

# Resetting, Repurposing, and Reimagining a State Organization: A Case Study

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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*A state organization of graduate faculty teaching in educational leadership preparation programs, the Michigan Association of Professors for Educational Leadership (MAPEL), serves as the focus for this case study designed to examine its efforts to reset, repurpose and reimagine its role. Using Bolman and Deal's (2107) observations of characteristics of organizations, the authors' four frame model provided a lens for understanding how this organization's members considered their past, prepared for its present and how it might contemplate its future. The study describes what contributed to these efforts and reports data gathered from its members regarding how changes might provide new opportunities for leadership and influence at the state level as well as impact the success of programs preparing graduates to serve as school and district leaders across the state. Research questions include (1) What is the awareness level of MAPEL membership of the attempts at redesign? How do members describe this change and its impact on them? (2) What were the catalytic events that led MAPEL to engage in redesign? (3) How did the Michigan Department of Education review and approval of new leadership standards impact the perceived role of MAPEL? (4) How did the examination of the by-laws impact the perceived role of MAPEL? Given the small amount of research on the impact of state level professional organizations, the study adds to the literature and offers recommendations for establishing communities of practice between and among colleges and universities, a vehicle for program improvement which to date has been underutilized.*

**Keywords:** State organization, case study, frames

Research literature during the past twenty-five years exploring the impact of school leadership on learning has revealed that leadership matters (Ni, Y. et al., 2019), whether at the school or district level (Harris, S., 2008; Lashway, L., 2006). Studies and books have detailed the knowledge, skills and dispositions required of successful school leaders (Knapp, et al., 2014; Deal, T. et al., 2009; Wilmore, 2008; Donaldson, G., 2008) and reported on the elements crucial for inclusion in school leadership preparation programs (Anderson, E. et al., 2018; Cosner, 2018; Wallace Foundation, 2016; Crow, G.M., et al., 2012; Orr, M. T. & Orphanos, S., 2011; Darling-Hammond, L., et al., 2007; Stein, S. J., 2006; Davis, S., et al., 2005). Organizations such as the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA, 2018) and state departments of education, e.g., the Michigan Department of Education, have developed and/or recently adopted standards for the preparation of school leaders to give guidance to and requirements for university programs as well as improve program quality (Gates, S. et al., 2020).

Given the importance of developing effective leaders, another relevant avenue for research has been how university faculty in educational leadership programs might improve quality e.g., quality assurance measures, authentic candidate assessments, meeting state and national accreditation standards (Wenger, E. C. & Snyder, W. M., 2000; Richlin, L. & Cox, M.D., 2004). Of lesser interest for study has been the role that a state organization of school leadership faculty might play and the value it might add in leveraging the success of program graduates. This exploration of the role of a state organization for school leadership program faculty has the opportunity to add to the understanding and potential impact of such associations (Brown, J. S. and Duiduid, P., 1991). It also has the potential to identify a community of practice within the faculty of these education leadership preparation programs so that they may learn from each other as well as engage as stronger advocates for the programs and the students they serve.

Three factors converged to support the transformation of the state organization for faculty teaching in leadership preparation programs in the state of Michigan: the national organization of faculty in school leadership programs (the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration or NCPEA) undertaking a self-study, the revision and publication of updated national standards for the preparation of school and district level leaders (NPBEA, 2018 ), and the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) 2019 decision to review, and if necessary, revise the standards that would guide the future approval and continued authorization of school leadership preparation programs.

According to its website, "The International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership [formerly NCPEA, now ICPEL] is committed to the practice and study of educational administration" (ICPEL website). Founded in 1947, the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) "continues its commitment to serve the interests and needs of professors of educational administration and practicing school leaders" by focusing on initiatives which:

1. Ensure the high-quality professional development of professors of educational administration.
2. Refine the knowledge bases for preparing practicing administrators and professors of educational administration.
3. Promote the application of theory and research in the field to the practice of educational administration.
4. Establish and promote a Code of Ethics for professors of educational administration.
5. Ensure access and inclusion of underrepresented groups into the professorship and administration and promote social justice in education.
6. Serve as an advocate for professors of educational administration and as an authority on critical issues.
7. Develop the administrative application of technology in the preparation and renewal of educational leaders.

