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Leadership Succession and Onboarding Processes of:
Mid-West United States International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) Schools

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

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Abstract

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) model of education is unique and comprehensive, and so is the PYP principal. This qualitative study examined the perceptions of Mid-West United States IB PYP leaders related to leadership succession, the onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and the effective leadership traits possessed by the new leaders. This study involved a phenomenological study in nature. A criterion sampling approach was used to identify six participants of the study. A semi-structured interviewing protocol allowed elaboration by participants and to discover aspects not originally considered. The key findings included the following: lack of formal structure of leadership succession and onboarding processes, perceived and modified traits of the leader, and the differences between an IB PYP model and a traditional model of school. The conclusions derived from the study were that aspiring leaders cannot assume schools will provide a structured formal leadership succession plan or onboarding plan. Principals with IB PYP experience prior to assuming the role as principal have a better transition, and less of a learning curve than those with less, or no IB PYP experience. Participants perceived they had effective traits and qualifications that were changed or eliminated because of IB practice and philosophy. Another conclusion was that barriers will exist, and that the new leader should have an awareness of this, and seek ways to eliminate the barriers. One recommendation is for schools to develop a structured leadership succession and onboarding plans specific to the IB PYP. Hiring practices should be evaluated and leaders should be assessed according to the IB effective leadership traits. Additional research could include: hiring practices of IB PYP principals, private vs. public school practices, and hiring practices of PYP coordinator and teachers.

Acknowledgments

Throughout this journey, there were many people who were placed in my path and helped me reach this personal goal. First, I would like to acknowledge my school family, who together we created an amazing learning experience. During my 18 years with you, I grew as a person and an educator. Thank you for your devotion to educating our students and your willingness to innovate for students and families. Each of you holds a special place in my heart and thank you for the most amazing years. I especially want to thank my friends, Ann and Kari, thank you for being there for me throughout this process.

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Finally, I would like to thank the two school districts where I had the opportunity to serve as an educator. Thank you for serving our children, families, and educators in our community. Above all, thank you for believing in me and helping me grow as an educator.

Dedication

I took the road less traveled. The completion of my dissertation journey has not been a traditional path, but with many obstacles along the way, it has made me a better person and educator. I dedicate my work to the following: First, I want to thank the three favorite guys in my life, my husband, Michael and my two sons, Ben and Will. To Michael, you are the love of my life. I thank you for sharing life with me and your continuous support and love. Thank you for always believing in me. To Ben and Will, you both are the true reason why I achieved this goal. When I become a mom, I found a new perspective and drive as an educator. Ben and Will, you are the reason I am so passionate about education, and devoted my career to helping create the best educational experience for you both. I am so blessed to be your mom and consider that to be my greatest accomplishment in my life. I pray that you see through my journey, you will understand the importance in never giving up on your dreams, and how your faith will see you through. I love you three more than life itself.

To my family and friends, thank you for staying after me to finish this goal. To my parents, Ted and JoAnn Morrison, I am so grateful for your support and love. Thank you for your sacrifices and love to make it possible for me to attain my goals. I love you.

To my grandfather, Vernon Cypert, whom I only knew for 19 years, but who had one of the greatest influences on my life. My grandfather's life story, caring for family and others, and valuing education were such an inspiration for me. I know he and my Granny are in Heaven smiling down on me.

Most of all, I want to thank and acknowledge my Savior, Jesus Christ, who opened doors and gave me the courage and the strength to walk through.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Most schools at one time or another faced the challenges of leadership change, whether a principal of 30 years retires, or a new principal leaves after the first year. Leadership changes are inevitable and can be disconcerting for everyone in the school. If leadership change is well-planned, the school and its members usually move forward with few untoward effects. However, these transitions can be perilous, with consequences affecting the entire school. Leadership change is often foreseeable and schools at some point will be challenged with this event. Logically, schools would have a transition plan and new leaders would be equipped to make the transition seamless and successfully.

In general, though succession of school leaders is inevitable, and the consequences are dependent on how well everyone is prepared, leadership succession in unique contexts may pose additional challenges. One such example is succession of leaders in an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP). Calnin, Waterson, Richards, and Fisher (2018) underline the uniqueness of leading an IB school, "the IB Model of leadership development for IB World Schools recognizes that leadership is highly contextualized within national and cultural settings" (p. 104). International Baccalaureate (IB)'s vision for their leaders' entails a leader that is adaptive, globally and locally engaged, and inspires commitment to create a better world through education by leadership grounded in professional inquiry (International Baccalaureate, 2018d). The IB organization defines effective leaders as those who:

- acknowledge and respond to the complex and interdependent nature of the environments in which they are required to demonstrate leadership
- understand how effective school leadership practices are in part determined by the diverse range of economic, political, organizational, cultural and pedagogical factors that impact directly or indirectly on school communities and, ultimately, student learning

- recognize the need to respond to complexity, interdependency and uncertainty through a commitment to institutional and professional learning and inquiry
- are committed learners, who are willing to challenge previously held assumptions and build individual and institutional knowledge and understanding
- model and support professional inquiry throughout the school community
- are reflective and strategic, capable of leading people with varied values, beliefs and expectations in order to build communities of learners motivated to create a better world through education (para.1).

In order for an IB PYP leader to be considered an effective leader and with the uniqueness of the IB PYP, school systems should plan for leadership succession and onboarding of the new leader. With limited IB PYP buildings and support structures within a school system, it is important that a new IB PYP leader possess the necessary leadership traits to be successful, to lead, and to sustain the practices of an IB PYP school.

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership succession of IB PYP leaders, onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to the IB PYP leaders. The focus of this study was on IB PYP schools in the Mid-West United States experiencing a change in leadership within the last ten years.

This study is important because research has found consistently, the principal's influence on student achievement is second only to the teacher (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). As a result of this influence, one of the most significant events of a school is when the school undergoes a change in leadership (Hargreaves, 2009). Many times, in the field of education with the demands and other priorities of serving students and families, there is a limited sense of urgency to look at leadership succession, onboarding processes, and the traits of effective leaders.

Purpose of Study

This qualitative study examined the perceptions of Mid-West United States IB PYP leaders related to leadership succession, the onboarding processes experienced by the new

leaders, and the effective leadership traits possessed by the new leaders. The researcher of the study is a former IB PYP administrator. This study was intended to assist schools in reflecting and evaluating their school's leadership succession and onboarding processes. This study identified the models of leadership succession used by IB PYP schools and generated the strengths and weaknesses of each model. This study analyzed onboarding processes implemented during the leadership transition of a new IB PYP leader and determined the strengths and weaknesses of the processes. This study attempted to identify the leadership traits that allowed for a successful leadership transition in an IB PYP school. The intent of this study was for IB PYP schools to develop or use the study's findings to analyze leadership succession and onboarding processes, and to integrate and focus on effective leadership traits needed for new IB PYP leaders.

Problem Statement

The IB educational model is unique and comprehensive focusing on the learning environment, IB learner profile, curriculum, student engagement, reflective processes, and student exhibition. The learning environment is a community of learners, where risk-taking, input, collaboration, and reflection are essential components. The learning environment also addresses the social and emotional climate (Curtis & Carter, 2015). Due to the uniqueness of IB PYP programs, there are only 566 PYP schools in the United States (International Baccalaureate, 2018c). As a result, there is little to no literature on IB PYP leadership succession and onboarding processes utilized by IB PYP schools.

A school system lacking a leadership succession plan or onboarding process for an IB PYP school could lead to inconsistency in the continuation and sustainability of the program. A new IB PYP leader, who does not possess an open mindset and the understanding of the IB PYP

model uniqueness, may negatively influence the school culture. Also, since the IB philosophy is unique compared to a traditional school model, certain actions are required for successful leadership change to ensure the continuation of the IB PYP, which is different from a traditional teaching and learning model.

Research Questions

The intent of this study was to identify leadership succession plans, onboarding models implemented by an IB PYP school with the transition of new leadership, and the effective leadership traits possessed by an IB PYP leader. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

The term leadership succession is the focus on leadership skill development and professional development opportunities to fill a leadership position when it is vacated (Hall, Salamone, & Standley, 2009).   Leadership succession is the process or steps an individual experiences prior to assuming the role as principal. It is designed to ensure the continuation of effective practices of an organization. Onboarding is the act, or process of orienting and training a new employee (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Onboarding is embedded into the leadership succession process. Onboarding is the steps or processes a leader experiences after assuming the role of leader.

