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An Investigation of the School Superintendent Mentoring Program in Arkansas

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT MENTORING
PROGRAM IN ARKANSAS

A Dissertation Submitted
to the Graduate College
Arkansas Tech University

in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in School Leadership

in the Department of the Center for Leadership and Learning
of the College of Education

May 2017

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Permission

Title: An Investigation of the School Superintendent Mentoring Program in Arkansas

Program: Doctor of Education in School Leadership

Degree: Doctor of Education

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Date

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Dedication

To my very patient family—Danny, husband; Justin, son; Hailey, daughter; Madison, daughter; Susan, mother; Ronnie, father; David, brother; Nadine, mother-in-law; Bob, father-in-law.

Abstract

The School Superintendent Mentoring Program was established in 2011 in Arkansas to provide essential training and support to enhance the new superintendents' potential for success during their first year as school district leaders. This research study utilized a qualitative research approach in which an open-ended survey instrument was used to gather data. The Theory of Context Leadership served as the theoretical framework for this study. A systematic review of the data indicated that new superintendents perceived the program as beneficial, time spent with the mentor was helpful, finance was the topic about which participants had found it most important to focus, and that they would have benefitted from an additional year in the program. An analysis of the qualitative data focused on the following themes:

a) the topics included in the induction program's curriculum and b) the mentoring aspect of the program. The School Superintendent Mentoring Program has been shown to be beneficial to new superintendents and should be continued in order to ensure quality leadership in Arkansas.

Keywords: induction; mentoring; superintendent

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Chapter I: Introduction to the Study

Mentoring programs for educators began in the mid-1990s with mentoring for first-year teachers (Beem, 2007). The practice of mentoring has since been expanded to include building principals and finally district leaders (Beem, 2007). Many states have implemented mentoring programs for superintendents. Arkansas only began superintendent mentoring in 2011 when legislators passed Senate Bill 344 (Appendix B). This bill amended Arkansas Code 6-17-427 to require a mentoring program for first-year superintendents beginning with the 2012-2013 school year. Few studies have been done to evaluate the induction and mentoring of new superintendents (Sheldon, 2011). To date, there has not been a longitudinal research study to determine the impact of the current induction and mentoring program for superintendents in Arkansas. This chapter will give some background to the present study, define the problem, and outline the purpose of the study.

Background of the Study

The superintendent's role has changed over time from a managerial role to one of instructional leadership (Reeves, 2006). The managerial aspect of the position still exists and is necessary to the school system. Beem (2007) referred to superintendent mentoring as the final frontier in formal mentoring programs. Teacher mentoring programs started in the 1990s, which then led to mentoring programs for principals. Spanneut, Tobin and Ayers (2011) reported a moderate to a high preference for mentoring for new superintendents in a survey of preferred delivery methods of professional development.

Superintendents must be instructional leaders, according to Reeves (2006), and also juggle the managerial aspects of the position. Superintendents are required to be

knowledgeable in personnel, finance, resource management, board relations, assessment, and accountability systems. They often balance intense and competing pressures. There is a steep learning curve during the first five years on the job, according to Mitchell (2015), and novice superintendents can feel isolated in their new role.

Superintendent induction and mentoring programs help new administrators bridge the gap between what they already know and what they need to know to be successful in their new positions (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013). A formal mentoring program can provide the needed support for a new superintendent (Beem, 2007). Superintendents need ongoing support as they transition into the district leader role (Lorenz, 2005).

The Arkansas School Superintendent Mentoring Program was established in 2011 by the 88th General Assembly with Senate Bill 344. The Arkansas Department of Education developed the rules and program requirements for the program (Appendix C). The mentoring program was required for all first-year superintendents and included superintendents with experience in other states. Superintendents must complete the mentoring program within 12 months of obtaining employment to maintain their superintendents' licenses.

The Arkansas School Superintendent Mentoring Program is administered by the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA) in collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and the Arkansas Association of School Administrators (AASA). The program includes professional development and the assignment of a trained mentor for first-year Arkansas school superintendents. The purpose of the program is to provide essential training and support to enhance the new superintendents' potential for success during their first year as school system leaders.

The program includes a minimum of 18 hours of training to include curriculum and instruction, ethics, facilities, human resources, leadership, school finance, technology, school board relations, and the Standards for Accreditation for Arkansas public schools. The mentor and mentee must document at least 12 hours of interaction during the year of induction. Mentors are current or retired Arkansas superintendents. They must complete an application and screening process, and then must complete a mentor training program before being assigned to mentor individual new superintendents.

The program is funded by a grant from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and by the participating superintendent's district. The grant amount varies depending on the number of participants in the program each year. The requested funding amount for 2016-2017 was \$120,000. The participating district is billed \$1,500 unless the district is in fiscal distress, in which case the user fee is waived.

Mentoring and induction programs are designed to help transition superintendents into their new district leadership role. This study examines the impact of the current mentoring and induction program in Arkansas.

Problem Statement

Superintendents are immediately faced with a monumental task of quickly gaining the confidence and respect from a multitude of stakeholders. The superintendent job is an isolated position in most school districts. No matter what preparatory program one has completed, there are no clear instructions on what the job entails. If one is lucky enough to get a few days with the outgoing superintendent, then one might gain some valuable insight into the task at hand. Often, the new superintendent is on their own to navigate the new role and quickly learn on the job.

The problem is, there is no research on the current mentoring program in Arkansas. Since valuable state resources are allocated to the School Superintendent Mentoring Program each year, do new superintendents benefit from the program?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the superintendent mentoring and induction program in Arkansas. To date, there has not been a formal study of the program. The study was a qualitative design involving past participants of the program. The findings of this study will be used to inform the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), and legislators on the impact of the induction and mentoring program for new superintendents in Arkansas.

Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

Arkansas has required mentoring for new superintendents in their first year for over five years now. No study has been conducted regarding the impact of the program. Therefore the research questions guiding this study were:

1. What is the perception of new Arkansas superintendents regarding the superintendent mentoring and induction program?
2. What do participants perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas?

Theoretical Foundation

The theory of context leadership is the lens through which the researcher examined this topic on superintendent mentoring and induction. Bredeson and Klar (2008) examined both context and leadership to better understand superintendent

leadership practices. Vroom and Jago (2007) argued that the effectiveness of the leader depends on the circumstances. They identified three distinct roles that situational variables assume in leadership: 1) organizational effectiveness is affected by situational factors, not under the leader's control; 2) situations shape how leaders behave, and 3) situations influence the consequences of the leader's behavior. This theory may be helpful in matching a particular type of leadership to a particular situation. However, it does not reflect the dynamic nature of educational leaders' work environments.

Bredeson and Klar (2008) concluded that superintendent jobs are similar but different across the state and nation. Factors that make them different include geographic location, school board relations, the tenure of board members, existing cultures, and size of the district. How do aspiring, as well as practicing, superintendents become context-responsive leaders? Which learning environments and socialization experiences support the development of context-responsive leaders? According to Vroom and Jago (2007), context leadership is practical wisdom in action and encompasses a complex mix of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Context-responsive leadership is expressed through interaction with dynamic contextual variables.

Bredeson and Klar (2008) concluded effective context-responsive leaders are contextually literate and engage in fluid conversations. They recognize contextual dimensions and influences vary while understanding contextual variables can both enhance and impede their behavior. By responding to contextual constraints in a time appropriate manner, context-responsive leaders can shape their contexts.

Bredeson and Klar (2008) determined that aspiring superintendents and practicing superintendents become context-responsive leaders through a combination of factors,

which include formal learning, informal learning, job-embedded learning, and ongoing professional development. Time, resources, supportive social interaction, motivation, and the willingness to learn also impact the superintendent's ability to become a context-responsive superintendent.

Bredeson and Klar (2008) created the Context-Responsive Leadership Framework, which includes five intersecting and interactive dimensions: personalized role, professional knowledge, purpose, people, and place. Superintendents in their study became context-responsive leaders by drawing upon knowledge, skills, dispositions acquired from university-based preparation programs, on-the-job learning, professional development, and real-life experiences.

Scope of the Study

This qualitative study is an analysis of measurable data collected through a survey instrument that was made available to past participants of Arkansas' superintendent induction and mentoring program. Every past participant was sent a link to the survey through an email that was sent out by an AAEA employee. Data collected from those who chose to participate were analyzed to determine if new superintendents in the state benefitted from the mandated superintendent induction and mentoring program. Data was also analyzed to determine the relative strengths and weaknesses of the current program in Arkansas. Results of the study are being shared with AAEA, ADE, and legislators so that the program may be further improved.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure understanding of these terms and acronyms throughout the study. The researcher developed all definitions that do not have a citation.

Mentoring. The activity of supporting and advising someone with less experience to help them develop in their work (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary, 2016).

Induction. The act or process of introducing someone formally to an organization or group (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary, 2016).

Mentee. A person who is given support and advice about their job by a mentor (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary, 2016).

Mentor. An experienced and trusted person who gives another person advice and help, especially related to work or school, over a period of time (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary, 2016).

ADE. Arkansas Department of Education

AAEA. Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators

AASA. Arkansas Association of School Administrators

Assumptions

It is assumed that all participants answered all survey questions honestly without any reservations.

Delimitations

The study includes data from participants who completed the superintendent mentoring and induction program in Arkansas. A survey was administered to all participants from 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Only

88 out of 107 past participants were sent the survey by AAEA. Nineteen participants did not receive the survey due to reasons such as death, moved out of state, or retired. Data was collected from 57 of the 88 participants (64.77%) who had been invited to participate in the study.

Limitations

There are some limitations to this study. Due to the small sample available for the study, results may not be generalized beyond the specific population from which the sample was selected. Further, there is an element of bias as the researcher was a participant in the program during the 2013-2014 school year. The researcher did not participate in the survey and will refrain from including her opinions in the study.

Significance of the Study

This study yielded information with which to inform ADE, AAEA, and legislators about the impact of Arkansas' current induction and mentoring program for new superintendents and generates recommendations by which the program may be improved. A strong induction and mentoring program ensures that Arkansas schools are led by competent educational leaders.

Summary

Superintendent mentoring is the latest area of formal mentoring in our school systems. There has been proven success of mentoring teachers and building level administrators in our school systems. The superintendent role is typically an isolated position in a school district. A mentor can provide needed support for a first-year superintendent.

Chapter two includes an examination of the importance of superintendent mentoring for new superintendents. It reviews the current mentoring program in Arkansas. It includes a literature review on research of other mentoring programs in other states and Canada. Common themes, as well as challenges of other superintendent mentoring programs were shared.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The following is an extensive review of the available literature published on superintendent mentoring in the last two decades. The review included information about the importance of mentoring of new superintendents. It included a review of the current mentoring program in Arkansas as well as a comparison of superintendent mentoring programs in other states and Canada. The literature review also includes literature about the theoretical leadership framework that was employed throughout this study.