8. Establish standards by which educational administration programs become certified, accredited, and approved.

The National Policy Board (NPBEA), is “a national alliance of major membership organizations committed to the advancement of school and school-system leadership. Member organizations represent the educational administration profession and collaborate to improve the preparation and practice of educational leaders at all levels” (NPBEA website). NPBEA revised the national standards for the preparation of school and district leaders in 2018. These new standards, aligned to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), officially replaced earlier standards developed by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC). According to the Council of Chief State School Officers (2015) document, these new standards were “recast with a stronger, clearer emphasis on students as learners, outlining foundational principles of leadership to help ensure that each child is well-educated and prepared for the 21st century” (CCSSO, 2015, p. 2).

Young et al. (2017) speak to the importance of having clear and consistent leadership standards to guide the preparation of future school leaders. Acknowledging the importance of having standards to guide not only program preparation but also program review and accreditation, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) assembled a task force of stakeholders in 2019 to review the Michigan standards for preparing school and district level leaders to ensure state-authorized approved programs provide “candidates with intentionally designed, research-based, leadership development experiences which build the knowledge and skills ...within authentic contexts” (www.npbea.org). At the conclusion of the review, the MDE recommended that the state of Michigan’s Board of Education adopt the 2018 NELP standards to guide these efforts.

### **Resetting, Repurposing, and Reimagining MAPEL**

The Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Leadership (MAPEL) represents university educational administration and leadership preparation programs and is affiliated with ICPEL. Founded in 1977, the MAPEL includes fifteen universities (Andrews University, Central Michigan University, Concordia University, Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, Madonna University, Michigan State University, Northern Michigan University, Oakland University, Saginaw Valley State University, University of Michigan, University of Michigan - Dearborn, University of Michigan - Flint, Wayne State University, Western Michigan University) and counts 66 individual faculty as members. Through their universities, MAPEL members serve nearly 900 school districts and 3,725 school buildings across the state’s upper and lower peninsulas and have played an important role in preparing a number of the 600 school superintendents and 4,500 school principals who lead learning in those organizations.

The national organization, ICPEL, having recently completed a process to redefine its mission, vision, values and goals, helped propel the anticipated review of its Michigan affiliate’s constitution and bylaws. A review of the proposed changes to the MAPEL constitution and bylaws set the stage for a substantive discussion of the mission, vision, values and goals of the state organization as well as strategies to effectively support the education and development of aspiring school leaders and the success of program graduates.

At the conclusion of those discussions, MAPEL had redefined the purpose of the organization as well as revised and approved the organization’s new constitution and bylaws, moving from the goal of sharing information *within* the organization to become an *outward facing* organization which:

- Develops policy positions
- Disseminates research and models best practices
- Obtains a “seat at the policy table,” recommending policy and legislative positions to local, state and national decision makers.

In order to “reset” the MAPEL organization to successfully reinvent itself as an outward-facing organization, the membership determined that work groups of members were needed to consider and then recommend how to make the transitions necessary to transform the organization. University faculty members from across the state were needed to explore these new priorities: Advancing MAPEL Policy and Legislative Advocacy; Informing Content Knowledge and Leadership Skills for Administrator Preparation Programs; Creating Field-Based Professional Learning for Continued Leadership Development for current school and district leaders; Identifying gaps in the literature on effective school leadership, conducting research and sharing findings on best practices for leadership preparation; and Developing handbooks for Field-based Clinical and Internship Experiences. These workgroups would be facilitated by members of the MAPEL Executive Board.

