of care, trust, respect, and integrity established by the Ontario College of Teachers (2006). It is one thing to suggest that such ethics are foundational to educational leadership in Ontario, but quite another to suggest that experiential interpretations of such abstract concepts will sufficiently align, through professional practice, to allow comparison and collaborative ethical discussion. We further suggest that future preparation processes for educational leaders, particularly for the first-time leadership role of the vice principal, might include more in-depth study of ethics and the process used to determine and pragmatically define a working definition of ethics, in particular the ethics of trust, care, respect and integrity.

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#### REMINDER

15<sup>th</sup> Annual Values and Leadership Conference  
September 21–24, 2010

Centre for Principal Development  
UMEA University, Sweden

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