Literature Search Strategy

My literature research strategy included identifying key terms and important concepts that related to induction and mentoring of superintendents. I was able to use numerous electronic research systems and multiple resources for the research including but not limited to, the Arkansas Tech University library, EBSCOhost, and ProQuest Central databases. Search terms included ‘superintendent mentoring,’ ‘superintendent induction,’ and ‘superintendent induction and mentoring programs.’ My initial search in the EBSCOhost database using the search term ‘superintendent mentoring and induction’ resulted in 112 search results. By selecting only peer-reviewed journal results, I was able to narrow the results to 37. After further evaluation of those sources, I selected 17 to include in my study. I repeated this process in the ProQuest Central database and found six additional sources to include in my study. I focused primarily on primary sources for my literature review. Once I located literature for my review, I read it to determine relevance to my research and sorted it into areas of focus for the literature review.

Theoretical Foundation

The theory of context leadership relates to mentoring relationships and new superintendents. Bredeson and Klar (2008) examined the intersection of context and leadership to better understand superintendent leadership practices. There are factors such as geographic location, school board relations, existing cultures, and size of the school district that make superintendent jobs different across the nation.

Bredeson and Klar (2008) determined that aspiring superintendents and practicing superintendents become context-responsive leaders through a combination of experiences, which include formal learning, informal learning, job-embedded learning, and ongoing professional development. Time, resources, supportive social interaction, motivation, and the willingness to learn also impacted the superintendent's ability to become a context-responsive superintendent.

The Context-Responsive Leadership Framework created by Bredeson and Klar (2008) includes five interactive dimensions: personalized role, professional knowledge, purpose, people, and place. Superintendents in their study used their knowledge, skills, and dispositions acquired through their university-based programs, on-the-job learning, professional development, and real-life experiences to become context-responsive leaders.

Bredeson, Klar, and Johansson (2011) conducted a study of superintendents to further advance the theory of context-responsive leadership. The study reflected key strategies that context-responsive superintendents used in their practice. The study provided several examples of how leadership is influenced by context.

Literature Review

In the current climate of tremendous change in our educational system, both at the national and state levels, superintendents face many challenges as they lead their districts. First-year superintendents may feel overwhelmed as they assume the district leader role in these times (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013). Mitchell (2015) related when new superintendents are starting out they do not know what to ask and they do not know what they do not know. The realities of the job can be overwhelming for newcomers schooled in pedagogy, but not in the politics of the job.

Organizations have acknowledged the benefits of mentoring in the workplace, which include job satisfaction, reduced turnover, enhanced productivity, and a more resilient workforce (Arora & Rangnekar, 2014). More than 70% of Fortune 500 companies use mentoring as a way to attract, develop, and retain good employees (Kovnatska, 2014). Mentoring does not have to be face-to-face and can be facilitated through technology.

Mentoring can be formal or informal, according to Bynum (2015), and tends to be reciprocal. A formal mentoring program is typically managed by an organization in which a mentor is assigned to a mentee or protégé. Informal mentoring relationships occur most often by chance and are more common than formal mentoring relationships. Mentoring is also important in the development of a support system for individuals in administrative and leadership roles (Bjork & Kowalski, 2005). According to the Institute of Leadership (2005), an experienced mentor can play a critical role in encouraging honest reflection of one's practice as well as providing valuable feedback. A bonus to a mentor-mentee relationship is the expansion of the professional network.

According to Beem (2007), mentoring and induction for superintendents are now required by more than half the states, including Arkansas. With the increased accountability and other demands on superintendents, it is increasingly important to ensure that superintendents have the necessary support to be successful leaders. It is crucial that new superintendents have the appropriate support through comprehensive induction and mentoring programs so they can lead their districts and impact student achievement (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013). Superintendent longevity correlates with increased student achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Sparks (2012) maintained that stability at the central office increased the potential of success for new educational reforms.

Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) examined the role of leadership in improving student learning. Leadership was second only to teaching among school-related factors in impacting student achievement. The impact was greater in high-needs school districts. District leaders, according to Leithwood et al. (2004), ensured that teaching and learning are supported at all levels. Superintendents were expected to be instructional leaders without clarity as to how to achieve that role.

The current literature on superintendent induction and mentoring reflects that structured support for first-year superintendents is crucial to their success. The literature review is organized to address three areas of focus:

- (1) The importance of superintendent induction and mentoring in impacting district leadership.
- (2) The induction and mentoring program in Arkansas.

- (3) A comparison of superintendent induction and mentoring programs in other states and in Canada.

Importance of Superintendent Mentoring

The role of the superintendent has transitioned from a managerial role to one of instructional leadership. The managerial aspect of the position still exists and is necessary to the school. Beem (2007) referred to superintendent mentoring as the final frontier in formal mentoring programs. Teacher mentoring programs started in the 1990s, which then led to mentoring programs for principals.

Superintendents must be instructional leaders, who maintain a laser-like focus on student achievement while also juggling the managerial aspects of the position (Reeves, 2006). Superintendents are required to be knowledgeable in personnel, finance, resource management, board relations, assessment, and accountability systems. They often balance intense and competing pressures. There is a steep learning curve during the first five years on the job, according to Mitchell (2015), and novice superintendents can feel isolated in their new role.

Brondyk and Searby (2013) identified three criteria for best practice in educational mentoring: 1) be effective in practice; 2) be empirically proven, and 3) achieve the stated purpose. Effective in practice relates to attainability, accessibility, and affordability. Empirically proven means that the practice is research-based. The practice must reach its intended goal or achieve its stated purpose.

Superintendent induction and mentoring programs help new administrators bridge the gap between what they already know and what they need to know to be successful in their new positions (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013). A formal mentoring program can

provide the needed support for new superintendents (Beem, 2007). Novice superintendents need ongoing support as they transition into the district leader role (Lorenz, 2005).

Mentoring Program in Arkansas

Act 222 and its impact on district level leadership. Superintendent mentoring is relatively new to Arkansas. There is no formal internship component in the preparation programs that lead to superintendent licensure in Arkansas. The Arkansas legislature passed Arkansas Act 222 in 2009 (Appendix A) with the intent to strengthen educational leadership development in the state. The General Assembly determined that a statewide performance and results-based system of leadership development was necessary to ensure high levels of collaborative leadership and continuous improvement for Arkansas schools. The legislators maintained that high-quality leadership capacity building and training were needed to align the public education system from kindergarten through the postsecondary level. The legislation urged high-quality learning experiences that would focus on both individual and organizational improvement, and provide educational leaders with a variety of support systems as they progressed across the career continuum from aspiring to retiring. Through Act 222 (2009) the legislators stated that an effective statewide leadership development system would result in increased graduation rates, reduced remediation rates, the closing of achievement gaps, increased student and adult performance, increased recruitment of effective leaders, increased capacity for instructional leaders, and, consequently, an increased number of Arkansas citizens with bachelor's degrees.

Act 222 (2009) also established The School Leadership Coordinating Council. The primary purpose of the School Leadership Coordinating Council is to serve as a central body to coordinate the leadership development system efforts across the state. This council assists the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Workforce Education, the Arkansas Leadership Academy, school districts, and other leadership groups in enhancing school leadership and school support efforts. The council also has input into the development of model evaluation tools for use in the evaluation of school administrators. The Council consists of thirteen members as follows:

1. The Chair of the Arkansas Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Council of Deans;
2. The Commissioner of Education;
3. The Director of the Arkansas Leadership Academy;
4. The Director of the Department of Higher Education;
5. The Director of the Department of Workforce Education;
6. The Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators;
7. The Executive Director of the Arkansas Education Association;
8. The Executive Director of the Arkansas School Boards Association;
9. The Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development;
10. The President of the Arkansas Rural Education Association;
11. A representative from the Arkansas Professors Educational Association;

12. A representative from the Arkansas Center for Executive Leadership;

13. A representative from an Educational Service Cooperative.

Act 344 of 2017 (Appendix D) amended Act 222 to add three additional members to the School Leadership Coordinating Council. New members will include a representative from the Arkansas Public School Resource Center; the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education or the Chair's designee, and the Chair of the House Committee on Education or the chair's designee.

Act 586 established a superintendent mentoring program in Arkansas. Act 586 (2011) established a superintendent mentoring program, developed and sponsored by the ADE, for first-year Arkansas superintendents, including experienced superintendents new to the state. First-year superintendents must complete this mentoring program within 12 months of obtaining employment as superintendents to maintain their superintendent license. A minimum of eighteen hours of professional development must be undertaken in the areas of curriculum/instruction, ethics, finance, facilities, human resources, school board relations, technology, leadership, and Arkansas Standards for Accreditation. The law specifies that 12 hours of the curriculum is devoted to finance. Each new superintendent is assigned a mentor who is either a currently practicing or a recently retired superintendent that has successfully completed mentor training. AAEA tries to make sure that every educational cooperative in the state has several trained mentors. Mentors do a full day of training on the coaching model. Ideally, mentors are paired with new superintendents in the same cooperative. Mentors are paired with mentees in districts of similar size whenever possible. The mentor must document at

least 12 hours of interaction with the new superintendent throughout the course of the latter's first year in that role.

Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators' role in induction and mentoring program. The Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators administers the induction and mentoring program for new superintendents. The current program consists of several face-to-face sessions throughout the year. The initial session occurs in early July as an all-day session at the AAEA offices in Little Rock. The other sessions occur as half-day sessions in conjunction with AAEA sponsored conferences throughout the year, including AAEA summer conference in August, AAEA fall conference in October, and the Superintendent Symposium in January.

Each novice superintendent is paired with a mentor that is a current or recently retired superintendent in a neighboring school district. Mentors receive training and a stipend and must document their time spent on mentoring activities. Mentor training is facilitated through Arkansas Association of School Administrators (AASA). It consists of a one-day training certification approved by the ADE. The new superintendent and their mentor signed a coaching agreement, which outlined the time agreement, coaching services, and shared responsibilities (Appendix E: AASA Coaching Agreement). New superintendents completed a coaching background information sheet (Appendix F: AASA Coaching Background Information), which included contact information so their mentor would be able to establish contact with them. This form also contained some questions for the new superintendent to answer so that the mentor would have some background information. At the initial meeting, the mentor or coach shared his or her contact information with the new superintendent (Appendix G: AASA Optimizing the

Coaching Session). New superintendents were asked to complete a coaching preparation sheet prior to each coaching session (Appendix H: AASA Coaching Preparation Sheet). On this form new superintendents were asked to list accomplishments since their last session, challenges or problems they were facing, and what they needed help with at that time. Superintendents were asked to set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely) goals for the year and share them with their mentor (Appendix I: AASAS Coach Program – Superintendent Goals). Mentors were required to document their interaction with their mentee, which included time spent and topics covered during each session (Appendix J: Documented Interaction Record of Progress). Mentors provided feedback on their coaching experience at the end of the program (Appendix K: AASAS Coach Feedback Form).

Comparison of Strong Induction and Mentoring Programs

There are several states and countries that have implemented mentoring and induction programs for superintendents. Massachusetts, Kansas, Texas, New Jersey, California, Georgia, Iowa, Alaska, Kentucky, Michigan, Virginia, Ohio, New Mexico, and Canada have established programs for new superintendents (Beem, 2007; Crippen & Wallin, 2008).