The work group tasked with advancing MAPEL policy and legislative advocacy has explored and informed MAPEL members about important legislative and policy issues in addition to encouraging greater participation in statewide policy-making activities. This group meets regularly to identify activities which will further the purpose of MAPEL advocacy and support. Activities to date have included:

- Gathering information for legislative and policy updates
- Expanding relationships with state administrator professional organizations
- Strengthening relationships with the Michigan Department of Education
- Circulating updates from MAPEL members serving on statewide committees
- Informing MAPEL members through monthly written updates on current policy and legislative issues
- Bringing advocacy positions to MAPEL members for consideration of adoption

These efforts have closely aligned to those of the workgroup tasked with informing content knowledge and leadership skills for school leaders. The focus of this workgroup was quickly redefined to inform, influence, and engage others such as practitioners, those in leadership preparation, and legislators by first identifying “hot topics” that needed to be addressed or needed advocacy and then focusing on a product or vehicle that would best meet that need or engage interested stakeholders, e.g., a scholarly activity, white paper, conference, or workshop. A crucial question this group explored was the support needed by current practitioners and the accountability of higher education institutions to provide it. Another topic which quickly rose to the surface was whether a common state assessment for all leadership preparation programs graduates was needed in addition to the authentic assessments already embedded in university coursework, clinical experiences and internships to indicate the student was prepared to obtain a state school administrator credential.

Thus, three subgroups organically emerged to inform, influence and engage. The first began development of a research-based Internship Handbook which spoke to quality, diversity, and higher education accountability after investigating the authentic and dynamic internship experiences across the state preparation programs. A second subgroup began discussing the pathway from preparation programs to becoming practicing school leaders with a white paper entitled, “Moving from Prep to Practice: Accountability in Leadership Preparation Programs.” The audience included current administrators to increase awareness of the preparation programs and the preparedness of leaders coming out of our programs. A third and larger group meets quarterly for updates on progress and to ensure there is not a duplication of efforts. A call is also put out regularly to the MAPEL members should they wish to be involved with a certain topic area and product creation. Future areas for action include creating additional white papers, exploring collaboration with the University Council for Education Administration (UCEA) now located in Michigan, and attracting others to the profession with activities such as a statewide *Why I Lead* conference and other recruitment events.

A third work group, creating field-based professional learning for continued leadership development, formed to identify any gaps in learning between preparatory programs and practicing

administrators in the context of a complex and dynamic educational industry. This group explored the initiative to Advance Inclusive Principal Leadership (AIPL) to consider if it might become a template for MAPEL's professional learning for pre-service principals as well as professional learning for practicing school leaders. MAPEL was approached to become one of the AIPL states for further collaboration and advocacy for the profession which will be explored further at the annual ICPEL conference in August, 2022. ICPEL and UCEA both support, along with the CCSSO, this national initiative to improve principal training and practice in serving special needs children. Other ICPEL state affiliates participating in the AIPL initiative include Ohio, Arkansas, Arizona, Georgia and Mississippi (J. Berry, personal communication, August 4, 2021).

Another early task of this workgroup was to identify content and assemble materials for review by leadership preparation programs, making MAPEL an aggregator of high-quality resources and materials in concert with other state associations.

The group identified professional learning strands which include the following:

- Effective principal leadership and communication in times of crisis
- Developing leadership capacity for practicing school administrators
- Mindfulness and care
- Early childhood learning and development
- Instructional supervision, e.g., High Leverage Teaching Practices, Universal Design for Learning
- Supervising special education teachers and paraprofessionals, e.g., PSEL/Disabilities, faculty materials
- Race, culture, and equity
- Theory to practice, e.g., case studies

A fourth work group's task was to identify gaps in the literature on effective school leadership, conduct research and share findings on best practices for leadership preparation. The purpose of this group was to develop, refine and communicate best practices through journal articles, books and book chapters and other resources for the MAPEL website.

The delineation of these various efforts quickly surfaced the need for an effective communication tool to disseminate information to MAPEL members and the national organization, ICPEL, and to the field more broadly. Developing a new and dynamic MAPEL website as a platform for this important work to engage stakeholders and support their collaboration resulted in a recommendation to develop a website, <https://miedprep.weebly.com/>, with three key functions: sharing information and resources to association members and other key stakeholders, connecting and engaging members by establishing a virtual network across the association, and collaborating through document sharing and communications to advance the association's mission and outreach.