Overview of Methodology

      This qualitative study examined the leadership succession and onboarding processes of IB PYP schools and the outcomes based on the school's process of leadership succession. Leadership succession in IB PYP schools is an expected change that can potentially have an extensive impact on a school environment. Leadership change and its potential impact on an IB PYP school can be defined as a social or human problem and lends it to be explored through qualitative research inquiry processes (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research has been a common practice in educational leadership knowledge base for at least 50 years. The research has helped to refine, deepen, and challenge leaders thinking about the ways that leaders are prepared, and the way they practice the art and science of their craft (Brooks & Normore, 2015). This study identified the models of leadership succession and identified strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the models. This study also analyzed onboarding processes implemented during the leadership transition of the new IB PYP leaders to identify approaches used by the schools, and determined the strengths and weaknesses of the processes. The findings from this study could assist IB PYP schools in the analysis of their onboarding processes for new leaders and to develop plans for leadership succession.

      This study was phenomenological in nature because of the examination of how IB PYP leaders construct meaning within their experience of leadership succession and onboarding processes. This approach was selected because research regarding the leadership succession and onboarding models for an IB PYP school is limited. The participants' experiences were used to describe the essence of leadership change phenomena in an IB PYP school. Participants were principals in a Mid-West United States IB PYP school who experienced the change in leadership within the last ten years. Due to the IB PYP school's content and delivery of instruction

requiring different leadership skills and understanding, it is necessary to understand new leader's

perspectives of an IB PYP school in the development of a leadership succession and onboarding

model. It was important to understand the components of a successful new leader's transition.

To assess how people, make sense of their experiences, semi-structured interviewing allowed

participants the opportunity to elaborate on personal important issues and discover aspects not

originally considered (Creswell, 2014). The process helped to provide a detailed examination of

leadership succession, onboarding processes used at the school, and the leadership traits needed

by the new leader. This approach was the most appropriate choice of methodology in order to

meet the intent and to address the questions of the study.

Participants elaborated on certain relevant topics, and this process led to follow-up

questions based on responses. The findings of the research were based on participants'

perceptions of leadership succession and onboarding processes implemented during their

leadership transition into an IB PYP school. A constructionism approach was used to make

meaning of the data from the participants' responses (Crotty, 2003).

Maxwell's (2013) Interactive Research Design was the organizational design model used

by the researcher as a logical progression of the research task. To conduct this study, the

University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board approval was sought and obtained (See

Appendix C). Participant interviews were recorded with the understanding they would be

deleted at the end of the study. A list of questions was asked to each participant and based on the

participant responses varying follow-up questions were asked. This approach supported the

opportunity for participants to elaborate on personal experiences. Additional data and

information were collected from the website, district, school, and state informational system

containing student demographics. All information was transcribed and collected in Excel, which

allowed for ease of the data analysis process. Participants' personal information was kept confidential. The data were collected in Excel, and the data analysis were completed using coding techniques and member checks to triangulate the data. The participants had the chance to review the transcripts of their interviews and make changes they deemed necessary. Once final approval by the participants was received, the information was coded to find themes. Once the themes were identified, the data were shared collectively, so no individual could be identified in the data analysis.

Significance of the Study

Leadership is an important factor in a school's performance and learning environment. International research consistently found the principal's influence on students is second only to the teacher (Leithwood et al., 2006). Effective succession of leadership and onboarding processes can lead to improved school performance when a change in leadership occurs. Fink and Brayman's (2006) research study found, if the principal succession is not developed, there can be negative effects on school performance.

The IB PYP educational model is unlike the traditional educational model. Likewise, there is uniqueness of the IB PYP leadership role. There have been no studies found on the leadership succession of an IB PYP school leader. To ensure the continuation of a successful IB PYP school, the leadership succession plan and onboarding model must be designed by the school system and implemented to meet the needs of the new IB leader; thus, the need for this study. The findings from this study will provide IB PYP schools with identified models of leadership succession and onboarding processes with strengths and weaknesses of each model. This study added to the breadth of skills needed for instructional leaders, due to the unique aspects of an IB PYP school. This study also provided the groundwork for IB PYP schools to

evaluate and reflect on current leadership succession and onboarding processes. If no leadership succession or onboarding processes were implemented, then the models studied could assist in the development of succession and onboarding plans. Furthermore, the identified leadership traits of an effective IB PYP principal could assist schools in the recruitment and succession planning process for hiring a new IB PYP leader. An IB school cannot assume leaders successfully transition into the leadership position in a PYP school and meet the IB effective leader expectations (International Baccalaureate, 2018d). Preplanning for this unique leadership opportunity requires sound policies and practices to ensure continuity and sustainability of the leadership succession.

Positionality

The researcher's educational leadership career began as an administrator in a traditional school that became an authorized IB PYP school. The researcher's personal goal was to collaboratively establish an innovative school for students and teachers. The researcher's educational school experience included a demographic shift, which presented the opportunity to change the educational approach of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the researcher's school exhibited a community of learners with a true representation of a growth mindset. This mindset was evident with the school's interest and ability to provide students with a non-traditional quality education and to set the stage for the dramatic, innovative changes the school would experience. The leadership of an IB PYP school is significant for the success of the school. The uniqueness of the structure and philosophy of an IB PYP school and the IB vision for leaders warrants an effective leader. The success of an IB PYP school could be jeopardized by a leadership movement.

As with all schools, leader succession is inevitable; however, IB PYP school leadership succession and onboarding processes must carefully be planned by the school district, due to the identified unique characteristics of the IB PYP education model and IB effective leaders' traits. The findings from this study could help other IB PYP schools facing leadership succession by guiding schools and districts in a successful transition plan. As with any other IB PYP leadership transitions, plans could be developed and implemented to help a school and school district best transition a new principal into an IB PYP school, and to assist in a seamless and successful transition. A school embracing the IB PYP philosophy is unique compared to a traditional delivery model of education. The researcher's goal of this study was to help other IB PYP schools in the succession of leadership, onboarding processes, and identification of needed leadership traits of the new leader. This study could have the potential to fill the void related to IB PYP leadership succession, onboarding processes, and effective leadership traits.

Limitations

The leaders in this study have experienced a leadership transition into an authorized Mid-West United States IB PYP school within the last ten years. Limitations exist in every study. In this study, there were limitations of the sample not encompassing IB PYP leaders from a global perspective. There were issues specific to certain leaders not addressed in the study and were not applicable to other leaders. Another limitation was geography; therefore, face-to-face interviews were conducted when appropriate. However, in some cases, this was not possible due to responses of participants from an IB PYP school and their location. Some participant interviews occurred over a conversation via telephone. The experiences of the new leaders were not similar based on location. Therefore, this study could not be generalizable; however, it is hopeful the findings can be helpful to IB PYP schools facing the succession of leadership.

The researcher encompassed an insider point-of-view. The researcher continually looked to discover and understand meaning, adopted a flexible stance, and was open to change. By having a mindset of an IB learner, the researcher was reflective throughout the process and acknowledged personal values and experiences brought to the study. Throughout the study, the researcher was active and involved (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Definitions of Key Terminology

To assist in the understanding of the study, key terms with definitions were provided. The literature review and resources used the key terms in the study.

Leadership Succession: Leadership succession planning helps districts focus on leadership skill development and professional development opportunities to fill a leadership position when it is vacated (Hall, Salamone, & Standley, 2009).

Onboarding: It is defined by the act, or process of orienting and training a new employee (Merriam-Webster, 2018).

International Baccalaureate (IB): IB offers a continuum of international education. Founded in 1968 the International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit foundation, which offers four high quality and challenging educational programmes for a worldwide community of schools. For close to 50 years, IB programmes have gained a reputation for their rigor and high academic standards, for preparing students for life in a globalized 21st century, and for helping to develop citizens who will create a better, more peaceful world. Currently, more than 1.3 million IB students attend schools in 149 countries. The four programs encourage both personal and academic achievement, by challenging students to excel in their studies and in their personal development. An IB education focuses on learners through the development of effective approaches to teaching and learning, works within global contexts, and explores significant

content. In order for a school to be an IB School, the school must complete the authorization

process and reauthorization process to continue with the status (International Baccalaureate,

2018e).

Primary Years Program (PYP): The PYP is for children aged 3 – 12. The goal of a PYP

school is to nurture and develop young students as caring, active participants in a lifelong

journey of learning. Through its inquiry-led, transdisciplinary framework, the PYP challenges

students to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning as they explore local

and global issues, and opportunities in real-life contexts (International Baccalaureate, 2018e).

IB Effective Leader: The IB organization defines their effective leaders as those who: 1)

acknowledge and respond to the complex and interdependent nature of the environments in

which they are required to demonstrate leadership; 2) understand how effective school leadership

practices are in part determined by the diverse range of economic, political, organizational,

cultural and pedagogical factors that impact directly or indirectly on school communities and,

ultimately, student learning; 3) recognize the need to respond to complexity, interdependence,

and uncertainty through a commitment to institutional and professional learning and inquiry; 4)

are committed learners, who are willing to challenge previously held assumptions and build

individual and institutional knowledge and understanding; 5) model and support professional

inquiry throughout the school community; and 6) are reflective and strategic, capable of leading

people with varied values, beliefs and expectations in order to build communities of learners

motivated to create a better world through education (International Baccalaureate, 2018d).