The Massachusetts program started as a result of an influx of new superintendents in the state in 2001 (Beem, 2007). According to The New Superintendents Induction Program (NSIP) Annual Evaluation Report (2011), the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents developed a long-range strategic plan that included a mentoring and induction program for new superintendents. The NSIP seeks to enhance superintendents' effectiveness through an induction process called "The Massachusetts

Way.” The Way centers on four broad activities: strategic instructional leadership, district leadership team development, human resource management, and supervision and evaluation. The NSIP Annual Evaluation Report (2011) included an overview of the structure of the NSIP as a three-year induction program. A team of former superintendents provides intensive coaching for the new superintendents. Support for the Massachusetts program is grounded in a research-based curriculum taught over a three-year period through a series of one-day workshops. Participants develop and effectively implement high-leverage strategies to improve teaching and learning in their districts during their first years as superintendents.

The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) has provided valuable support for first-year superintendents in response to a need identified by state and local professionals (Augustine-Shaw, 2013). The KELI program, according to Devin (2013), was founded by several cooperating entities including the state department of education; state associations for school boards, school administrators, and superintendents; civic leadership organizations; and Kansas State University. By pooling their resources, these partners were able to support Kansas’s school leadership. According to Augustine-Shaw (2016), Kansas superintendents in their second year had the opportunity to be involved in an additional year of support through the KELI program. Mentors make quarterly contact and are available as needed in that second year. Superintendents can participate in KELI cohort meetings and attend KELI-sponsored events at reduced rates.

All new superintendents in Texas are required by law, according to Beem (2007), to participate in a formal mentoring program. This program includes experienced superintendents new to the state. The program, which is administered by the Texas

Association of School Administrators (TASA), began in the summer of 2000 with almost 100 superintendents trained to mentor new superintendents. First-time superintendents, including first-time to the state, were required to participate in a one-year mentorship which included at least 36 hours of professional development directly related to state standards. The new superintendent and mentor were required to have contact at least 12 times during the one year. Wesson and Marshall (2012) stressed the need for the recruitment, retention, and mentoring of new superintendents as a large number of Texas superintendents approached retirement.

According to Beem (2007), New Jersey superintendents have been mentored since the early 1990s when the state changed its requirements for district level certification. The New Jersey Association of School Administrators works closely with the state's department of education to determine the programming for mentors. In 1991, New Jersey law changed, and superintendents were no longer able to gain tenure and were only protected by their contract. This change, according to Beem (2007), caused more turnovers in superintendent positions in the state due to a more political climate. Superintendents in New Jersey have another mentoring option through the Institute for Educational Leadership, Research, and Renewal at Seton Hall University. This model is less formal and pairs one mentor with five to eight new superintendents in cohorts which meet monthly.

The California mentoring program, according to Beem (2007), is the result of a joint project of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and the New Teacher Center at the University of California-Santa Cruz. The ACSA program is voluntary and lasts one to two years during which the mentor provides ongoing and

personalized professional development to the protégé. Face-to-face visits as well as phone and email contacts support first and second-year superintendents.

According to Beem (2007), Georgia's program is modeled after a corporate coaching program and facilitated by the Georgia School Superintendents Association and has been in place since 2001. Coaches are active and retired superintendents. Every new superintendent and superintendents new to the state are assigned a mentor during their first year in office.

In 2006, Iowa legislation took effect that required every school district to provide a mentoring and induction program for all new administrators (Beem, 2007). The School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) developed a mentoring program option for school districts. Mentors receive one day of training before they are matched up with new superintendents. SAI hosts two annual statewide meetings to allow mentors and mentees time to network. Mentors must make a face-to-face visit to each mentee once a month as well as communicate by phone or email once a week.

Beem (2007) noted that Alaska's mentoring program was developed out of concern for retention in the district leader role. New superintendents are assigned a mentor who is typically a retired superintendent as well as a buddy superintendent who is a current superintendent. Due to funding, mentors only make one face-to-face visit to the new superintendent's district. Most contact is made via email or by phone. Alaska mentors are asked to take on a more coaching role as they work with new superintendents.

According to Beem (2007), in Kentucky both new superintendents and assistant superintendents participate in a mandatory testing and training program and can

voluntarily participate in an optional one-year formal mentoring program. Participants are matched with mentors based on district size and geographic proximity.

Michigan's state association offers several mentoring opportunities, according to Beem (2007), which are optional and facilitated by regional representatives. The New Superintendents Leadership Academy was created to support new superintendents or experienced superintendents wanting to improve their skills. It offers four one-day sessions throughout the year on topics such as school finance, leadership for learning and achievement, board relations, and human resources practices. The Michigan Leadership Institute offers optional executive mentoring to first-year superintendents.

New Mexico's Superintendent Transition and Mentoring Program (STAMP), according to Beem (2007), includes a monthly online chat room on predetermined topics requested by the new superintendents. It also provides 24/7 cell phone support by a retired member and the state association director.

Ohio's Executive Coaching program was developed in 2001 to help transition new superintendents into their new position (Telego, 2005). The program helped new superintendents learn about their new responsibilities as the leaders in their school districts and to gain insight from successful and experienced Ohio superintendents.

According to Beem (2007), Virginia modeled their program after Georgia's program. All new superintendents receive one year of free coaching, and experienced superintendents new to the state can participate for a fee.

Superintendents participate in an induction program established by the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) in the Canadian province of Alberta (Brandon, Donlevy, Hanna, Gereluk, Patterson, & Rhyason, 2014). According to Brandon et al.

(2014), this program developed through informed design, dialogic adoption, implementation as learning, and meaningful outcomes.

Common themes in other state programs. Participants in the KELI program noted five strengths of the program including safe and trusting environment, face-to-face mentoring, reflective practice, networking, and building leadership capacity (Devin, 2013). Brandon et al. (2014) identified five key program components of the CASS NSIP program which included standards based design, orientation, trained mentors, like-group support, and large-group support.

Challenges of induction and mentoring programs. Several challenges were noted throughout the review of research on other state induction and mentoring programs. Time was a major limiting factor for both mentors and mentees. Attending meetings and scheduling mentoring activities presented a challenge for many participants. Devin (2013) presented many challenges that occurred in the Kansas program, including differentiation of content, recruiting viable mentors, program funding, and travel issues. Alsbury and Hackman (2006) highlighted the need to recruit more women and minorities as mentors for new superintendents. Mentor's demographics such as gender and race should be reflective of the superintendents in the program. Brandon et al. (2014) noted that new superintendents indicated they would prefer to have had input into the selection of their mentor. Contact between mentor and mentee should be initiated by the mentor on a regular basis.

Summary

The available literature supported the need for and importance of superintendent induction and mentoring. District leadership is impacted through a formal mentoring

program. District leadership in areas of student achievement, graduation rates, and school reform positively impacts school districts.

The induction and mentoring program for new superintendents is relatively new in Arkansas, with only four cohorts having completed the required year-long program. The AAEA has required participants to complete end of the year evaluations. These evaluations were used to make adjustments to the curriculum of the program from year to year.

There are currently induction and mentoring programs in over half of the other states, as well as in some provinces in Canada. Some programs are optional, while others are mandated. Various organizations oversee these programs, but several are facilitated by a state administrators' organization, as is the case here in Arkansas. There are some common themes to these programs, such as the fact that most programs were developed in response to projected shortages of superintendents due to attrition and retirement. Most state programs employ both face-to-face mentoring sessions as well as phone or email support. There are also some challenges shared by these programs, such as time being a major limiting factor. Recruiting viable mentors was another challenge in most states. Funding and travel issues also present a challenge in other induction and mentoring programs.

Chapter III: Research Method

This study investigated the superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. There had not been a formal study to date on the required superintendent and induction program in Arkansas that has been in place for over five years. The method used in this research study is described in the following section. In this section, information regarding the setting, participants, the role of the researcher, a description of the instrument, intervention, procedures for data collection, and analysis were presented.

Research Questions

This study was conducted in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the perception of new Arkansas superintendents regarding the superintendent mentoring and induction program?
2. What do participants perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas?

This study will inform the ADE, the AAEEA, and the legislature regarding the impact of the superintendent mentoring and induction program in Arkansas.

Research Design and Rationale

The researcher conducted a qualitative study of the impact of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. In a qualitative study, the intent is to explore a phenomenon through purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2008).

A survey instrument that included open-ended questions was used to collect data from past participants. This approach allowed the researcher to collect qualitative data during the study.

Population

Arkansas superintendents with five or fewer years of experience were the targeted population for this study. More specifically, all superintendents who completed the Arkansas superintendent induction and mentoring program since its inception in the 2012-2013 school year – i.e., 107 superintendents across four cohorts – were targeted to participate in this study. This population consisted of 76 males and 31 females. The number of participants in each cohort was: Cohort I - 19 participants; Cohort II – 29 participants; Cohort III – 35 participants; Cohort IV – 24 participants.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The researcher conducted a census survey of all participants from the four cohorts of new superintendents who completed the induction and mentoring program since it began in 2012. The greatest advantage of a census survey is that everyone who has been through the program had an opportunity to participate. A census survey was possible to administer in this study because there was a limited number of participants.

Email was sent to every past participant of the superintendent induction and mentoring program from the AAEEA requesting participation in the study with a link to the electronic survey using *Survey Monkey*©. The email contained information about protecting the identity of the participant as well as instructions on how to complete the survey.

An attempt to collect data from every past participant was made by first sending the survey link to every identified participant of the program. A follow-up email was sent to participants two weeks later to encourage them to complete the survey.

Instrumentation

The researcher examined the effects of the Arkansas superintendent induction and mentoring program by administering an online survey to all past participants of that program (Appendix L). As past participants of the program are located all across the state of Arkansas, an interview approach was not feasible and would have resulted in a smaller sample size due to time constraints. Consequently, the researcher employed a Web-based survey for the study. There were advantages and disadvantages to a Web-based survey. Advantages included the ability to reach a larger sample, lower costs, and the ability to construct response-sensitive instruments (Scriven & Smith-Ferrier, 2003). Electronic surveys also allowed the researcher options in coding and reporting of the data (Boyer, Olsen, Calantone, & Jackson, 2002). Disadvantages included varying response rates and nonresponsive errors such as the solicited participants' choice not to take part in a study, non-received emails, and survey solicitations deleted by potential participants (Skitka & Sargis, 2006).

Survey questions were developed based on the research questions and input from AAEA and my committee chair. The researcher conducted a peer review of the survey instrument with a small number of current superintendents and former superintendents to get their feedback. Superintendents in the peer review were not participants in the actual study. The researcher made changes to the survey based on their feedback. Superintendents in the peer review provided feedback related to ease of use of the survey instrument as well as the content of the survey items.

The survey was comprised of demographic questions, closed-ended questions, and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed the participant to share

information regarding their personal experience in the induction and mentoring program. The information collected allowed the researcher to further explore the strengths and weaknesses of the current induction and mentoring program.

The survey instrument contained demographic and experience-related questions that included: a) gender, b) age, c) size of district, d) mentor's gender, e) year in program, f) other state experience, g) prior central office experience, h) current district, and i) prior years in education. The balance of the survey instrument contained questions related to the actual induction and mentoring experience. These included: a) aspects of the program that contributed most to your growth as a superintendent, b) total time spent with your mentor, c) how would you characterize your relationship with your mentor, d) did your mentor provide outside resources/tools to enhance your skills, e) would you have participated in an additional year of support if that had been an option, and f) what recommendations would you suggest for the program.