With these developments in mind, the researchers wanted to understand these changes from the perspective of the membership. To that end, the following research questions were developed:

1. What is the awareness level of MAPEL membership of the attempts at redesign? How do members describe this change and its impact on them?
2. What were the catalytic events that led MAPEL to engage in redesign?
3. How did the MDE review and approval of new leadership standards impact the perceived role of MAPEL?
4. How did the examination of the by-laws impact the perceived role of MAPEL?

## Literature Review

A review of the literature included inquiry into the following areas of research that informed this case study: communities of practice, technical vs. adaptive change, and Bolman and Deal's four frames or perspectives on organizations.

### University Faculty Collaboration through Communities of Practice

Social constructivists emphasize the collaborative nature of learning and explain all cognitive functions as products of social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). Learning is assumed to occur in a variety of social situations. Communities of practice have the potential to provide the social setting and a powerful framework for groups of educators interested in the improvement of teaching, learning and leading.

Lave and Wenger (1991) questioned the efficacy of formal learning experiences in continuing professional development and proposed that the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skill occurs when meaning is shared, discussed, developed, and debated through participation in *communities of practice* (CoP). As defined by Wegner and Wenger-Trayner (2015), "Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (p. 1). Learning, then, is a process that takes place in a participative setting where it is mediated by differences in participant perspective.

In Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002), participants in communities of practice are described as follows:

These people don't necessarily work together every day, but they meet because they find value in their interactions. As they spend time together, they typically share information, insight, and advice. They help each other solve problems. They discuss their situations, their aspirations, and their needs. They ponder common issues, explore ideas and act as sounding boards . . . they become informally bound by the value that they find in learning together. This value is not merely instrumental for their work. It also occurs in the personal satisfaction of knowing colleagues who understand each other's perspectives and in belonging to an interesting group of people. (pp. 4-5)

According to Wegner's (1998a) theory, communities of practice share three crucial characteristics: the *domain*, the *community*, and the *practice*:

The *domain*: A domain includes members who have a shared area of interest.

The *community*: A community is built when members build relationships that allow them to engage in purposeful activities and meaningful discussions which enhance the learning or efficacy of each member.

The *practice*: Members are practitioners and they develop a shared repertoire of resources, such as techniques, stories, and experiences when sharing their practice. (Wegner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015, p. 1)

### Technical vs. Adaptive Change

One model through which organizational change is often viewed is the technical vs. adaptive leadership lens, posited by Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky (2009). A key element of the model which has close application here is the distinction between technical and adaptive change. The former depends on clear problems and solutions, a locus of the work resting on an authority figure (e.g., a leader), and smooth execution. By contrast, adaptive challenges are far more complex and even messy. These problems and solutions require new learning on the part of the stakeholders who are the locus of the work. Because of

its less definitive and ever evolving process, adaptive leadership depends on experiments and what the authors of the model would describe as smart risks.

Adaptive leadership has been widely applied as of late to areas such as the pandemic (Bagwell, 2020; Kolb, 2021), financial services (Doyle, 2017), and academic libraries (Wong and Chan, 2018).

## **Reframing Organizations**

Bolman and Deal's (2017) observations about organizations can also provide a powerful cognitive lens as MAPEL members consider its past, prepare for its present as well as contemplate its future. The authors state that what we see and do is strongly influenced by our preconceptions. They further observe that organizations are "complex", "surprising", "deceptive" and "ambiguous". In order to make sense of what is going on in an organization, they offer four perspectives, or frames, that help leaders find clarity and meaning. They also introduce the concept of reframing or "viewing situations from multiple perspectives." Bolman and Deal argue that leaders sometimes have too few ideas, a limited perspective and habitual response to the challenges which limits not only their options but effectiveness. Instead, multiple lenses allow leaders to look at old problems in a fresh way and confront challenges with new tools and move from intentions to actions. In addition, the four frames can provide the lenses to bring the organization and its challenges clearly into view instead of relying on private theories and personal judgements.