Effective Principal: An effective principal is defined as a leader who exhibits the

following five key practices: shaping a vision of academic success for all students, creating a

climate hospitable to education cultivating leadership in others, improving instruction, managing

people, and data and processes to foster school improvement (National Association of

Elementary School Principals, 2015).

Professional Development (PD): PD is used in reference to a wide variety of specialized

training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators,

teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competences, skills, and

effectiveness ("Ed Glossary," 2018).

Organization of Dissertation

Chapter I describes the introduction of this study, purpose of this study, problem

statement, research questions, overview of the methodology, positionality, and definition of key

terminology. Chapter II outlines the review of the literature for this study on IB PYP leadership

succession, onboarding processes, and effective leadership. Within the review, the topics of

educational leadership succession, educational onboarding, private sector leadership succession,

private sector onboarding, and educational leadership traits are outlined. Chapter III describes

the research design, sample population, collection methods, analysis methods, trustworthiness,

and limitations. Chapter IV outlines the findings from the participants. The final chapter,

Chapter V, details the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership succession of Mid-West United States IB PYP leaders, onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to IB PYP leaders. The intent of this study was to identify leadership succession plans, onboarding models implemented by an IB PYP school with the transition of new leadership, and leadership traits needed by an IB PYP leader through the interpretation of participant interviews. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

Educational researchers, such as Fink and Brayman (2006), and Hargreaves (2009) contributed to the study of leadership succession in the traditional educational model. However, research in the field of leadership succession in an IB PYP school is limited. The increase in the number of authorized IB PYP schools and the financial investment required to become an authorized IB PYP school, warrant the contribution and significance of the study.

This study focused on six areas of literature presented in this chapter. The focus areas reviewed included:

1. International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)

2. Educational Leadership Succession

3. Educational Onboarding Processes

4. Private Sector Leadership Succession

5. Private Sector Onboarding Processes

6. Educational Leadership Traits and the IB PYP Leader

The first section includes the review of the IB PYP and its unique characteristics and the management of the succession of leaders. The second and third sections encompass the current literature of educational leadership succession planning and onboarding processes being implemented, and the importance of schools to create leadership succession and onboarding processes. The fourth and fifth sections include a review of the successful contributions of the private sector to leadership succession planning during the onboarding processes. The last section is comprised of the educational leadership traits needed for a successful school leader and the IB PYP leader.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers a continuum of international education. The IB programs encourage both personal and academic achievement, challenging students to excel in their studies and personal development. The IB organization offers four programs for school implementation: Primary Years Program (PYP) serving children age 3-12, Middle Years Program (MYP) serving children age 11-16, and two options for children 16-19, the Diploma Program (DP) and the Career-Related Program. In May 2018, there were 6,258 IB World Schools across 4,871 schools in 149 countries. From the years 2012-2017, the number of IB programs as grown 39.3% (International Baccalaureate, 2018b). The increase in the growth of the IB model and schools supported the necessity of the study.

In 1997, the Primary Years Program (PYP) began with a focus on nurturing and developing young students as caring, active participants in a lifelong journey of learning and

preparing students to become active, caring, lifelong learners who demonstrate respect for themselves and others, and have the capacity to participate in the world around them. IB focuses on the development of the whole child (International Baccalaureate, 2018e).

Even though the numbers of PYP schools continue to increase, there are limitations on the ability to network with other PYP principals. Unlike a traditional school, an IB PYP leader may not have access to another leader in the same district to collaborate on the issues of his/her school. This limitation sometimes creates obstacles in building a collaborative networking group for an IB PYP leader, especially for a new leader.

The IB PYP model of education is comprehensive and distinctive. The learning environment is the starting point for a successful IB PYP implementation. The school's learning environment is one of a community of learners, where risk-taking, input, collaboration and reflection are essential components. The learning environment refers to the physical space and resources, and also a few tangible elements such as the social and emotional climate (Curtis & Carter, 2015). The learning environment can be regarded as reflecting a program's philosophy, values, and pedagogical approaches (Morrissey, Rouse, Doig, Chao, & Moss, 2014).

Another distinctive feature of an IB PYP school is the integration and focus on the development of the learner profile. In IB schools, the learner profile is the ultimate outcome of all learners. The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people, who recognized their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet to help create a better and more peaceful world. The learner profile is defined by the following ten terms: inquirer, knowledgeable, thinker, communicator, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-taker, balanced, and reflective. The integration and modeling of the learner profile is essential to the success of an IB School ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009).

A third unique feature is the IB PYP curriculum. The curriculum and inquiry of study is created by the school staff and based on six IB PYP transdisciplinary themes: 1) Who we are, 2) Where we are in place in time, 3) How we express ourselves, 4) How the world works, 5) How we organize ourselves, and 6) Sharing the planet. Understanding by Design is the model teachers use to create the conceptual based units of study. IB PYP public schools are required to align district, state, and national requirements into the PYP units of study. The IB PYP prescribes a curriculum framework of essential elements including; knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and actions. Each essential element is reflected in the learner profile and is a reference point for the construction of a school's curriculum. The delivery of the transdisciplinary curriculum is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for students. An inquiry approach to learning supports student questioning and choice in learning. Another part of the curriculum is the integration of teaching a second language to all students ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009).

Reflective practices are integrated throughout the IB PYP processes for students and teachers. For students, reflection is conducted throughout the unit process through questioning, inquiry, assessment, and action. At the end of a unit of study, a student is asked to reflect on what was learned and document it through a portfolio. Students are self-reflective on their perceptions of the IB learner profile and how they could improve on each profile trait. Teachers are active participants in reflection through collaboration with colleagues and self-reflection. This collaborative reflective process is conducted at the end of each unit of study and focused on, to what extent did we achieve our purpose, and to what extent did we include the elements of the PYP? The intent of the reflective process for the learner and educator is to share ideas, strengths and to ultimately improve teaching and learning processes ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009).

A unique feature of an IB PYP school is the student exhibition, which is the culminating project for a student in the final year of the PYP. The exhibition is an example of student inquiry and student choice. The exhibition requires each student to demonstrate engagement with the five essential elements of the programme: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and actions. It is a transdisciplinary inquiry conducted in the spirit of personal and shared responsibility, as well as a summative assessment activity. The exhibition is a celebration as students move from the PYP into the middle years of schooling ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009).

To become an authorized IB World School, schools must apply and then follow an extensive application and evaluation processes. For a school to implement an IB PYP curriculum, the school must complete the IB authorization process. The criteria for a school to become an IB school is to have at least two consecutive grades, have an IB coordinator to help lead and communicate the IB program, commit to PYP teacher professional development, and ensure student experience is continuous (International Baccalaureate, 2018a). The authorization process can take two-to-three years for a school to complete. There are two main phases of the authorization process. The first is the consideration phase, in which the school completes the candidacy application, and then a decision is given by IB for the school to become a candidate school. This leads to the candidate phase of the authorization process. This phase is the trial implementation of the program. During this time, there is an IB consultation process which includes a visit with an IB consultant that provides guidance for the school. The school begins the process of investing in staff through attendance in IB professional development. The next part is the authorization application process. Once the application is completed, an authorization visit will be conducted by a team of IB educators. During the visit, the team will determine if the school is working on meeting the IB standards, which focuses on 73 standards. The standards

are outlined in three areas of 1) philosophy; 2) organization, leadership and structure, and resources and support; and 3) curriculum, collaborative planning, written curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment. If the school is working toward the standards, then based on the team's recommendation, a school can become an authorized IB school and begin the implementation of the PYP curriculum (International Baccalaureate, 2016). An IB PYP school is very unique in many facets, unlike a traditional elementary school. As of March 2017, there were 1,472 schools offering the PYP, in 109 different countries worldwide (International Baccalaureate, 2018).

Another unique aspect to the IB PYP includes an additional fiscal responsibility. According to the 2018 IB fees, for a school to begin the PYP application phase for candidacy there is an initial fee of $4,000. Once a school becomes a candidate school, the annual candidate fee in the Americas is $9,500, for the school as long as they are in the candidacy phase. Once a school becomes an authorized PYP school, the annual fee is $8,520. The IB conducts periodic evaluation visits, which also includes a fee. In addition to the annual fees, one of the commitments as an authorized IB school is the continuation of professional development for the staff. The IB offers face-to-face trainings, online trainings, and conferences. The registration fees range from $660 for online to $745 for face-to-face trainings (International Baccalaureate, 2018a).