Archival Data

The Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA) shared the number of participants in each cohort since the beginning of the induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. AAEA also shared the survey that was used for feedback from participating superintendents at the end of their year of induction and mentoring. The items included in that survey were used to further develop the survey instrument.

Data Analysis Plan

The researcher employed a thematic content analysis of the qualitative data. This approach is exploratory in nature and allows the researcher to code and categorize the data into recurring themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Qualitative data was coded using an

anticipated list of codes. New codes were added to the list as needed during the coding process. Codes were merged and or split in this process. Once all data were coded, the researcher grouped the data together to identify significant themes. Descriptive statistics were included based on the open-ended survey items. This methodical treatment of the qualitative data allowed for a more succinct interpretation of the data and provided answers to the research questions.

Threats to Validity

Threats to validity included reliance upon on the participants' recall of the program components and their experience in the program, as some time had passed since their participation in the program. A significant number of program participants were not located.

Researcher Positionality

The researcher was a participant in the Superintendent Induction and Mentoring Program in Arkansas during the 2013-2014 school year. The researcher did not complete the survey.

Ethical Procedures

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at Arkansas Tech University before collecting data (Appendix M). Anonymity and confidentiality of participants were preserved, and voluntary participants could withdraw from the study at any time.

Each participant in the study was assured that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. Participants agreed to consent, which was embedded in the survey instrument. Once the data was collected from the surveys, access to the survey in *Survey*

Monkey© was deleted. Notes and data collected will be kept in a secure location for a period of two years upon the completion of the study.

Summary

This chapter outlined the study design including methods, procedures, and data analyses. The purpose of this research study was to investigate the impact of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas.

Chapter IV: Results

The research questions outlined in Chapter 1 provided the foundation for this study whose purpose was to investigate the impact of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. Before this study, no formal study of the program had been conducted. This qualitative study consisted of a survey of the past participants of the superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas that began in the 2012-2013 school year. To date, four cohorts have completed the program.

The study was based on the following research questions:

1. What is the perception of new Arkansas superintendents regarding the superintendent mentoring and induction program?
2. What do participants perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas?

This chapter contains an outline of the process of data collection of this study. Some results of the study are depicted in tables and graphs. Descriptive statistics are used to present data and themes of the study.

Participants

The survey was sent to 88 of the 107 past participants of the School Superintendent Mentoring Program in Arkansas. According to the AAEA representative who assisted in fielding the survey, 19 participants could not be located. Two of the participants were deceased, and the others had either retired or moved out of state. Through an online survey service called *Survey Monkey*®, a total of 57 responses were received for a response rate of 64.77%.

Data Collection

Data was collected via an online survey service, *Survey Monkey*©. Invitations to participate were distributed to 88 past participants. A representative of Arkansas Association of School Administrators (AAEA) sent the survey link to past participants via an email that outlined the research study. The survey contained a brief letter to the participants outlining the study. The letter conveyed that that participation in the study was voluntary and that they questionnaire would not take more than ten to 15 minutes to complete. The letter also assured the participants that their individual responses would remain strictly confidential. Contact information for the researcher was included in the letter. Participants were able to give consent by clicking next in the survey. A follow-up email was sent out again by the AAEA representative two weeks later to encourage more participation in the study. Data collection was completed during a three-week period from January 23, 2017 to February 13, 2017.

Study Results

The sample consisted of 57 participants. Questions one through five of the survey instrument collected demographic data on the past participants of the induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. Table 1 illustrates the composition of the sample. Question one asked the participant to identify their gender. The sample consisted of 48 male and nine female participants. Question two asked the participant to identify the gender of their mentor. Forty-four indicated that their mentor was a male. Ten indicated that their mentor was a female. One participant skipped the question. Question three asked the participant to classify their age in five categories. No participant indicated that they were in the 30 and under category. Ten (17.54%) participants were between the

ages of 31 and 40, 18 (31.58%) participants were in the 41-50 age category, 25 (43.86%) participants were between 51 and 60, and 4 (7.02%) participants were over the age of 60. Question four asked the participant to classify the size of their district when they participated in the program in four categories. Thirty-eight (66.67%) indicated that their district was comprised of 1000 or fewer students. Nine (15.79%) were from districts of 1001-2000 students. Six (10.53%) were from districts of 2001-3000 students. Four (7.02%) were from districts greater than 3000. Question five asked the participant to indicate the cohort or school year that they participated in the program. Eleven (19.03%) of the respondents participated in 2012-2013; nine (15.79%) respondents participated in the 2013-2014; twenty-one (36.84%) participated in 2014-2015; and sixteen (28.07%) participated in 2015-2016.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

	Value Label	N	% of Total Group (N = 57)
Gender	Male	48	84.21
	Female	9	15.79
Mentor's Gender	Male	46	80.70
	Female	11	19.30
Age	30 and under	0	0.00
	31-40	10	17.54
	41-50	18	31.58
	51-60	25	43.86
	61 and over	4	7.02
District Size	1000 or less	38	66.67
	1001-2000	9	15.79
	2001-3000	6	10.53
	3001 and above	4	7.02
Year Completed	2012-2013	11	19.30
	2013-2014	9	15.79
	2014-2015	21	36.84
	2015-2016	16	28.07

Questions six through nine of the survey related to the experience of the superintendent (Table 2). Question six asked the participant to share if they had experience as a superintendent in another state before becoming a superintendent in Arkansas. Seven (12.50%) indicated that they had been a superintendent in another state while 49 (87.50%) said they did not have experience in another state. One participant did not respond to this question. Question seven asked the participant to indicate if they had prior central office experience before becoming a superintendent. It also asked them to indicate how many years of prior central office experience. Twenty-four (42.11%) did have prior central office experience, and 33 (57.89%) did not. Of those that indicated

prior central office experience, the years of experience ranged from one to 24 years. Ten participants indicated that they had less than five years of central office experience.

Five (71.43%) of superintendents with experience in another state also indicated that they had prior central office experience. Question eight asked the participant to share if they were still in the same school district as they were when they completed the induction and mentoring program. Fifty-three (92.98%) indicated that they were still in the same district. Question nine asked the respondent to share how many years in five categories that they had been in education prior to assuming the superintendent role. No one indicated that they had been in education one to five years. Three (5.26%) indicated that they had six to ten years of prior experience in education. Twelve (21.05%) indicated 11 to 15 years of experience. Fifteen (26.32%) indicated 16 to 20 years of prior experience in education. Twenty-seven (47.37%) indicated more than 20 years of prior experience in education.

Table 2

Experience of Participants

	Value Label	N	% of Total Group (N = 55)
Another State Experience	Yes	7	12.50
	No	49	87.50
Central Office Experience	Yes	24	42.11
	No	32	57.89
Same District	Yes	51	89.47
	No	6	10.53
Education	1-5 years	0	0.00
	6-10 years	3	5.26
	11-15 years	12	21.05
	16-20 years	15	26.32
	More than 20 years	27	47.37

Induction Program Curriculum

Questions ten through 12 related to the curriculum topics covered during the induction phase of the superintendent induction and mentoring program. In question ten, participants were asked to rank ten curriculum topics from most important to least important that were covered during the induction phase of the program. Finance was ranked number one by 31 (60.78%) of the participants with a weighted score of 7.92. Legal issues ranked number two by participants with a weighted score of 6.64. Adequacy/Matrix ranked third with a weighted score of 5.98. Question 11 asked the participants to rate each curriculum topic's benefit to them on a 5 point Likert scale (Table 3). Eighty-nine percent of the participants indicated that the training they received in finance was beneficial to them. Eighty-six percent of participants agreed that training

in legal issues was beneficial to them. Training related to adequacy and the funding matrix was indicated as beneficial to new superintendents with 78.94%.

Table 3

Participant Ratings of Curriculum Topics

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Adequacy/Matrix	5.26% 3	0.00% 0	15.79% 9	45.61% 26	3.33% 19
Curriculum	5.26% 3	0.00% 0	28.07% 16	56.14% 32	10.53% 6
Ethics	5.26% 3	1.75% 1	14.04% 8	56.14% 32	22.81% 6
Facilities	7.02% 4	1.75% 1	8.77% 5	54.39% 31	28.07% 16
Finance	7.02% 4	0.00% 0	3.51% 2	17.54% 10	71.93% 41
Instructional Leadership	7.02% 4	1.75% 1	15.79% 9	50.88% 29	24.56% 14
Legal Issues	5.26% 3	0.00% 0	8.77% 5	42.11% 24	43.86% 25
Purchasing and Bid Laws	5.26% 3	1.75% 1	7.02% 4	43.86% 25	42.11% 24
Special Education	5.26% 3	5.26% 3	24.56% 14	56.14% 32	8.77% 5
Technology	5.26% 3	3.51% 2	33.33% 19	49.12% 28	8.77% 5

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

Question 12 asked the participant to make suggestions for additional topics for the induction phase of the program. Twenty-nine of the participants answered this open-

response question and suggested additional topics for the program. Several respondents asked for more on finance including budgeting, bid laws and purchasing, and legislative audit. Board relations, TESS/LEADS (instruments for teacher and administrator evaluation respectively), Teacher Fair Dismissal, contract negotiation, school choice, accountability, culture, reporting requirements, and child nutrition were other topics that the participants suggested to be added to the curriculum.

Duplication of College Prep Program

Question 13 asked participants to indicate if they noticed any duplication of the curriculum of the superintendent induction and mentoring program and their college preparation program. Twenty-three (40.35%) indicated that there was some duplication. Two participants said that their college prep program was several years ago, one said it was over 20 years prior. Thirty-four (59.65%) respondents indicated that they did not notice any duplication in the curriculum and their college prep program. One respondent said, “Mentor made things practical while college curriculum was tied to theory.” Several respondents reflected that the induction curriculum was more relative to current issues in the state. Three participants shared that their college prep program was several years prior to their transition to the superintendent role.

Mentoring Component

New superintendents are paired with a mentor at the beginning of the program. Mentors are assigned to new superintendents by AAEA. It is required that the mentor and the mentee document twelve or more hours of contact time during the year. Questions 14 through 16 related to the mentoring component of the program. Participants were asked to estimate the total time spent with their mentor during their

induction/mentoring year. Nine (15.79%) of the participants indicated that they only spent the required 12 hours with their mentor. Twenty-four participants (42.11%) showed that they spent 13 – 24 hours with their mentor. Thirteen respondents (22.81%) indicated 25 – 40 hours spent with their mentor, and eleven (19.30%) of the participants indicated that they spent more than 40 hours with their assigned mentor. One participant noted, “I really would have struggled had it not been for the mentor program and the way it was conducted. I still use my mentor quite frequently, and he does not seem to mind at all.” Another participant shared that her mentor’s valuable contacts and their area of expertise positively impacted her mentoring experience.