### ***The Structural Frame***

Bolman and Deal (2017) outline assumptions that underlie structural thinking: two tensions of organizational design, dividing work or differentiation and coordinating individual contributions or integration. They discuss options for designing the structure of the organization and structural imperatives to consider in determining an appropriate structure, e.g., an organization's size, age, core process, environment, goals and strategy, information technology and workforce. The authors conclude that finding the right structure is a central concern for any organization as it becomes the arrangement of roles and relationships that depict desired patterns of activities, expectations, and exchanges for employees as well as constituents. They also indicate that the organization's structure is intended to provide a means for standardization, efficiency, clarity and predictability given its goals and environment.

### ***The Human Resources Frame***

According to Bolman and Deal (2017), most think that organizations exist to serve human needs rather than the converse. However, the authors state that people and organizations need each other. Organizations need ideas, energy and talent. People need careers, salaries and opportunities. Given that interdependency, when the fit between the individual and the organization is poor, one or both suffer. A good fit benefits both the individual and the organization. Individuals find meaningful and satisfying work and organizations get the talent and energy they need to succeed.

### ***The Political Frame***

In describing the political frame, Bolman and Deal (2017) point out the limits of authority and the inevitability that resources are frequently too scarce to fulfill all demands. Thus, organizations are often arenas where groups jockey for power. As arenas, organizations have an important duty to shape the rules of the game. As actors or players, organizations are powerful tools for achieving the agenda of whoever

controls them. The authors offer two important insights regarding the political frame: goals emerge from bargaining and compromise among different interests rather than only from rational analysis at the top and that conflict becomes an inescapable, even welcomed, byproduct of everyday life. Handled properly, conflict can be a source of constant energy and renewal.

### ***The Symbolic Frame***

Organizational culture is both a product and process: an embodiment of accumulated wisdom and an ongoing source of innovation and renewal as new members challenge old ways. Bolman and Deal (2017) suggest that culture is a distinctive pattern of beliefs, values, practices and artifacts, developed over time which defines for members who they are and how they do things. The authors emphasize that from a symbolic perspective, meaning is a basic human need. Leaders in an organization can shape meaning by understanding and encouraging symbolic forms and activities to create more effective organizations.

### **Methodology**

Researchers chose a case study method to address the research questions above (Yin, 2009). The specific case under study is the redefinition and/or redesign of a professional organization, in this case MAPEL, and the phenomenon under examination is that transformation and its possible impacts. To this end, researchers developed a survey instrument using Qualtrics (see Appendix for survey questions connected to research questions).

### **Study Context**

As noted, a variety of factors converged that led MAPEL to examine its purpose with a fresh perspective. Beginning with the change in state standards from the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards to the National Educational Leadership Standards (NPBEA, 2018), professors in educational leadership in the state of Michigan had cause to meet on a more frequent basis. One result of this increase in contact was not only robust conversations around the standards, but also about the current role of MAPEL and what it might be. As this developed further into creating specific work groups, researchers felt it wise to capture the impact and perceptions of these changes on the membership at large.

As noted, MAPEL has 66 members statewide that serve on the faculty of 15 institutions and provide preparation programs for aspiring building and district level leaders. Historically, MAPEL has met twice per year in the fall and spring, but as a result of this work, meetings with sub groups and the full body have been more frequent, especially with the work groups described above.

### **Data Collection and Participant Selection**

The survey developed and sent to all 66 MAPEL members included an embedded consent for each participant and did not ask for a name or institution to protect confidentiality. Members were initially given three weeks to complete the survey, but after receiving an initial 12 responses, researchers decided to resend the questionnaire with an extended deadline of one week. This yielded an additional 8 participants for a total of 20 respondents representing a 30.3% response rate.