Educational Leadership Succession

According to Hargreaves (2009), one of the most significant events in the life of a school is when the school undergoes a change in leadership. Twenty percent of first-year principals leave their schools within the first or second year, which affects both teaching and student achievement (Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, & Ikemoto, 2012). On average, half of principals

leave their schools after only three years (CHURN, 2014). Yet, research suggested that a

principal should be in place around five-to-seven years to have a positive impact on a school

(Wallace Foundation, 2013). Leadership succession is defined as creating a plan to fill a

leadership position when it is vacated. Renihan and Noonan (2012) suggested that leadership

succession is an integral component of sustainable, relevant, and effective leadership for the

longer term of the organization. Planning for leadership succession is accurately suggested by

Zepeda, Bengtson, and Parylo (2012)

> …school system leaders can no longer count on a pool of applicants naturally appearing
> whenever there is a job opening; therefore, the management and planning for the
> succession of principals should be considered an important aspect on how a system
> ensures that candidates are ready to assume the principalship when an opening does
> occur. (p. 139)

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) supports leadership

succession planning by helping districts focus on leadership skill development and professional

development opportunities (Hall et al., 2009).

International studies in educational research consistently found the principal's influence

on students is second only to the teacher (Leithwood et al., 2006). Fink and Brayman (2004)

discussed succession planning should become a major policy for the schools. The most effective

succession plan must link leadership recruitment, preparation, selection, assignment induction,

and ongoing leadership development. Succession planning during regularly scheduled principal

rotation in turbulent times appears to create more problems than it solves. A school system must

be continuously reflective regarding the abilities and backgrounds of their leadership teams.

Finally, a top-down reform tends to undermine the ability of principals to engage with staff and

students, and other engagement approaches must be considered (Fink & Brayman, 2004).

Hargreaves (2009) supported the need for leadership succession planning and found four ways for a school to have effective leadership succession: 1) increase leadership stability, 2) build systematic leadership by encouraging schools to help each other, 3) develop distributed leadership within the school for all staff, and 4) create coaches for the new leader. Hargreaves' focus on succession planning is about growing and connecting leadership systems.

Zepeda et al. (2012) used Rothwell's (2010) fifteen characteristics of leadership succession developed for the private sector to evaluate four Georgia schools' leadership planning and management. Three of the four school systems identified succession planning and management as important with a variety of differing plans used in the schools. The large urban school district had policies and procedures representing twelve of Rothwell's fifteen characteristics. From the study of the four Georgia school systems, the following themes were identified: a sense of urgency, development of leaders, mentoring, and building collaborative relations with outside organizations, which is not one Rothwell's fifteen characteristics (Zepeda et al., 2012).

Calareso (2013) detailed the importance in creating a leader succession model as the author strongly believes succession planning is the key to maintaining the stability of leadership. The two processes that must be implemented are assessment and planning. Assessment includes the personnel and the succession plan itself. The planning for leadership succession must be in place and will vary on the position it addresses and the scope of the organization.

Research supported the need for leadership succession at various levels within a system. Normore's (2007) study on leadership development initiatives at a large urban school district offered four programs. The four programs focused on staff at different levels in the system with various supports for each. The four programs are: 1) leadership experiences and administrative

development, 2) interim assistant principal program, 3) interim principal program, and 4) first year principal support program. Professional development had a positive effect on leadership succession at each phase. Mitgang's (2012) research at The Wallace Foundation supported the view of leadership planning at various levels. The first was the selection process for future principals, as they must be more selective in creating a more capable and diverse corps of future principals. Second, the aspiring principals need pre-service training in leadership of improved instruction and school change, not simply management of buildings. Third, systems should do more to exercise power by raising the quality of principal training to meet the system's needs. Fourth, states could make better use of their power to influence the quality of leadership training through standard-setting, program accreditation, principal certification, and financial support for highly qualified candidates. The fifth and last recommendation involves principals needing high quality mentoring and professional development tailored to individual and district needs during the first years on the job.

In order for a school to have sustainable leadership, a system should implement succession planning. From a study conducted with four Canadian schools, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) identified six characteristics of succession planning. The six characteristics are 1) preparation for the transition, 2) give others time to prepare, 3) incorporate school improvement plans, 4) responsibility of many rather than the existing leader, 5) based on the school's existing stage of development and future needs of improvement, and 6) linked to clearly defined leadership standards and competencies. Zepeda et al. (2012) concluded that the characteristics of good succession planning from Hargreaves and Fink (2006) were parallel to those succession characteristics of the private sector addressed by Rothwell (2010). Leadership succession planning is important in maintaining sustainable leadership. Fink and Brayman (2006) agreed, if

principal succession is not planned, there can be negative effects on school performance; therefore, sustainable leadership matters. It is a shared responsibility that does not deplete human or financial resources, but cares for, and avoids exerting damages on the surrounding educational and community environment (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

State and school district leadership succession initiatives vary from district-to-district and state-to-state. One approach for leadership succession is aspiring administrator programs. The Delaware Department of Education and the University of Delaware collaborated in developing a statewide leadership succession plan in 2005. One aspect of the plan was providing funding for schools to develop leadership succession plans and establishing collaborative time for schools to share models with other school's leadership (Wilson, 2009). The Appoquinimink School District created an aspiring administrator program to meet the needs of their fast-growing school district. Their leadership succession plans established clear guidelines for aspiring leadership candidates; each candidate must have five years of teaching experience and all candidates were given "big picture" experiences. Monthly meetings provided opportunities for candidates to report their job-embedded leadership projects. One such project was to investigate IB and design an implementation plan for the district (Brittingham, 2009).

New Leaders Aspiring Principals Program is another succession leadership designed to assist individuals in the preparation to work as a principal in a large urban school district. Through a strenuous process, a residency is established. The prospective principals lead teachers with the support from a mentor principal and New Leaders staff. The New Leaders developed and implemented the Urban Excellence Framework. This framework focuses on learning and teaching, culture, aligned staff, operations and systems, and personal leadership. Through the program, the focus was on building a first-year action plan, using data to drive instruction,

aligning teams, creating high expectations in the culture, and developing personal leadership skills ("Onboarding for Administrators," 2015).

A collaborative report written by the Ohio Principal Workgroup (2017) was comprised of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Association of Elementary and Secondary School administrators, focused on strategies supporting principals' continuous improvement and journeys to excellence. A workgroup examined what could be done in Ohio to improve high-quality leadership practices and principal effectiveness. The five areas included serving in the principal role; recruitment and job seeking; assignment; supportive experiences; and ongoing professional development and supports. The group identified categories and supports available for principals in successfully fulfilling their job requirements (Ohio Principal Workgroup, 2017).

Some school systems created succession plans with multiple pathways of leadership. Olson (2008) described Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) leadership succession plan. The school's mindset supported the view of building leaders within the school. Outside funding allowed the organization to develop a Leadership Pathways Program. The model consisted of three main models of leadership. The Principal Prep is for those leaders who will assume an administrative position within eighteen months. The Leadership Team was created for those staff members who are already in an existing leadership position with the intent to build on their personal experiences. The last model is the Teacher Leader for those teachers who serve as department chairs or other leadership roles at the school. This focus of building leaders within the system helps the school to be sustainable with a leadership change.

When developing a leadership succession plan, school systems should consider barriers. The Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Association of Elementary and Secondary educators identified barriers to leadership succession planning for pre-service educators. These

barriers included reluctance to change, keeping up with changes (legislative, district, etc.), lack

of time: to meet all demands and expectations of the training, institutional demands and existing

cultures may not align with pre-service training, and a lack of instructor on-the-job expertise

(Ohio Principal Workgroup, 2017).

Just as the IB PYP curriculum is unique to the traditional education, so is the position of

IB PYP principal as compared to a traditional elementary principal. The uniqueness of the

position exists in the leadership/management style. The IB PYP principal must blend and

promote the IB philosophy in addition to local belief systems. The second is the uniqueness of

overseeing the development and implementation of curriculum that incorporates the local, state,

and federal mandates, while maintaining the implementation of the IB PYP standards. The last

unique feature is the lack of networking with other IB PYP principals. In many school district

settings, the PYP principal must network with other PYP principals through other avenues other

than face-to-face interactions. The IB organization offers professional development for aspiring

leaders in conjunction with the organization's leadership training. This training focuses on

building the leader's skills to become an effective IB leader (International Baccalaureate, 2018d).

Educational leadership succession is important to consider in maintaining sustainability

of leadership in a school. According to this literature review there are numerous approaches to

leadership succession practiced in different school environments.

Educational Onboarding Processes

Educational onboarding for new administrators can take on many forms, which varies

greatly from district-to-district and state-to-state. The onboarding processes can range from

mentorship, to three-day trainings, or to a sink or swim approach. Onboarding is defined by the

act, or process of orienting and training a new employee (Merriam-Webster, 2018). The field of

education has created multiple opportunities for leadership succession; however, educational

leadership onboarding is not as extensive as it is in the private sector. Educators should value

this change, as the private sector learned from their findings to build leadership succession and

onboarding processes. The Wallace Foundation supported a study by Tucker (2011) focused on

the need for investing in leader's preparation. The report reviewed educational systems in

Shanghai, Finland, Japan, Singapore, and Canada. In all five educational systems', international

students consistently outperformed United States students. The distinguishing characteristics of

those systems included investing in high-quality preparation, and mentoring and professional

development for teachers and leaders, entirely at the government's expense.