Thirty-nine new male superintendents were paired with a male mentor. Thirty (76.92%) of this group indicated that their mentor provided valuable support to them in their transition to the superintendent role. Eight new male superintendents were paired with a female mentor. Six (75%) of this group agreed that their mentor provided valuable support. Six new female superintendents were paired with a male mentor. Four (66.67%) shared that they received valuable support during their induction year. Three female superintendents were paired with a female mentor. All three (100%) indicated that their mentor provided valuable support to them in their first year as superintendent. More research is needed to determine if gender is a factor that should be considered when pairing of mentors with mentees.

Nine (15.79%) new superintendents indicated that they only spent the required 12 hours with their mentor. Five (55.56%) of those superintendents reflected that they did receive valuable support from their mentor, while four (44.44%) did not. Twenty-four (42.11%) new superintendents shared that they spent between thirteen and twenty-four

hours with their mentor. Eighteen (75.00%) of the 24 indicated that they received valuable support. Thirteen (22.81%) new superintendents said they spent between twenty-five and forty hours with their mentor. Twelve (92.31%) of them reported receiving valuable support from their mentor. Eleven (19.30%) of the new superintendents spent over 40 hours with their mentor. Nine (81.81%) shared that they received valuable support from their mentor during their first year on the job. Forty-eight (84.21%) out of the 57 participants indicated that they spent more than the required 12 hours with their assigned mentor. Thirty-nine (81.25%) of those 48 indicated that they received valuable support from their mentor. One new superintendent shared, “I really enjoyed and learned from the stories of those with many years [of] experience in the Arkansas field.” One participant shared that his mentor sometime had difficulty meeting and finding time to answer questions.

Fifty-one (89.47%) of the 57 surveyed reflected that their mentor provided or suggested outside resources and tools for them to enhance their skills as new superintendents. Forty-four (77.22%) of those participants also indicated that their mentor provided valuable support to them in their transition into the superintendent role. Seven (12.28%) of the participants indicated that their mentor did not provide valuable support to them.

In addition, participants commented on the possibility of pairing new superintendents with mentors from districts that are of similar size as well as in close proximity. Another participant suggested that there should be more invested in mentor training. Another participant shared that it was difficult for their mentor to schedule time for meetings or even to have questions answered. A suggestion was made to make site

visits between the mentor and the mentee a requirement of the program. The participant went on to suggest that the new superintendent attend a board meeting of the mentor and then follow up with a discussion regarding the meeting.

Question 17 asked participants to indicate whether the School Superintendent Mentoring Program was beneficial to them as a new superintendent on a 5-point Likert scale. Forty-seven participants (82.46%) indicated either by selecting strongly agree or agree that the program was beneficial. Nine (90%) of participants in the 31-40 age group indicated that the program was beneficial to them as a new superintendent. Twelve (70.59%) of participants in the 41-50 age group indicated that the program was beneficial to them. Twenty-one (84.0%) of the 51-60 age group indicated that the program was beneficial. In the 61 and over age group, all four (100%) of the participants shared that the program was beneficial. Twenty-one (87.5%) of the participants with prior central office experience indicated that the program was beneficial to them. Six (85.71%) of the 7 participants with experience in another state indicated that the program was beneficial to them. One superintendent shared, “This program is one of the best offered to administrators I have seen. If anything, I would like to see more opportunities for further relationship building between current superintendents and new superintendents. I really enjoyed and learned from the stories of those with many years [of] experience in the Arkansas field.” Several participants indicated the need to continue the program.

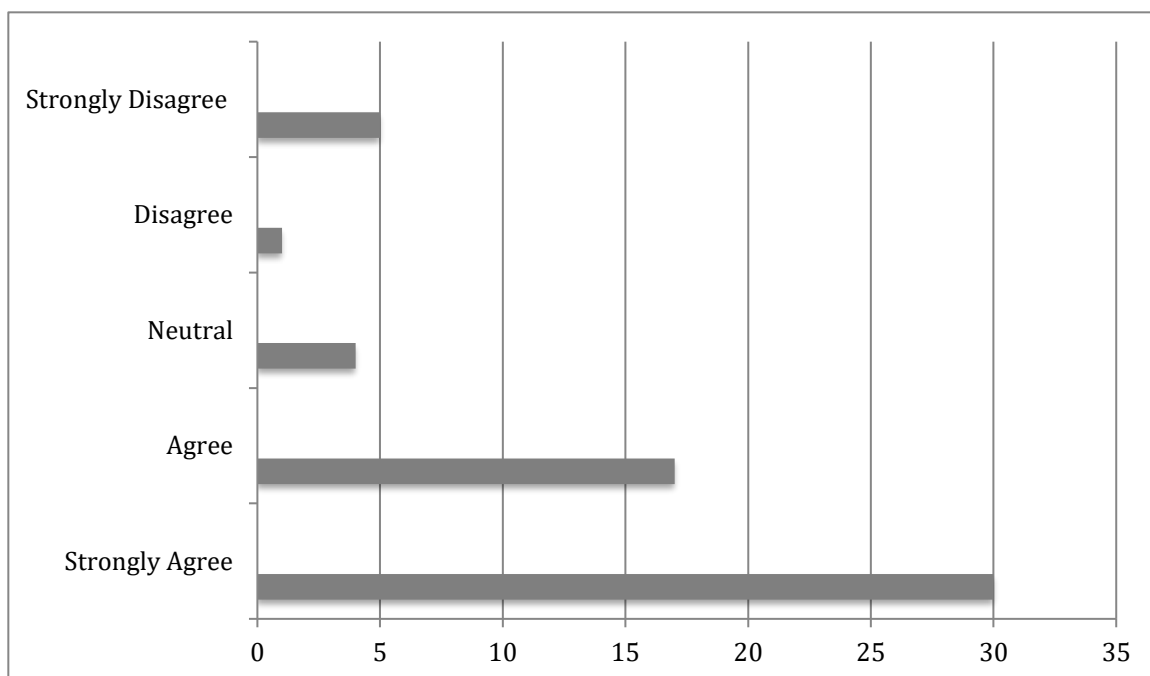


Figure 1

Benefit of Superintendent Induction and Mentoring Program

Additional Year of Support

Question 18 asked participants if they would have participated in an additional year of support had it been offered. Forty of the 57 (70.18%) participants indicated that they would have participated in an additional year of support if it had been offered. Notably, nearly half of those in favor of another year of support had prior central office experience or experience as a superintendent in another state. Nineteen (79.17%) of participants with prior central office experience agreed that they would have participated in another year of support. Five (71.43%) superintendents with experience in another state indicated that they would have participated in another year of support if it had been offered.

The researcher in this study did participate in the program during the 2013-2014 school year. From my experience in my first year as a superintendent, an additional year of support would have been welcome. There is so much to learn that first year, and you are struggling just to survive.

Question nineteen asked participants to make suggestions to improve the mentoring aspect of the program. Fifteen (26.32%) participants made suggestions regarding the mentoring program. One participant suggested opportunities for the mentor and mentee to attend meetings, conferences, and/or legislative sessions together. Another participant suggested that mentors should be required to make site visits to the mentee's district and vice-versa. The Mentee could attend a board meeting held by the mentor and follow up with a discussion. Monthly cooperative meetings for new superintendents to have open discussions about issues with other mentors from that region would give the mentees a different point of view.

Question twenty asked participants to indicate if they would be willing to be interviewed by the researcher if the study needed more clarification. Thirty-six (63.16%) participants indicated that they would participate in an interview. The researcher did not follow up with any participants for an interview. Survey responses were complete and provided the necessary information for this study.

Qualitative Data Themes

Participants' answers to open-ended response items were analyzed and common themes were identified. The overarching themes emerged from my analysis of participants' responses to the time that invited them to suggest ways by which Arkansas School Superintendent Mentoring Program might be improved. The first of these,

curriculum topics, refers to participants' suggestions about the content that they felt ought to be addressed by the induction program. The second theme highlights participants' suggestions for how the mentoring aspect of the program might be improved.

Finance was ranked as the most important curriculum topic by 31 (60.78%) participants and was referenced several times in the suggestions for additional topics question. Superintendents are responsible for the fiscal health of their school districts. Suggestions included funding, budgeting, bid laws and bid process, legislative audit process and hearings, and purchasing. Personnel were another topic suggested by participants. New superintendents indicated that they would like to learn more about Personnel Policy Committees, personnel hearings, Teacher Fair Dismissal, conflict resolutions, evaluations including TESS and LEADS, and Bloomboard software.

Summary

In addition to revealing that participating superintendents indeed perceive Arkansas' School Superintendent Mentoring Program to have benefitted them, this qualitative research study also yielded information about the relative strengths and weaknesses of that program, as perceived by program participants. Included in the former category is the variety of topics included in the program's curriculum, the support provided by most of the mentors, and the impact of the program on district leaders across the state. Included, as suggestions for program improvement were specific training for mentors and the more thoughtful pairing of mentors with novice superintendents.

Chapter V: Conclusions

This qualitative study sought to answer the following two research questions about Arkansas' School Superintendent Mentoring Program: 1) What is the perception of new Arkansas superintendents regarding the superintendent mentoring and induction program? and 2) What do participants perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current superintendent induction and mentoring program in Arkansas?

The qualitative survey was emailed to 88 past participants of the program. Fifty-seven participants completed the survey for a response rate of 64.77%. The survey contained 20 questions including demographic questions and open-response items through which respondents could suggest additional topics for the curriculum of the induction aspect of the program and/or adjustments to the mentoring aspect of the program.

This chapter includes a brief summary as well as an interpretation of the data. Also included are recommendations for improving the School Superintendent Mentoring Program, as well as suggestions for future research. A research brief will be shared with ADE, AAEA, and legislators.

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the current School Superintendent Mentoring Program in Arkansas. This program was established in 2011 with the passage of Senate Bill 344 by the 88th General Assembly. Beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, all new superintendents in Arkansas were required to complete an induction and mentoring program within 12 months to maintain their superintendent license. Before this investigation, no formal study of the program had been undertaken.

Findings from this study will be used to inform AAEEA, ADE, and our legislators about the strengths and weaknesses of the current program and make recommendations to improve it. This study also adds to the body of work in the area of superintendent induction and mentoring.

The research design was guided by a comprehensive review of research in the area of superintendent induction and mentoring. The study included information about similar programs in other states and in Canada. Some of the programs in other states are optional while others are required as is the case here in Arkansas. Some states such as Kansas offers an additional year of support for new superintendents.

The survey instrument consisted of twenty questions including some open-ended questions so participants could expand on their response and offer specific feedback regarding the program. The researcher developed the survey and presented it to a panel of current and former superintendents who offered feedback on the content and structure of the instrument. The survey gathered demographic data as well as perceptual data of the superintendents who participated in the program. The open-ended questions asked participants to suggest additional topics for the induction phase and recommendations to improve the mentoring component of the program.

The sample consisted of 57 participants of which 48 were male and nine were female. Seven of the participants did have experience in another state. Twenty-four participants had prior central office experience in the capacities including assistant superintendents and curriculum coordinators. Fifty-one of the participants were still in the same district as when they completed the mentoring program.