Participants, self-selected by returning the survey, were asked their academic rank, years of service in K-12 administration and higher education as follows:



**Table 1***Participant Breakdown by Rank and Experience Levels*

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Respondents at this Rank</i>	<i>Years of Experience as a faculty member of Ed Leadership</i>	<i>Respondents at this experience level</i>	<i>Years of PK12 Administrator Experience</i>	<i>Respondents at this experience level</i>
<i>Affiliate or Visiting Professor</i>	7	0-7	5	0-7	6
<i>Assistant Professor</i>	5	8-14	6	8-14	5
<i>Associate Professor</i>	4	15-21	6	15-21	5
<i>Full Professor</i>	4	21 or more	3	21 or more	4

### Findings

#### Awareness Level and Description of the Redesign (Research question 1)

The most frequent themes in participant responses centered on legislative policy and advocacy as well as communication and collaboration. Stated broadly, one respondent noted that MAPEL had moved from an historical inward focus “to an outward focus on how to inform, influence and support the preparation and development of school leaders.” Another respondent emphasized MAPEL’s “importance of voice to represent the institutions at the ‘table’ and to make sure politicians, lobbyists, and policymakers know we have a voice that is influential.”

Participants also valued the increase in communication and collaboration with colleague members: “MAPEL has risen to the occasion over the last few years to bring Michigan professors of ed leadership together.” Also valued is the connection to those practicing in PK-12 education, noting that MAPEL is “more connected to PK-12 and the broader political field that surrounds it” and that “Our PK-12 leaders want and need our support and collaboration, and that support can go well beyond leadership preparation.” Another respondent captured the importance of collaboration as transforming MAPEL “from a twice a year meeting that was nice to have to much more frequent and useful interactions that I don't want to miss.”

#### Catalytic Events that Led MAPEL to Engage in Redesign (Research question 2)

This transformation, like many, did not happen in a vacuum. Contextual events contributed and coalesced to effect this change, not the least of which was the leadership of the organization: “the current leadership was finding ways to make the organization stronger and more relevant even aside from the MDE review and approval process.” Another respondent noted that the MAPEL even seemed to be influencing MDE through its involvement, “having MAPEL leading the discussions and being involved with the MDE.”

### **Impact Review and Implementation of New Leadership Standards (Research question 3)**

Complementing the broader legislative and policy advocacy noted above, another specific and impactful event in this outward transformation was the participation of many MAPEL members in the leadership standards review for the state of Michigan with one respondent describing it directly, “The standards review process was a catalyst.” This theme was also illustrated well with another respondent who noted, “since the standards work with MDE, there is a collective commitment to impact the field as a group.” Other members felt that MAPEL has a “healthy relationship with the MDE” and that this “allowed MAPEL membership to provide input into the standards adoption.” Still others viewed the state assessment conversation as more impactful, “I am not sure the NELP (National Education Leadership Preparation) standards review process impacted the perceived role as much as the discussion of the state assessment which occurred multiple times within the process.” Even as opinions on the specific catalyst differ, MAPEL did meet more frequently during the standards review process.

### **Impact of By-law Examination on the Perceived Role of MAPEL? (Research question 4)**

Researchers were also curious as to the impact of MAPEL examining its own by-laws, and here the respondents differed. Some felt that clearly this was a factor in redefining the organization, noting that the process gave a “clearer understanding” of MAPEL or “reconfirmed the role of the organization.” Even more to the point, some noted the by-laws dialogue “moved us directly into examining our reason for being and talking about it as an organization.” Others saw this differently, however, and when asked if by-law review had an impact of transforming MAPEL simply stated, “it didn’t” or “I would say not very much.” As such, the value of this process may well have been in the eye of the beholder.

## **Discussion**

After individual and collective analysis of respondent data, researchers noted connections to the organizational theories summarized in the literature review. Communities of practice was certainly evident in that MAPEL is composed of professors with similar roles who share a common passion: to prepare educational leaders for the challenges of the work in schools and districts. Members enhanced professional relationships within work groups that formed organically. In addition, the transformation of MAPEL reflects the adaptive change model of Heifetz et al. (2009). Members engaged with each other in learning, as described in communities of practice, and the work groups can be viewed as experiments in the complex transformation of the organization.