Onboarding varies from school system to school system. Often onboarding of new

leaders is completed through an orientation model with the inclusion of mentorships. A study

conducted by Hanover Research ("Onboarding for Administrators," 2015) focused on

onboarding practices for new educational administrators. The findings suggested that effective

onboarding programs orient new administrators to the role. The key findings of the research

were: 1)successful orientation programs pair new administrators with a more experienced

mentor, 2) effective mentoring allows for meaningful responsibility, 3) onboarding processes

should occur throughout the year, 4) effective onboarding lasts longer than one year, 5) key

players are used in designing the orientation programs, and 6) onboarding provides districts

effective leadership practices. During the onboarding process, the new administrator is

introduced to the school culture while also improving the leadership quality of the individual.

The Hanover study mentioned Infusino's work, which addressed ten strategies that should be

included during onboarding processes for new administrators. These strategies help ensure

success for new administrators: 1) never send emails or memos on critical issues, 2) never make

changes immediately after becoming the administrator , 3) do not vote on critical issues, 4)

consult with others before making decisions, 5) level the playing field, 6) be accessible and

approachable to staff, 7) never display anger in public, 8) demonstrate integrity at all times, 9)

get out of the office, and 10) use common sense to guide actions ("Onboarding for

Administrators," 2015).

A common finding in educational onboarding practices is the use of a mentorship

program. Some research views the mentor or coach as a crucial part of onboarding as evident in

Hargreave's study. Hargreaves (2009) outlined his plan for leadership succession with the need

for creating a coach for the new leader. The intent of the coach is to help the first-time leader

through the first year. The coaching model is based on The New Teacher Center at the

University of California in Santa Cruz. An interesting perspective to the coaching model is the

new leaders have coaches from another district. This outside mentor encourages the new leader

to be more open in sharing problems and that the new leader would reach a quicker solution

without fear of failure. Thus, partnership would help with a successful leadership transition.

The Hanover Research report (2015) revealed mentoring was important in the

transitioning of a new administrator. An effective mentorship program is developed by various

leaders in designing the new administrator orientation process. The timeline for this process is

crucial, as well as, educating the new administrator about his/her role and expectations.

Furthermore, mentors are key to the new administrator's success and significant attention must

be given to the selection and training. The mentor's role is to help the new administrator by

identifying, evaluating, and solving on-the-job problems. The mentors can be from within a

school district, or from another district within the state. The Southern Region Education

supported the mentorship process and outlined a proposed yearlong orientation for the new

administrator including: identifying and building key relationships, establishing 45-day, 90-day and yearlong intent, formal mid-year check, and providing multiple opportunities for the new administrator to participate in professional learning communities' board ("Onboarding for Administrators," 2015). A successful mentorship program extends up to three years for the new administrator. The first year provides tools and resources needed to accomplish the most important aspects of the job ("Onboarding for Administrators," 2015).

Mentoring for new administrators is a commonly used method of induction, and was detailed in the 2003 study, *Making the Case for Principal Mentoring*, conducted by National Association of Elementary School Principals and the Educational Alliance at Brown University. Based on their investigations, the researchers provided a guide for creating, or refining mentoring programs. The outcome of the mentorship was to strengthen the principal's skills. The study also provided examples of state mentorship programs and resources for practitioners (The Education Alliance at Brown University, 2003).

Rowland (2017) discussed the importance of new principal orientations. The process described some states and districts having well-developed support systems for their new principals (usually orientations geared to the rules and ways of their new schools) once they are on the job for a while. However many new principals have limited on-site training and mentoring is only included in some of the school districts models. Mentoring often refers to specific guidance and support for new principals during the initiation phase. While, most states require some form of mentoring for new principals, the range in application and quality is vastly different (Mitgang, 2007).

The orientation process for new leaders is another approach to onboarding. Amerson and Wiseman (2016) outlined their school district's approach for a ten-day process by addressing

orientation, key stakeholder session, mentorship, and reflection and planning. During the orientation process, the district communicates expectations and established the conditions, which helps the new principal to feel part of the team in order for a successful transition. The next phase of the orientation is meeting with stakeholders. Amerson and Wiseman (2016) referred to the external and internal stakeholders of the school. The external stakeholders helped establish networking and support. The internal stakeholders are the staff, students, and parents of the school. For the school staff, this consists of one-on-one time, and for students and parents in the form of focus groups. All groups were asked three questions, which were derived from Michael Watkins book, *The First 90 Days,* 1) What are some opportunities for growth; 2) What are the greatest challenges; and 3) If you were me, what would you focus on? The third part of the onboarding program is peer shadowing opportunities. The district identified high performing leaders in the district who would serve as mentors for the new principal. During this part of the onboarding process, the new principal and mentor write a plan for success for the first year. The final part in onboarding leaders is reflection and planning. This time is devoted to developing the plan of action based on expectations, feedback from the stakeholders, and to reflect on the onboarding process. Amerson and Wiseman (2016) summarized their views by stating that effective onboarding better prepares new school leaders for success in these trying times.

The training or onboarding process for school leaders can vary greatly from district-to-district and state-to-state. In Arkansas, the state provides a beginning administrator mentoring program, which provides new administrators face-to-face trainings throughout the year (Arkansas Department of Education, 2014). The Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Administrators Education Association have partnered to implement a multi-tiered support system encompassing the Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS), and

the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). For first year administrators, mentoring includes induction and regional networking meetings. The next two years, leaders participate in the Arkansas Leadership Quest, which are meetings held throughout the year focused on relevant leadership topics (Arkansas Department of Education, 2014). Arkansas also provides a Master Principal Program for current principals who apply for the program. The three-year program provides opportunities for the principal to expand his/her knowledge base and leadership skills. Other trainings and onboarding practices for administrators are left to the discretion of the individual school district (Arkansas Department of Education, 2018).

Oklahoma provides a New Principals Assistance Program. The voluntary program supports new leaders in maintaining balance, prioritizing responsibilities, leading effective meetings, and providing productive relationships. For those practicing administrators, monthly webinars over a variety of topics are provided (Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administrators, 2018). According to Oklahoma House Bill 2957 (2016), all new principals are required to become certified in the Teacher Evaluation System. This is a three-day face-to-face training (Legiscan, 2016).

In 2014, the Missouri Leadership Development System began with the primary focus of development and support of effective school leaders who engage with school and community, serve as leaders for meaningful and productive change, develop excellent instruction, and sustain a culture of continuous learning (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2014). The five areas are visionary leader, an instructional leader, a managerial leader, a relational leader, and an innovative leader. The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders are integrated into the competency. Missouri conducted a three-year evaluation of the program. Even though it is still too early to draw a conclusion of the impact, three aspects of principal

retention were revealed: ongoing professional development, meaningful network opportunities, and individual support beyond the first two years (Missouri Leadership Development System, 2018a).

The Association of Washington School Principals (2018) created the Launching Principal Leadership Training Series. The four workshops are provided by experienced administrators. The focus for this program is for principals in their first year. The four workshops include: maximizing leadership in the first eight weeks, instructional leadership for success, finishing the year strong, and setting oneself up for success in year two ("Onboarding for Administrators," 2015).

The Houston Independent School District is another example of new assistant principals and deans of students onboarding. The school district created a three-day onboarding learning grounded in instructional and managerial leadership skills and knowledge aligned with the Texas Principal Standards include: 1) instructional leadership; 2) human capital; 3) executive leadership; 4) school culture; and 5) strategic operations (Houston Independent School District, 2017).

Research about the importance of school leaders with respect to teaching and learning is compelling in the area of professional development for leaders. For principals to be effective and continue to grow, they need access to ongoing, high-quality professional learning (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2018; National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2018). In the February 2017 edition of Education Policy Center at American Institutes for Research, the focus was on principal professional development, and new opportunities for renewed state focus. Rowland (2017) shared the point-of-view of how school funds are more often spent on teacher professional development than principal professional

development. Research showed principals can play an important role in school improvement.

Strong school leadership is associated with higher levels of student achievement particularly in

schools with the greatest needs; furthermore, principals can be multipliers-effective principals

who work as instructional leaders can impact everyone in the school from teachers-to-students

(Rowland, 2017).

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Executive Director

shared data indicating principals work 60-to-70 hours per week, and only spend about two

percent of their time on professional development. The focus on professional development for

administrators has been on instructional techniques. Only half of the states have minimum

professional development requirements for principals to renew their licenses (DeNisco, 2015).

School districts in Arkansas are required to have no less than six days of professional

development. Administrators are required to receive annual training in data disaggregation,

instructional leadership, and fiscal management (Arkansas Department of Education, 2016).