Curriculum topics required in the program included adequacy/matrix, curriculum, ethics, facilities, finance, instructional leadership, legal issues, purchasing and bid laws, special education, and technology. Finance was ranked as the most important curriculum topic and the topic that participants desired even more training. Specifically, participants would welcome more training on funding, budgeting, and the legislative audit process. Participant ratings related to legal issues, adequacy and the funding matrix, ethics, facilities, instructional leadership, and purchasing and bid laws were favorable. The topics that were rated as least important were technology, special education, and curriculum. Additional curriculum topics suggested by participants included school board relations, legislative process, personnel, conflict resolution, and accountability.

Duplication of the curriculum in the program as related to their college preparation program was indicated by forty percent of the participants. Yet several added that the School Superintendent Mentoring Program centered on current practices and less on theory as in the college preparation programs. Others indicated that there had been a significant number of years between their college preparation program and the induction and mentoring program.

The mentor component of the program was valuable to the new superintendents as they assumed their role as district leader. Seventy-seven percent of the participants noted that their mentor provided valuable support to them. Gender did not impact the participant's rating of the support of their mentor. Time spent with their mentor did positively impact the rating and a majority of the participants spent above the required 12 hours with their mentor.

Most of the participants agreed that the School Superintendent Mentoring Program was beneficial to them as a new superintendent. The majority of participants with prior central office experience and or experience in another state also agreed that the program was beneficial to them as they transitioned to their new role. A significant number of participants would have participated if they had been offered an additional year of support.

Interpretation of Findings

Interpretation according to Creswell (2008), involves making sense of the data, which means the researcher forms some larger meaning about the phenomenon based on personal views and comparisons to prior studies. In this study, prior studies included studies on induction and mentoring programs in other states and Canada.

The majority of participants (57.89%) did not have prior central office experience and therefore did not have exposure to district level decisions. There is a steep learning curve in transitioning from a building level administrator to a district level administrator. In addition, college preparation programs do not include a true internship component. New superintendents must quickly acclimate to their new position. A strong induction and mentoring program can be crucial to them as they lead their districts.

Curriculum topics in the induction phase of the program were determined by legislation in the original act. Finance, legal issues, and adequacy/matrix topics were identified as the most important to new superintendents. These topics are more unique to the district level or superintendent position. Superintendents must develop the district budget and make decisions on staffing based on adequacy and requirements of the matrix. The superintendent is ultimately the one responsible for the legal liability of the district

and must be cognizant of Teacher Fair Dismissal and other laws related to school districts. Technology, special education, and curriculum topics were identified as least important to new superintendents. These topics are very significant to building level administrators and are covered extensively in their professional development opportunities. In addition, building level administrators lead or facilitate professional development for their staff on these topics.

A strong mentor relationship can positively impact the new superintendent's first years' experience. By spending more than the required time with the mentee and suggesting outside resources, mentors can prove valuable to the new superintendent as he or she navigates that first year. Mentors should spend face-to-face time as well as make contact by phone and email to their mentees.

A significant number of participants (82.46%) claimed that the School Superintendent Mentoring Program was beneficial to them as new superintendents. Several superintendents commented that the program was valuable and should be continued. Thirty-six participants were willing to engage in a follow up interview if necessary. Their willingness to be interviewed indicates that they believe the program is beneficial and important to the leadership in our state.

Forty (70.18%) of the participants expressed interest in receiving an additional year of support from the program. Topics for the additional year could include more on finance, accountability, and legal issues, and could be more individualized for the new superintendent.

Limitations

The population for this study was rather small, as only 107 new superintendents have participated in the program since its inception. AAEEA was only able to send the survey out to 88 superintendents as some of the cohort members had retired, deceased, or moved out of the state. It should be noted that the richness of the responses to open-ended questions in the survey and the willingness of participants to be interviewed both lends to the trustworthiness of the data for this study and attests to the value that new superintendents place in the investigated program.

Recommendations

This study has provided valuable insight into the induction and mentoring program in Arkansas. There were several clear themes in the research that support recommendations to strengthen the program. Recommendations can be categorized into suggestions for curriculum in the induction phase and suggestions for the mentoring component of the program.

Curriculum topics to be further developed include more training in the area of finance. Finance training should include an in-depth focus on the bid process, financing of building projects, and legislative audit. The legislative process is another topic to add to the curriculum. New superintendents should be acclimated to the legislative process by attending legislative sessions and committee meetings with their mentors. Most new district leaders have not been involved in the legislative process. School board relations are another topic that was suggested in the study. New superintendents should attend a school board meeting in their mentor's district and then debrief afterwards.

Careful consideration should be made in pairing a mentor with a new superintendent. School district demographics and proximity are certainly factors to consider, but personalities and possibly gender need to be considered as well.

The majority of school districts in Arkansas are currently smaller than 1,000 students, which was also reflective in the sample in this study. Most school districts in this category do not have assistant superintendents to support the superintendent. The superintendent is often the only administrator in the central office.

There is significant support to expand the program into a second year, which would allow more time to spend on these important topics. I would recommend that the School Leadership Coordinating Council appeal to the Arkansas legislature to support an additional year of support for new superintendents. This additional year could be optional and structured to meet the needs of the superintendents who choose to participate. Kansas offers an optional additional year of support to new superintendents.

Suggestions for Future Research

Recommendations for further research:

1. A study of how mentors are selected, trained, and paired with novice superintendents.
2. A study of ways to structure of an additional year of induction and/or mentoring.
3. A study of superintendent preparation programs in the state to determine curriculum topics covered and time spent on each.

Conclusions

This qualitative study reinforces other studies regarding induction and mentoring programs in other states. A strong induction and mentoring program is critical for the

development of district leadership in our schools. It is encouraging that almost 90% of the participants in the study reported that they have remained in the same school district. This is good for Arkansas schools to have stability at the district level. According to Marzano and Waters (2009) longevity of the superintendent positively impacts student achievement in the school district. Superintendents need support early in their tenure to ensure stability for their district and success for the students in their care.

The intent of the Arkansas General Assembly in 2009 with the passage of Act 222 was to strengthen educational leadership in Arkansas. To date 107 new superintendents have completed and 29 are currently participating in the School Superintendent Mentoring Program in Arkansas. This program builds leadership capacity, and promises to impact student achievement in our state.

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Appendix A

Act 222 of 2009

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

Act 222 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H1/30/09 H2/4/09 H2/6/09 S2/12/09*

2 87th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2009

HOUSE BILL 1034

4

5 By: Representatives Cook, Abernathy, M. Burris, George, Rainey, J. Roebuck, *Betts, Dale, Perry, G.*

6 *Smith, Wagner, Blount, Breedlove, J. Brown, Cheatham, J. Dickinson, Nix, Pennartz, Tyler*

7 By: Senator Broadway

8

9

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For An Act To Be Entitled

11

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE SYSTEM OF ARKANSAS

12

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT; AND FOR OTHER

13

PURPOSES.

14

15

Subtitle

16

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN ARKANSAS

17

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

18

19

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

21

22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 1, is amended to add an
23 additional subchapter to read as follows:

24 SUBCHAPTER 4 - SCHOOL LEADERSHIP COORDINATING COUNCIL

25

26 6-1-401. Title.

27 There is established the "School Leadership Coordinating Council".

28

29 6-1-402. Findings.

30 The General Assembly finds that:

31

32 (1) A statewide performance and results based system of
33 leadership development to ensure high levels of collaborative leadership and
34 continuous improvement must have all educators work collaboratively with
35 community stakeholders to apply effective, evidence-based strategies and
practices that increase student and adult learning and close the achievement



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1 gap;

2 (2) High quality classroom teaching and administrative
 3 leadership are strong predictors of student success, all educators in the
 4 state must possess the skills and knowledge to increase student and adult
 5 learning and close the achievement gap;

6 (3) High quality leadership capacity building and training is
 7 required to align the public education system from kindergarten through
 8 postsecondary and workforce readiness, with an objective of universal
 9 proficiency for all students.

10 (4) High quality learning experiences focus on both individual
 11 and organizational improvement and provide educational leaders with a variety
 12 of support systems as they progress on the career continuum from aspiring to
 13 retiring; and

14 (5) An effective statewide leadership development system will
 15 result in increased graduation rates, reduced remediation rates, closing of
 16 achievement gaps, increased student and adult performance, increased
 17 recruitment of effective leaders, and increased capacity for instructional
 18 leaders, thus will increase the number of Arkansas citizens with bachelors
 19 degrees.

20

21 6-1-403. Purpose.

22 The purpose of the School Leadership Coordinating Council is to:

23 (1) Serve as a central body to coordinate the leadership
 24 development system efforts across the state including:

25 (A) Encouraging school districts to work with, the
 26 Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education,
 27 the Department of Workforce Education, the Arkansas Leadership Academy, and
 28 other leadership groups;

29 (B) Recommending a state leadership development system to
 30 coordinate all aspects of leadership development based on educational
 31 leadership standards adopted by the Department of Education; and

32 (C) Devise a system of gathering data which includes input
 33 from practitioners, educational and community leaders, university leadership
 34 and faculty, and other interested parties;

35 (2) Assist the Department of Education, the Department of Higher
 36 Education, the Department of Workforce Education, the Arkansas Leadership

1 Academy, school districts, and other leadership groups in enhancing school
2 leadership and school support efforts; and
3 (3) Aid in the development of model evaluation tools for use in
4 the evaluation of school administrators.
5
6 6-1-404. Creation.
7 (a) The School Leadership Coordinating Council consists of thirteen
8 (13) members as follows:
9 (1) The Chair of the Arkansas Association of Colleges for
10 Teacher Education Council of Deans;
11 (2) The Commissioner of Education;
12 (3) The Director of the Arkansas Leadership Academy;
13 (4) The Director of the Department of Higher Education;
14 (5) The Director of the Department of Workforce Education;
15 (6) The Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of
16 Educational Administrators;
17 (7) The Executive Director of the Arkansas Education
18 Association;
19 (8) The Executive Director of the Arkansas School Boards
20 Association;
21 (9) The Executive Director of the Arkansas Association for
22 Supervision and Curriculum Development;
23 (10) The President of the Arkansas Rural Education Association;
24 (11) A representative from the Arkansas Professors of
25 Educational Administration;
26 (12) A representative from the Arkansas Center for Executive
27 Leadership; and
28 (13) A representative from an Educational Service Cooperatives.
29 (b) Any member may appoint a designee to serve in his or her place if
30 necessary.
31 (c)(1) The Chair of the School Leadership Coordinating Council is
32 elected by majority vote at the first meeting of the council.
33 (2) All changes in council chairmanship are decided by majority
34 vote of the council.
35 (d)(1) The council shall meet at the times and places that the chair
36 deems necessary but no less than four (4) times per year.

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1 (2) Seven (7) members of the council shall constitute a quorum
 2 for the purpose of transacting business.

3 (3) All actions of the council are by quorum.

4 (e) The Department of Education, with the assistance of the Department
 5 of Higher Education and the Department of Workforce Education, shall staff
 6 the council.

7 (f) All members of the council may receive expense reimbursement in
 8 accordance with § 25-16-902 paid by the Department of Education if
 9 funds are available.

10
 11 6-1-405. Report.

12 (a) The Chair of the School Leadership Coordinating Council shall
 13 provide a report to the House Interim Committee on Education and the Senate
 14 Interim Committee on Education no later than September 1, 2010, and each year
 15 thereafter.