Without question, however, using the lens of the four frames posited by Bolman and Deal brought some meaningful insights from the survey responses such as:

#### **Structural Frame:**

- Establishing closer partnerships between and among school leadership preparation programs in the state
- Becoming part of the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership Affiliate Pilot Project
- Establishing an ongoing connection to University Council of Education Administration

#### **Political Frame:**

- Responding to factors in the political environment impacting the MAPEL constitution and bylaws by adopting an outward facing presence including development of an MAPEL website
- Establishing a stronger working relationship with the Michigan Department of Education leading to a higher profile and potentially greater impact for MAPEL

- Discussing the option of adding a mandated state assessment for aspiring school leaders

#### Symbolic Frame:

- Redefining the identity and purpose of the organization by changing the name from the Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Administration (MAPEA) to the Michigan Association of Professors of Educational Leadership (MAPEL) which paralleled the recent name change of the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership
- The development of a website to disseminate the purpose and priorities of the organization and to keep others informed.

#### Human Resource Frame:

- Promoting participation from association members in the Michigan Department of Education's revision of the state standards for school leadership preparation programs and other state level initiatives
- Promoting active participation in the newly established MAPEL work groups reflecting the newly identified purposes, goals and activities of the organization

### **Implications and Recommendations for Research and Practice**

Bolman and Deal (2017) state that, in dealing with leadership challenges, educators frequently use only the structural or human resources lenses without considering if there are political or symbolic forces to consider. Using all four frames allows an organization, its members, and its leaders to see things that might have been overlooked as well as reframe new possibilities and opportunities, becoming more versatile and effective leaders. For MAPEL, a number of elements were at play as the organization redefined itself that benefitted from a close study of Bolman and Deal's four frames. In reviewing the survey data, members "reframed" outcomes using the perspective of the structural, human resources, political as well as the symbolic lens. Hence, using all four frames, as Bolman and Deal suggest, may provide state and national level organizations a clearer understanding of an organization's current state as well as a perspective and the clarity needed for future focus and priorities.

Furthermore, while this study focuses primarily on the connections to the four frames of Bolman and Deal, others may find additional change theories of interest. For example, a common error that Heifetz et al. (2009) points out is that leaders bring technical solutions to adaptive problems. As noted above, MAPEL appeared to avoid this as the locus of this transformation did not have a centralized authority figure, and the solutions were not fully known. Thus, the work groups serve as experiments as MAPEL continues to progress. Similarly, the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) might be another resource to bring about adaptive change. This tool helps to look at systemic implementation within an organization of a solution to a problem of practice (Meyer-Looze & Vandermolen, 2021). The Levels of Use version of the tool is able to assess the level of implementation within an organization through a series of questions (Hall, Dirksen & George, 2006). Rather than implementing technical solutions (to address adaptive problems), CBAM is able to assist the user in looking at the challenge with a more adaptive and sustainable approach. Both of these theories as well as others could be examined more closely in future research endeavors.

### **Conclusion**

As with many research and leadership journeys, this work is more of a beginning than an end. Few states under the ICPEL umbrella have sought to organize and recalibrate to this extent, but of course that does not mean they cannot. Quite the contrary, if a critical mass of state associations can become more outwardly focused and influential, it will likely benefit the field of educational leadership and stand out as

a poignant example of leadership that matters. Moreover, if the field of educational leadership can expand its collective reach and political influence, this has the potential to impact the entire field of PK-12 education and the millions of students it serves across generations. At the end of the day or in the twilight of one's career, is that not the point?

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## Appendix

### Survey Questions

#### Demographics:

Rank - Affiliate/Adjunct, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor

Years of service in K-12 administration

Years of service as faculty in Educational Leadership

#### Survey Questions Connected to Research Questions:

- a. As you consider the role of MAPEL over the last three to five years, have you noticed a change? If so, how would you describe that change? (RQ 1)
- b. To what degree did the MDE review and approval process of new leadership standards impact the perceived role of MAPEL? (RQ 2)
- c. Did the state and/or national accreditation process impact your perception of how MAPEL could support or enhance that work at your local institution? If so, how? (RQ 2,3)
- d. How did the examination of the by-laws impact the perceived role of MAPEL? (RQ 4)
- e. Do you anticipate MAPEL's role continuing to evolve? Why or why not? (RQ 2)
- f. What have been the lessons learned so far that would be helpful for the future of the organization? (RQ 1, 2)
- g. Do you think a closer association or connection to ICPEL benefits MAPEL? Why or why not? (RQ 2)