During years one-through-four, Missouri administrators are required to receive 120 hours of

professional learning over four years. For administrators in the timeframe of five-to-ten years of

service, the administrator is encouraged to complete an Educational Specialist degree or receive

30 hours annually (Missouri Department of Education, 2018b). Oklahoma outlined their

required professional development for all staff (Oklahoma Department of Education, 2017). In

addition to state professional development requirements, administrators are required to attend

Teacher Evaluation recertification every two years (Legiscan, 2016).

Due to the uniqueness of an IB PYP leader and the IB PYP philosophy, the IB

organization created support for aspiring and current leaders. Essentials of International

Leadership is a 60-hour credential offered to IB leaders. IB leaders are diverse due to their

cultural settings and types of school. The goal for practicing leaders in an authorized IB program

is to develop a better understanding of what types of leadership practices have the best chance of

maximizing student and organizational outcomes in different contexts (Calnin et al., 2018). In

order to better prepare IB leaders, the IB organization created a leadership development training

(International Baccalaureate, 2018d). This training focuses on seven interdependent

intelligences. The first is strategic intelligence. As part of the IB Programme and Practices

(International Baccalaureate, 2014) one of the standards is the role of the leader in the promotion

of the IB vision and mission within the school, and the staff is committed to the IB program.

The second is cultural intelligence. IB schools are diverse and complex; therefore, open-

mindedness is crucial for the leader. An IB leader is connecting with people, institutions, and

ideas from different cultural traditions (Calnin et al., 2018). Entrepreneurial intelligence is the

third area for development of an IB leader. This intelligence is related to the IB Learner profile

attribute of risk-taking with the continual commitment to active, creative, and discovery-driven

engagement for the learners. The entrepreneurial intelligence focuses on a creative element,

analytical element, and practical element (Calnin et al., 2018). Relational intelligence is the

fourth component. The IB learning environment for all learners is built on trust, respect, ethical

principles, and collaboration (Calnin et al., 2018). The fifth intelligence is reflective intelligence,

which is directly tied to the learner profile attribute of reflective learners. This intelligence is

evident in the leader's thinking in evaluative terms, while analyzing the impact of practices

implemented at the school in order to view student progression. Heuristic intelligence is defined

as the process of how to efficiently make decisions. According to Calnin et al. (2018), the

challenge for IB leaders is to ensure the right action is taken at the right time. The ability to

know when to use heuristic techniques consistent with the IB philosophy and values is crucial for

the school. The final intelligence the training supports is pedagogical intelligence. The IB

standards and practices outlines leader's expectations to demonstrate pedagogical leadership

aligned with the philosophy of the program (International Baccalaureate, 2014). The view of a

community of learners is apparent in IB schools in order to provide an IB education.

Pedagogical intelligence ensures leaders understanding of the IB curriculum and the teaching and

learning practices (Calnin et al., 2018).

The types of educational onboarding for leaders vary from school-to-school and state-to-

state. Mentoring or coaching appears to be the best models in transition for leadership

sustainability. The following section of the review of literature focuses on leadership succession

models from the private sector.

Private Sector Leadership Succession

The private sector has over 30 years of research and studies connected to leadership

succession. Since the 1990's, the private sector was instrumental in creating systems promoting

leadership succession (Gordan & Overbey, 2018). This sense of urgency was due to the changes

in workforce demands with retirement of the baby boomer generation. Along with the need for

leadership succession planning, there was also a focus of onboarding new leaders. In the book,

Succession Planning: Promoting Organizational Sustainability edited by Gordon and Overbey

(2018), a wide range of perspectives were identified. The book outlined succession planning in

non-profit healthcare, small business, federal agencies, family-owned business, and education.

This collection of various leadership successions provided a connection for the private sector and

education. In the first chapter of the book, the focus was about the onboarding of new

employees to communicate the organization's culture, policies and procedures, and expectations

were explored. Training known as knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) was provided for the

new employee. After KSA training, additional trainings for job growth and promotion were offered which were based on individual needs.

Rothwell (2010) is one of the leading researchers in the field of leadership succession. Rothwell's view on leadership succession stemmed from replacement planning requiring the identification of potential openings and finding individuals to replace the leader. Rothwell believed succession planning and management includes replacement planning, and the addition of leadership development through change and teamwork. Rothwell's book, *Effective Succession Planning, Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within*, explored many facets of leadership succession. According to Rothwell (2010), leadership succession is any effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization, division, department, or work group by making provision for the development, replacement, and strategic application of key people over time. Rothwell identified the following best practices of leadership succession: use a *big picture roadmap or model* to guide the effort, ensure hands-on involvement by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and other senior leaders, use competency models to clarify what type of talent the organization's leaders want to build, develop and implement an effective performance management system, lead the target by clarifying what competencies will be needed for the future if the organization is to achieve its strategic objectives, use individual development plans to narrow developmental gaps, develop descriptions of the values and ethical standards acquire and assess people relative to those as well as to competencies, build a viewpoint that high-potential talent is a shared resource rather than owned by specific managers, use leadership development efforts to build shared competencies needed for the future (Rothwell, 2010). Rothwell (2010) determined fifteen characteristics of successful leadership succession planning:

1. Top Management Participation and Support
2. Needs-Driven with External Benchmarking
3. Focused Attention
4. Dedicated Responsibility
5. Succession Planning and Management Extends to All Levels
6. A Systematic Approach
7. A Comparison of Present Performance and Future Potential
8. Clarification of High-Level Replacement Needs
9. An Obligation to Identify and Prepare Successors
10. Specific Developmental Programs Established and Conducted
11. High Potentials Work While Developing
12. Developmental Programs Establish Familiarity with Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How
13. Developmental Experiences Encourage Critical Questioning
14. Succession Planning Emphasizes the Qualities Necessary to Surpass Movement to the Next Higher-Level Job
15. Formal Mentoring Emphasized. (p. 59-62)

Zepeda et al. (2012) used these fifteen characteristics in a case study conducted in four Georgia school systems. The results of their study revealed three of the systems identified the importance of succession planning and management.

Planning for leadership succession impacts many individuals. Each year about 10% to 15% of corporations appoint a new leader. Many times, the positions are filled with external candidates. Harrell (2016) supported the view that companies need to be better prepared in leadership succession. He believed the key is identifying internal candidates early on, and to begin preparing them to fill the positions.

Berns and Klarner (2017) revealed five Chief Executive Officers (CEO) succession types implemented by companies. The first is the Relay CEO succession, which is defined as the company identifying a person to assume the new role and to prepare the person for the position. The second is defined as a Horse Race, where candidates compete against one another for the position. CEO origin types are defined where company boards can choose between candidates from within the company, outside of the company, within the industry, or with a different

industry. The fourth is Ordinary or Focused succession, and the last is temporary or interim

CEO, which usually occurs during periods of uncertainty. Berns and Klarner (2017) detailed the

Boards role in the CEO succession process and its importance to the company. The Pre-

succession phase is reviewing candidates and their qualifications that meet the board

requirements and expectations. The CEO Change Phase begins when the Board identifies the

shortlist of candidates, and then hiring of the new CEO. The current CEO is usually involved in

both of these phases. The Post Succession begins after the new CEO is hired. This is a time for

the Board to continuously evaluate the new CEO and the progress of the first 100 days. The

recommendation from the study was to continue to study the Board's processes in each of the

phases.

The private sector has been instrumental in developing various leadership succession

practices. Some of the models are now being replicated in education. The next section of this

review of the literature focuses on private sector onboarding practices implemented for

transitioning leaders.

Private Sector Onboarding Processes

The private business sector developed several models of onboarding new leaders which

vary in level of support offered for new leaders. One such model is the sink or swim approach

that offers minimal support for the new leader. The second system is a basic orientation that

explains a company's policies, organizational structure, strategy and results with no other

support. Active assimilation is a method wherein the company sets up meetings with

stakeholders. The last system is accelerated integration, where the company provides custom

designed experiences, including team building, strategy development and cultural understanding

(Byford, Watkins, & Triantogiannis, 2017). Byford et al. (2017) explained the transition process

of a new leader from the orientation phase to an integration model. This approach allows for a successful transition in a reduced amount of time. An integration model is an intensive approach to assist a new employee in becoming a fully functioning member of the team as quickly and smoothly as possible.

In Byford et al (2017) article, survey results from Zehender, concluded the findings of 588 executives who transitioned into a new role and determined some risk factors for failures of a new leader. Sixty percent of respondents reported it took six months to have a full impact on their job, and almost 20% said it took nine months to have a full impact on their job. Almost 70% of participants identified a lack of understanding about norms and practices, and about 65% stated a misfit with organized culture contributed to failure. In education, the nine-month timeframe is equivalent to a year of learning for students. Watkins (2013) referred to accelerating transition to gain momentum and provided ten key factors. The ten factors were: prepare yourself, accelerate your learning, match your strategy to the situation, secure early wins, negotiate success, achieve alignment, build your team, create coalitions, keep your balance, and accelerate everyone (Watkins, 2013).