16 (b) The report shall identify:

17 (1) Deficient areas of school leadership;

18 (2) Innovative programs to address deficient areas of school
 19 leadership;

20 (3) Progress made to improve school leadership;

21 (4) Plans to improve the quality of school leadership throughout
 22 the state;

23 (5) Development and activities of school leadership cohorts; and

24 (6) Efforts made to address school leadership recommendations
 25 expressed in the 2008 Educational Adequacy report or subsequent reports
 26 submitted by the House Interim Committee on Education and the Senate Interim
 27 Committee on Education.

28
 29 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-440 is amended to read as follows:

30 (a)(1) There is created the Arkansas Leadership Academy School Support
 31 Program through which the Arkansas Leadership Academy in collaboration with
 32 the Department of Education and other leadership groups shall provide support
 33 to schools or school districts designated by the department as being in
 34 school improvement and other school districts who opt to participate.

35 (2) The program shall be designed, developed, and administered
 36 by the academy created under § 6-15-1007.

1 (b) The program shall:

2 (1) Build the leadership capacity of the school and school
3 district personnel;

4 (2) Train a diverse school leadership team, including, but not
5 limited to, ~~the superintendents~~, school principals and teachers;

6 (3) Provide a cadre of highly experienced, trained performance
7 coaches to work in the school or school district on a regular basis; and

8 (4) Work with the school and school district staff, school board
9 members, parents, community members, and other stakeholders as necessary to
10 provide a comprehensive support network that can continue the school's
11 progress and improvement after completion of the academy's formal
12 intervention and support.

13 (5) Ensure access to training programs and leadership skills
14 development;

15 (6) Develop incentive programs for institutions and program
16 participants;

17 (7) Assist in the development of partnerships between university
18 leadership programs and school districts; and

19 (8) Work closely with the School Leadership Coordinating
20 Council, the Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education, and
21 the Department of Workforce Education to coordinate cohesive leadership
22 goals.

23 (c)(1) The department and the academy shall develop criteria for
24 selection of schools or school districts to participate in the program.

25 (2) ~~Any school district that is in school improvement may be~~
26 ~~invited, strongly encouraged, or required to~~ shall be eligible to
27 participate in the program as provided in the rules of the State Board of
28 Education.

29 (3) The academy and participating schools shall commit to
30 *continue participation in the school support program for no fewer than three*
31 *(3) consecutive school years.*

32 (d)(1) The number of schools participating in the program shall be
33 determined by the amount of funding available for the program.

34 (2) The state board or the department may require a school
35 district to fund a portion of the cost of the school's or school district's
36 participation in the school support program if the Commissioner of Education

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1 *determines that* such participation is in the best interest of the students
 2 served by the participating school or school district.

3 (3) Subject to the approval of the state board, the commissioner
 4 shall determine the portion of the school district's financial obligation for
 5 participation in the program, if any.

6 (e) The state board shall promulgate rules as necessary to implement
 7 the requirements of this section.

8 (f)(1) The State Board of Education shall have the authority to issue
 9 requests for proposals if the state board should determine to change the
 10 operator or the location of the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

11 (2) The academy shall maintain one (1) main office and, as
 12 needed, satellite offices partnered with institutions of higher education
 13 that have approved leadership programs and are strategically located in areas
 14 of the state identified by the Department of Education as having the greatest
 15 need for school leadership support.

16
 17 SECTION 3. NOT TO BE CODIFIED. The document attached hereto titled
 18 "Prologue" contains the Leadership Taskforce recommendations as submitted to
 19 the Adequacy Study Oversight Subcommittee, the House Interim Committee on
 20 Education, and the Senate Interim Committee on Education. The document,
 21 "Prologue", shall be filed in the journals of the House and Senate.

22
 23 SECTION 4. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
 24 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that it is the constitutional
 25 obligation of the state to ensure that the state's public school children
 26 receive an equal opportunity for an adequate education; that to ensure that
 27 opportunity, it is essential to have strong and effective school leaders; and
 28 that this act is immediately necessary to allow the Department of Education,
 29 the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Workforce Education,
 30 and the Arkansas Leadership Academy to address deficiencies in the Arkansas's
 31 educational leadership system. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist
 32 and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public
 33 peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

34 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

35 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,
 36 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the

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1 bill; or

2 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is
3 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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/s/ Cook

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APPROVED: 2/25/2009

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Appendix B

Senate Bill 344 of 2011

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: S3/3/11*
 2 88th General Assembly **A Bill**
 3 Regular Session, 2011 SENATE BILL 344
 4
 5 By: Senators Holland, G. Baker, Elliott, G. Jeffress, J. Jeffress, J. Key, Rapert, Salmon
 6
 7 **For An Act To Be Entitled**
 8 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT MENTORING
 9 PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
 10
 11
 12 **Subtitle**
 13 TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT
 14 MENTORING PROGRAM.
 15
 16
 17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
 18
 19 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 17, Subchapter 4, is amended
 20 to add an additional section to read as follows:
 21 6-17-427. Superintendent license – Superintendent mentoring program
 22 required.
 23 (a)(1) The Department of Education shall develop and sponsor a
 24 superintendent mentoring program for first-year superintendents that includes
 25 without limitation:
 26 (A) Curriculum and instruction;
 27 (B) Ethics;
 28 (C) Facilities;
 29 (D) Human resources;
 30 (E) Leadership;
 31 (F) School funding; and
 32 (G) Technology.
 33 (2) The department shall incorporate all training that is
 34 currently required for first-year superintendents into the superintendent
 35 mentoring program.
 36 (3) The State Board of Education shall establish rules to



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As Engrossed: S3/3/11

SB344

1 implement the superintendent mentoring program.

2 (b) Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, a first-year Arkansas
3 superintendent shall complete the superintendent mentoring program within
4 twelve (12) months of obtaining or maintaining employment as a superintendent
5 to maintain his or her superintendent's license.

6 (c) This section is subject to the appropriation and availability of
7 funding.

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/s/Holland

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Appendix C

Rules Governing School Superintendent Mentoring Program

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RULES GOVERNING THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT MENTORING PROGRAM
 March 1, 2012

1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the School Superintendent Mentoring Program.
- 1.02 The State Board of Education enacted these rules pursuant to its authority as set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-13-109, Act 586 of 2011, and 25-15-201 et seq.

2.00 DEFINITION

- 2.01 "First-year Arkansas superintendent" means a licensed educator who will become a superintendent in Arkansas for the first time during the 2011-2012 school year or each school year thereafter. The term does not refer to other district level administrators, such as deputy superintendents, assistant superintendents or associate superintendents. The term does not refer to acting superintendents or interim superintendents unless the acting superintendents or interim superintendents become the permanent superintendents of the district.

3.00 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 3.01 Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, a first-year Arkansas superintendent shall complete the superintendent mentoring program within twelve (12) months of obtaining or maintaining employment as a superintendent to maintain his or her superintendent's license.
 - 3.01.1 Except as noted in subsection 3.01.2 below, the twelve (12) month superintendent mentoring program period shall begin upon the first day that the first-year Arkansas superintendent obtains employment with an Arkansas public school district, as evidenced by the effective date contained in the signed employment contract between the superintendent and an Arkansas public school district.
 - 3.01.2 For an interim or acting superintendent of a school district who becomes the permanent superintendent of the same school district, the twelve (12) month superintendent mentoring program period shall begin upon the date

the interim or acting superintendent becomes the permanent superintendent pursuant to official action of the school district's board of directors.

- 3.02 The Department of Education shall, in conjunction with the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, develop all curriculum and training materials for the superintendent mentoring program.
- 3.03 Membership in the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, or any other organization, is not required in order for a superintendent to successfully complete the requirements of the program.
- 3.04 The requirements contained in these rules are in addition to those contained in other areas of Arkansas law or in other rules of the State Board of related to administrator licensure, including without limitation, the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Initial and Standard/Advanced Level Administrator and Administrator – Arkansas Correctional School Licensure.

4.00 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- 4.01 The superintendent mentoring program shall include the following components:
 - 4.01.1 Curriculum and instruction;
 - 4.01.2 Ethics;
 - 4.01.3 Facilities;
 - 4.01.4 Human resources;
 - 4.01.5 Leadership;
 - 4.01.6 School funding;
 - 4.01.7 Technology;
 - 4.01.8 School board relations;
 - 4.01.9 Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts;

4.01.10 Understanding reports and trend data; and

4.01.11 Legal issues.

- 4.02 The required course of study for the superintendent mentoring program shall not consist of less than thirty (30) hours of instruction. Twelve (12) of the thirty (30) hours of instruction shall consist of documented interaction between the mentor and superintendent mentee.
- 4.03 A first-year Arkansas superintendent who completes the requirements of the superintendent mentoring program may use the training toward fulfillment of the Initial Tier 1 training set forth by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2204 and the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Arkansas Financial Accounting and Reporting System and Annual Training Requirements. A first-year Arkansas superintendent who has previously completed Initial Tier 1 training must nevertheless complete the requirements of the superintendent mentoring program.
- 4.03 Instruction under the superintendent mentoring program may take place in person, through distance learning, through Compressed Interactive Video (CIV), or a combination thereof.
- 4.04 The superintendent mentor and superintendent mentee shall keep a signed, written record of progress that includes a description of:
 - 4.04.1 The subject of instruction and areas covered;
 - 4.04.2 Whether the instruction took place in person, through distance learning, through Compressed Interactive Video (CIV), or a combination thereof; and
 - 4.04.3 The amount of time of instruction during each session.
- 4.05 In order to successfully complete the superintendent mentoring program, a superintendent must:
 - 4.05.1 Take and pass an assessment for each of the program components described in Section 4.01 of these rules; and
 - 4.05.2 Complete a final assessment or project covering the entire program.

- 4.06 Upon proof of successful completion of the superintendent mentoring program, a superintendent will receive a certificate of program completion from the Department of Education.

5.00 SANCTIONS

- 5.01 A first-year Arkansas superintendent who does not complete the requirements of the superintendent mentoring program within twelve (12) months of obtaining or maintaining employment as a superintendent shall be ineligible to maintain his or her superintendent's license.
- 5.02 If, due to the physical or mental disability of the superintendent or other extenuating circumstances as may be recognized by the State Board, a superintendent does not complete the requirements of the superintendent mentoring program within twelve (12) months of obtaining or maintaining employment as a superintendent, the State Board may permit the superintendent up to an additional twelve (12) months to complete the program.

6.00 MENTOR QUALIFICATIONS

- 6.01 For the purposes of these rules, a mentor shall meet the following basic qualifications:
- 6.01.1 A practicing Arkansas superintendent or retired Arkansas superintendent;
- 6.01.2 Successfully completes an application and screening process as set forth by the Department of Education; and
- 6.01.3 Successfully completes a mentor training program as set forth by the Department of Education.
- 6.02 The Department of Education will certify mentors who meet the qualifications outlined in Section 6.01 of these rules.

7.00 FUNDING

- 7.01 These rules are subject to the appropriation and availability of funding.

- 7.02 The Department of Education may, through the use of contracts, grants, or sub-grants, coordinate with qualified entities to provide training under the superintendent mentoring program to superintendents in Arkansas.

Appendix D

House Bill 1019 of 2017

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H1/19/17*
 2 91st General Assembly **A Bill**
 3 Regular Session, 2017 HOUSE BILL 1019

4
 5 By: Representatives Cozart, Lowery
 6 By: Senator J. English

7

8 **For An Act To Be Entitled**
 9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL
 10 LEADERSHIP COORDINATING COUNCIL; AND FOR OTHER
 11 PURPOSES.

12

13

14 **Subtitle**
 15 TO AMEND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL
 16 LEADERSHIP COORDINATING COUNCIL.

17

18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

20

21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-1-404(a), concerning the membership of
 22 the School Leadership Coordinating Council, is amended to read as follows:

23 (a) The School Leadership Coordinating Council consists of ~~thirteen~~
 24 ~~(13)~~ fifteen (15) members as follows:

25 (1) The Chair of the Arkansas Association of Colleges for
 26 Teacher Education Council of Deans;

27 (2) The Commissioner of Education;

28 (3) The Director of the Arkansas Leadership Academy;

29 (4) The Director of the Department of Higher Education;

30 (5) The Director of the Department of Career Education;

31 (6) The Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of
 32 Educational Administrators;

33 (7) The Executive Director of the Arkansas Education
 34 Association;

35 (8) The Executive Director of the Arkansas School Boards
 36 Association;



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/s/Cozart

Appendix E

AASA Coaching Agreement

The coach distributes and reviews this form with the leader at the first meeting.



AASA Coaching Agreement
Between
AASA Coach and Superintendent

Both above named parties agree upon the following conditions for performance:

Time Agreement: We will have at least 12 hours of documented interaction during your first year as superintendent. The first session will be in person. We will decide together how to conduct the remaining sessions. You are welcome to leave messages via e-mail, or voice mail should you wish to share information, action items, or highlights prior to our coaching. Feel free to e-mail me in between sessions to discuss when you need support.

Coaching Services: The services provided to you by AASA are coaching. Coaching, which is not advice, therapy or counseling, may address specific personal goals, career or general conditions in your profession. Other coaching services may include brainstorming, identifying plans of action, examining modes of operation, asking clarifying questions, making empowering requests and holding you accountable regarding your established goals. The services provided are designed to meet the requirements of Act 586 of 2011, more commonly known as the School Superintendent Mentoring Program.

Duration: I will serve as your AASA Coach for the first year of your superintendency.

Confidentiality: I commit to you that all information you share with me will be kept strictly confidential. I respect your willingness to be open with me and will treat confidentially any information (consistent with the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators) you share with me.

Preparation: Please come to each session prepared to participate fully.

Shared Responsibility: Having coaching work for you is a shared responsibility. I request that you be responsible for having coaching work for you: Lead the session, ask for what you want, let me know what is working and not working in our coaching partnership. My promise to you is to be totally constructive. I ask your permission to be bold and forthright in coaching you. This is about winning.

Our signatures on this agreement indicate full agreement with the requests and promises above, and complete understanding of the services to be provided.

Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

AASA Coach: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F

AASA Coaching Background Information

The coach distributes and reviews this form with the leader at the first meeting.



AASA Coaching Background Information

I am pleased to have the opportunity to work with you through the Coach Program sponsored by the Arkansas Association of School Administrators.

Please complete this brief questionnaire and e-mail, fax, or mail to me prior to our first scheduled coaching session. Thank you and I look forward to working together!

Full Name: _____

School System: _____

System Address: _____
Street City, State Zip

Home Address: _____
 Street City, State Zip

Office Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Fax #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

How do you prefer for me to contact you? _____

I invite you to respond to some (or all) of the following questions.

1. What appeals to you about have an AASA coach?
2. Are there prevailing issues you want to work on? If so, what are they?
3. Imagine many years into the future that you are looking back on your career as a school superintendent. What would you want to see?
4. How would you characterize the strengths you bring to your role as a superintendent?
5. What position were you in immediately preceding this superintendency?
6. What should I know about you that might contribute to a successful coaching relationship?

Appendix G

AASA Optimizing the Coaching Session

The coach distributes and reviews this form with the superintendent at the first meeting.



Optimizing the Coaching Session

PREPARATION

To receive the most value from the coaching session, please come to each session prepared to participate fully within the time constraints of the session. We will bring closure to each coaching session in the last few minutes by reviewing agreements and goals for the next session.

Completing the Coaching Prep Sheet prior to the call or meeting will increase the value of your coaching dramatically. I have included a suggested format. E-mailing, faxing, or mailing your Coaching Prep Sheet to me in advance of our meeting will also improve my ability to prepare for our time together and provided us both with an outline to look at during the call.

COACH CONTACT INFORMATION

Coach Name: _____

Phone Numbers:
Office _____ Cell _____ Home _____

Fax Number: _____ E-mail: _____

You are welcome to leave messages via any source should you wish to share information, action items, or highlights prior to our coaching.

Mailing address: _____
Street City State Zip

Appendix H

AASA Coaching Preparation Sheet

This form is completed by the leader to prepare for and focus on the upcoming coaching session.



AASA Coaching Preparation Sheet

Superintendent

Name: _____

AASA Coach

Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

Date of Next Session: _____

What I've accomplished since our last session:

What I'd planned, but didn't get to:

The challenges and problems I am facing now:

Opportunities available to me now:

I want to help from my AASA Coach during the next session to:

What I promise to do by the next coaching session:

Appendix I

AASA Coach Program – Superintendent Goals



AASA Coach Program – Superintendent Goals

Superintendent Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Remember! **SMART** goals are:

Specific – clear descriptions of what must be done

Measurable – how will I know I achieved success?

Attainable – a reasonable likelihood of success with perseverance

Realistic – really makes a difference, fits the situation

Timely – clear understanding of what must be done by when -- milestones

I agree to work on the following (Specific):

What will it look like when it is accomplished (Measurable)?

On a 1-10 scale, how likely am I to achieve this by our next meeting (Attainable)?

Will progress be made as a result of this action (Realistic/Relevant)? How will you know?

What is my timeframe (Timely)?

Appendix J

AASA Documented Interaction Record of Progress



**Documented Interaction Between AASA Coach/Superintendent
Record of Progress**

Superintendent
Name: _____

AASA Coach
Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

Date of Next Session: _____

of Hours Met: _____

Areas Covered During Today's Session (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|-------|--------|--|
| _____ | 4.1.1 | Curriculum and Instruction |
| _____ | 4.1.2 | Ethics |
| _____ | 4.1.3 | Facilities |
| _____ | 4.1.4 | Human Resources |
| _____ | 4.1.5 | Leadership |
| _____ | 4.1.6 | School Finance |
| _____ | 4.1.7 | Technology |
| _____ | 4.1.8 | School Board Relations |
| _____ | 4.1.9 | Standards for Accreditation of AR Public Schools |
| _____ | 4.1.10 | Understanding Reports/Trend Data |
| _____ | 4.1.11 | Legal Issues |

Notes: _____

AASA Coach Signature: _____

Superintendent Signature: _____

Appendix K

AASA Coach Feedback Form



AASA Coach Feedback Form

Coach Name: _____ **Superintendent Name:** _____

Date: _____ **Type of Contact:** _____

Check all that apply:

How would you characterize this coaching experience?

___ Very Productive ___ Productive ___ Not as Productive as I had Hoped ___ Unproductive

My superintendent responded to the coaching process in a way I would characterize as:

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

Coaching was:

___ Challenging ___ Difficult ___ Easy

Compared to previous coaching conversations, this experience was:

___ The Same ___ Challenging ___ Easier ___ Different ___ Not Applicable

Were there any surprises during the conversation? Explain.

If applicable, how would you handle the coaching conversation differently? Why?

Summary of Superintendent's Goals and/or Action Plan:

Attach any additional notes or comments you wish to include. Thank you.

Appendix L

Survey Instrument

Superintendent Mentoring and Induction in Arkansas

Welcome to My Survey

Dear Superintendent,

Thank you so much for your participation in my study. Your participation in this survey is **VOLUNTARY**. Please be assured that your individual responses will remain strictly confidential. No individual superintendent information will be released.

By clicking Next, you will be providing permission/consent to participate in this study.

The questionnaire should take no more than 10 - 15 minutes to complete. The deadline for completing this survey is important for the research.

Please complete the online survey by Wednesday February 1, 2017.

If you have any questions about this survey or the research please contact Mary Ann Spears using the following information:

Mary Ann Spears
Doctoral Student
Arkansas Tech University
mspears4@atu.edu
479-841-9339

Superintendent Mentoring and Induction in Arkansas**Arkansas New Superintendent Induction and Mentoring Program Survey**

1. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. What was your Mentor's gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

3. What is your age?

- ☐ 30 and under
☐ 31-40
☐ 41-50
☐ 51-60
☐ 61 and over

4. What was the size of your district when you participated in the New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program?

- ☐ 1000 or less
☐ 1001-2000
☐ 2001-3000
☐ 3001 and above

5. Which year did you complete the New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program in Arkansas?

- ☐ 2012-2013
☐ 2013-2014
☐ 2014-2015
☐ 2015-2016

6. Were you a superintendent in another state prior to becoming a superintendent in Arkansas?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Did you have prior central office administration experience before becoming a superintendent? If yes, how many years?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ If yes, how many years?

8. Are you currently in the same school district that you were during your mentoring/induction year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. How many years were you in education prior to becoming a superintendent?

☐ 1-5 years

☐ 6-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ 16-20 years

☐ more than 20 years

10. Rank the following topics of the New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program from 1 to 10 with 1 = most important to 10 = least important.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Adequacy/Matrix
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Curriculum
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Ethics
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Facilities
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Finance
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Instructional Leadership
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Legal Issues
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Purchasing and Bid Laws
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Special Education
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	<input type="text"/>	Technology

11. The following curriculum topics of the induction phase of the program were beneficial to me.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Adequacy/Matrix	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ethics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructional Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing and Bid Laws	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Special Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What suggestions do you have for additional topics for the induction phase of the program?

13. Did you notice any duplication of the curriculum of the New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program and your college preparation program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comments

14. What would you estimate was the total time spent with your mentor during the induction/mentoring year?

☐ 12 hours (required)

☐ 13 - 24 hours

☐ 25 - 40 hours

☐ More than 40 hours

15. Did your mentor provide or suggest outside resources/tools for you to enhance your skills?

☐ Yes

☐ No

16. My mentor provided valuable support in my transition into the superintendent role.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neutral

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

17. The New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program was beneficial to me as a new superintendent in Arkansas?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

18. If the New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program had offered an additional year or support, would you have participated?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

19. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the mentoring aspect of the program?

20. Should the study need more clarification, would you be willing to be interviewed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If yes, please provide name and contact information.

Appendix M

IRB Approval



Academic Affairs
Administration Room 200
1509 North Boulder Avenue
Russellville, Arkansas 72801

Office: 479-968-0319
Fax: 479-968-0644
www.atu.edu/academics

1/19/17

To Whom It May Concern:

Mary Ann Spears' IRB application "An Investigation of the Superintendent Induction and Mentoring Program in Arkansas" is approved through January 17, 2020. The approval code is Spears_011717.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Tucci".

Jack Tucci, Ph.D.

IRB Chair