In another global survey conducted by Zehenders, company onboarding practices were assessed to determine where companies provide support, and where they do not. The results indicated that the majority of the 198 executives thought their companies did a good job with basic orientation processes, but lacked in helping to coordinate leaders and their teams. The survey also revealed executives viewed their companies as lacking in helping the new executive adapt to culture and positive climate (Watkins, 2013).

Byford et al. (2017) identified five major tasks in the integration approach leaders must undertake in their first few critical months. The first is assuming operational leadership with

awareness of issues, solving urgent problems, and identifying and achieving quick wins. The second task is taking charge of the team through building trust and facilitating sessions between the new leader and teams. Aligning with stakeholders is the third task. Identifying the most important stakeholders and connecting with them is crucial. The article suggested the leader develop an "elevator speech" which helps with the process. The fourth task is engaging in the culture to understand values, norms and assumptions of the new organization. The authors recommended a cultural questionnaire to help compare the new leader's previous company with the new company to identify potential problems. The last task is defining strategic intent in the creation of strategy for the new leader's next steps.

Private sector organizations have a variety of onboarding support models for transitioning leaders. The next section of this review of the literature focuses on effective educational leadership traits.

Educational Leadership Traits and the IB PYP Leader

The term effective leadership has multiple definitions and viewpoints on what is an effective leader. What constitutes effective educational leadership has changed from various perspectives over the years. For this purpose of this dissertation, effective leadership according to 21st leadership and IB effective leaders were used as they may reflect to IB PYP leaders. According to Thompson's (2017) study and review of educational leadership, the requirements of the 21st century school leader must include an understanding of instruction, community, and shared visionary leadership. The view is for a new leader to inspire and influence others rather than using the position of authority to accomplish goals.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) defined effective principals as those who follow the Principal Leadership Development Framework (PLDF) and

emphasizes the practice of four key roles. As an effective principal, the focus on the building leader should be on instructional leadership. Within this mindset, the principal's focus is to portray a vision for the organization, be an instructional leader, support staff through engagement, and always be a learner and collaborator (Hall, Childs-Bowen, Cunningham-Morris, Pajardo, & Simera, 2016).

A Wallace Foundation Project conducted by Mitgang (2012) focused on characteristics of an instructional-focused collaborative leader. The findings identified five key practices exhibited by effective principals. These practices included: shaping a vision of academic success for all students, creating a climate hospitable to education, cultivating leadership in others, improving instruction, managing people, and data and processes to foster school improvement.

Another approach to effective leadership is outlined by Fullan (2015). *Leadership from the Middle* is a model supporting the abandonment of the top-down and bottom-up approach. This approach encourages more people in the system to be involved in the educational processes and have ownership. *Leadership from the Middle* can be briefly defined as a deliberate strategy that increases the capacity and internal coherence of the middle, as it becomes a more effective partner upward to the state and downward to its schools and communities, in pursuit of greater system performance. Fullan (2015) believed this systemic approach to leadership would appeal to a mass of people who wanted to contribute and provide the opportunity to launch innovative methods for student learning and engagement.

Collaboration and collective responsibility are other identified effective leadership traits. For many years, DuFour and Mattos (2013) studied the field of learning communities and leadership. Their belief is "…schools do not need instructional leaders who attempt to ensure teachers use the right moves. Schools need leaders who are willing to learn. These learners

create a school wide focus on learning for students and adults" (p. 40). DuFour and Mattos

believed effective school leaders should implement Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

that focus on student learning. The PLC model creates and promotes collaboration and

collective responsibility (DuFour & Mattos, 2013).

The IB Organization created a vision for leadership for all four IB programs. "IB leaders

are adaptive, globally and locally engaged and inspire commitment to create a better world

through education by leadership grounded in professional inquiry" (International Baccalaureate,

2018d). The organization defines an effective leader as possessing the following traits:

- Acknowledge and respond to the complex and interdependent nature of the environments in which they are required to demonstrate leadership
- Understand how effective school leadership practices are in part determined by the diverse range of economic, political, organizational, cultural and pedagogical factors that impact directly or indirectly on school communities and, ultimately, student learning
- Recognize the need to respond to complexity, interdependency and uncertainty through a commitment to institutional and professional learning and inquiry
- As committed learners, are willing to challenge previously held assumptions and build individual and institutional knowledge and understanding
- Model and support professional inquiry throughout the school community
- Are reflective and strategic, capable of leading people with varied values, beliefs and expectations in order to build communities of learners motivated to create a better world through education. (para. 1).

In 2014-2015, an IB funded project focused on leadership in six PYP schools in different

European countries was conducted by Day, Townsend, Knight and Richardson (2015) of the

University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. The researchers examined the links between school

leadership and application of the IB PYP. The findings supported the unique characteristics of

IB schools, as well as, the influence of PYP values on leadership. All leaders in the study

demonstrated a firm and passionate commitment to IB values and to the learner profile. The

researchers revealed the perception of the principal as the "guardian" of the school culture. The

principal is the key person in articulating the vision, supporting staff, and other leaders in the

implementation of the PYP. The second finding focused on a common understanding of the goals, purpose, and commitment to the PYP. Ensuring fidelity in the execution of PYP values was necessary for a successful IB PYP leader. The study found that the leaders who had previous PYP teaching experiences were better able to assure fidelity than those with no PYP experiences. The fourth finding involved the PYP coordinators position, and how the leader utilized this position within the school environment. The study revealed teacher orientation processes, but none for leaders.

Lee, Hallinger, Walker's (2012) study of five K-12 IB schools in East Asia, focused on how instructional leadership responsibilities were distributed in schools. Three broad instructional practices were identified: curriculum articulation, cross-program activities, and strategic staffing. The findings reinforced the importance of distributing leadership across the staff. The principals in all five schools appeared to be knowledgeable and engaged leaders and focused on IB program implementation. The formal leaders acted as facilitators of instructional leaders for their staffs.

An effective educational leader possesses distinct leadership traits. From a 21st Century leader to the perspective of leadership from the middle, the focus is on building leaders. The IB organization's vision for leadership and their outlined effective traits are the guiding principles for IB leaders.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study focused on the IB PYP, existing leadership training, onboarding, leadership succession, and effective leadership traits. The model details the connections and impact of each component to the IB PYP leadership succession. The following Figure 2.1 details the Conceptual Framework of this study.
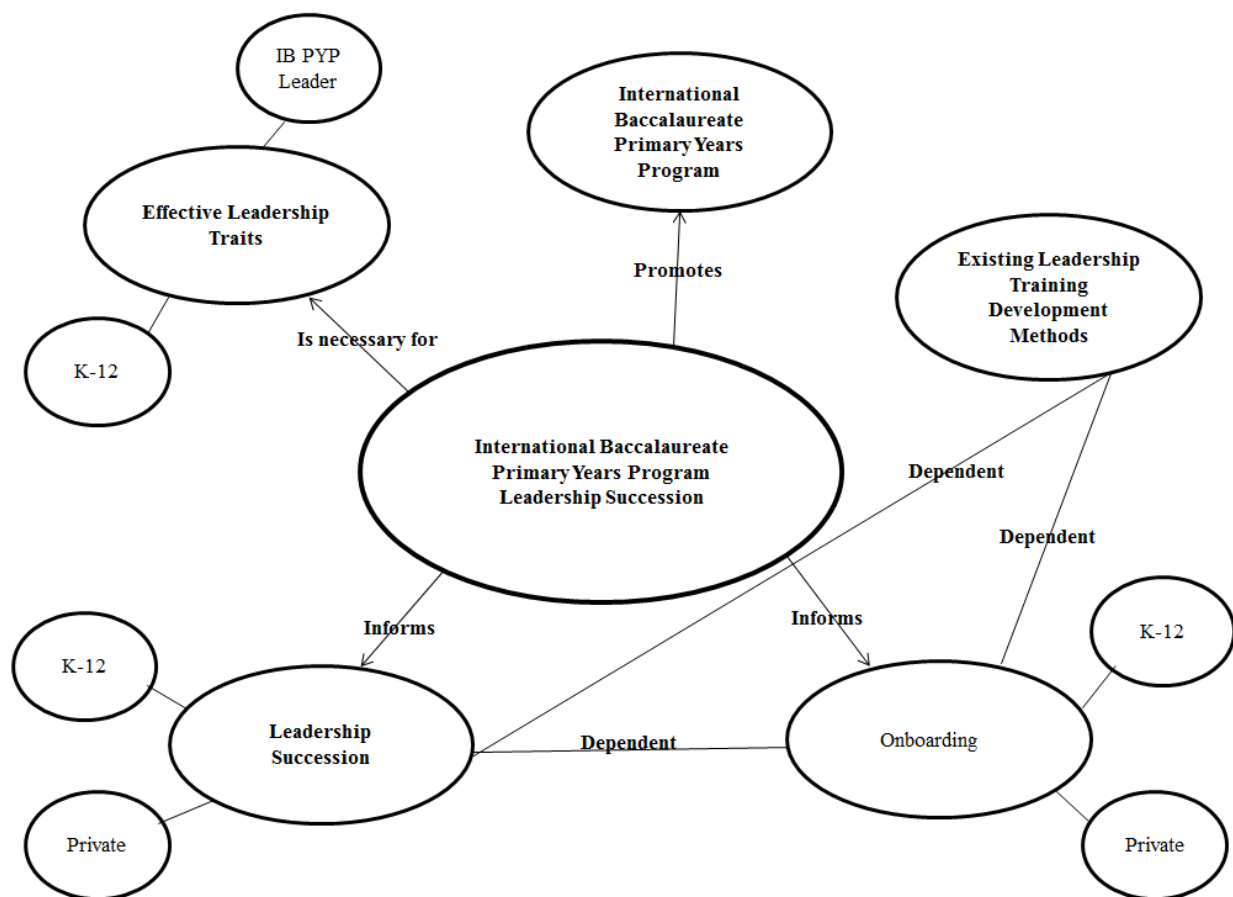
Figure 2.1. The Conceptual Framework. The figure outlines the major focus areas of the study.

Chapter Summary

As previously discussed, there are numerous articles and studies that supported succession planning of leadership and various onboarding models. This mindset and process is more common in the private sector than in education. A study by Zepeda et al. (2011) focused on leadership succession and management of principals. The study evaluated the sense of urgency, development of leaders, mentoring and building collaborative relations with outside organizations in four Georgia school systems based on Rothwell's (2010) framework. The private sector practices from Rothwell's theory of succession planning and management can be applied to a school system, in conjunction with other practices and characteristics unique to

public school's system settings. A study conducted by Zepeda, Bengtson, and Parylo (2012) found, "leadership succession in public schools may require different approaches. Rothwell's theory may not be applicable to all schools and his theory may apply more to larger school systems" (p. 150).

Some educational systems have leadership succession plans and a very limited onboarding approach ranging from an orientation model to mentoring processes. From this review of literature, there are several takeaways for educators, and especially those of an IB PYP school. First, the IB PYP school must be intentional in the planning and implementation of the comprehensive leadership succession plan and onboarding model for an IB PYP leader:

> An IB education is unique because of its rigorous academic and personal standards. IB Programmes challenge students to excel not only in their studies but also in their personal growth. The IB aims to inspire a lifelong quest for learning hallmarked by enthusiasm and empathy. (International Baccalaureate, 2015, p. 17)

Because of the uniqueness of an IB PYP learning environment, the complexity, and comprehensiveness of the IB educational model, there must be a specific model for IB PYP leaders. Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) six characteristics of succession planning, as well as Rothwell's best practices for leadership succession have shown success and can support other leadership succession planning. The onboarding process must begin with building an integrated onboarding process as described by Byford et al. (2017). Within the onboarding model, there must be acceleration as described by Michael Watkins (2013) outline of accelerating transition to gain momentum. Districts could reexamine their funding allocations to support professional development opportunities for leaders.

In conclusion, just like the IB PYP educational model differs from the traditional educational model, so is the uniqueness of the IB PYP leader. There were no studies found on the leadership succession of an IB PYP school leader. In order to ensure the continuation of a

successful IB PYP school, the leadership succession plan and onboarding model must be designed and implemented to meet the needs of the new IB leader; thus, the need for this study.

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership succession of IB PYP leaders, onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to the IB PYP leaders. The intent of this study was to identify leadership succession plans, onboarding models implemented by an IB PYP school with the transition of new leadership, and leadership traits needed by an IB PYP leader through the interpretation of participant interviews. Through the understanding of the IB PYP leaders and the leadership succession plans, onboarding processes and leadership traits exhibited the issue of the need for leadership succession and onboarding plans were evident. The present study makes a contribution in the field of educational leadership succession and onboarding plans for IB PYP leaders and identifying of leadership traits needed by an IB PYP leader.

Chapter III

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

The available literature research on International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years

Program (PYP) leadership succession and onboarding is minimal. The literature review revealed

an abundance of articles related to leadership succession and onboarding in the private sector,

but limited research in the field of educational leadership. The purpose of this study was to

examine leadership succession of an IB PYP leader, onboarding processes experienced by the

new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to the IB PYP

leaders. This qualitative study examined the leadership succession processes of IB PYP schools

and the outcomes based on the school's process. Qualitative research is an inquiry process

exploring a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). This research study identified the models

of leadership succession and the researcher generated the strengths and weaknesses of the

models based on participants' feedback. This study analyzed onboarding processes implemented

during the leadership transition of the new IB PYP leaders to identify the onboarding approaches

used by the schools to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the processes. The researcher

believes the findings will help IB PYP schools analyze their onboarding processes for new

leaders and develop plans for the successful transition of principals into the IB PYP schools.

This study identified the leadership traits supporting a successful transition in an IB PYP school,

and determined the models and traits needed for a new IB PYP leader.

The intent of this study was to identify IB PYP leadership succession plans, onboarding

models implemented by IB PYP schools with the transition of new leadership, and leadership

traits needed by an IB PYP leader. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

A qualitative study was warranted to identify the processes and practices the new leaders experienced in the IB PYP schools in the form of leadership succession and onboarding processes. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) stated, "in order to obtain the leaders' perspectives, the research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in experiences" (p. 30). This study encompassed this approach.

A phenomenological interpretivist theoretical approach allowed the researcher to explore how participants made sense of their personal and social world. The participants' experiences were used to describe the essence of the leadership change phenomenon in an IB PYP school (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The intent of the study was to identify the IB PYP succession processes, onboarding processes new principals were involved with during the transition into the IB PYP school, and the leadership traits needed for success.

According to Crotty (2003), a constructionist approach is used to make meaning of the responses of the participants. The findings of the present research were based on participants' perceptions of leadership succession and onboarding processes implemented during their leadership as the leader's transition into an IB PYP school. The information gathered from the semi-structured interviews, allowed the researcher to construct meaning based upon the responses from the new leaders.

This study was a phenomenological study in nature because of the examination of how IB PYP leaders constructed meaning within their experience of leadership succession and onboarding processes. This approach was selected because the leadership succession and onboarding models for an IB PYP school have not been studied. Understanding the new leaders' perspective of an IB PYP school in the development of a leadership succession and onboarding model was unique, due to the content and delivery of an IB education, which requires different leadership skills and understanding. The uniqueness of the IB philosophy makes it important to understand the components of a successful new leader's transition. A semi-structured interview protocol allowed participants the opportunity to elaborate on personal important issues and to discover aspects the researcher had not considered. The process helped provide a detailed examination of leadership succession, onboarding processes used at the school, and the leadership traits needed by the new leader. According to the research, this approach was the most appropriate choice of methodology to meet the intent and to address the questions of the study. Figure 3.1 outlines the theoretical, philosophical, and methodological framework that is associated with this study.

Theoretical Perspective: Interpretivism
Interpretation of the experiences with the phenomenon of change in leadership succession on IB PYP leaders.
Epistemology: Constructionism
Understanding the phenomenon of leadership succession and onboarding processes of a new leader in an IB PYP school through constructing knowledge from the experiences of participants.
Methodology: Phenomenology
Phenomenological research that will investigate the process of leadership transition through the experiences of the new leaders in an IB PYP school.
Methods: Strategies
Semi-structured interviews using thematic coding and triangulation of data.

Figure 3.1. Theoretical, Philosophical, and Methodological Framework. The theoretical, philosophical, and method framework guiding the research approach for the study.

Research Sample

Identifying the authorized IB PYP schools experiencing a change in leadership required connecting to the IB World Community. The International Baccalaureate Organization (2018) did extensive work using social media platforms to connect IB programs across the world. To identify the research participants who had transitioned into new IB PYP principal positions, the researcher used a criterion sampling approach. A set of criteria was developed for the sample selection, making it a purposeful sample (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). The following attributes were determined for the participants to be selected into the study:

- held the position of principal in an authorized IB PYP school

- experienced the transition to an IB PYP leadership position within the last ten years

- held the position of principal in a Mid-West United States IB PYP school

- held a position in a publicly-funded IB PYP school

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), when selection is given to a set of identified criteria, the research sample for the study is purposeful. Furthermore, participants were allowed to opt into the study; therefore, the randomness of selection was minimized. The first step in the process was to identify publicly funded IB PYP schools located in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma through the IB website. An email was sent to all principals asking if he/she met the criteria and would be interested in becoming a participant in a research project. After responses were received, the list was narrowed to six participants. The participants of the study were not limited to principals who were former IB PYP teachers, or IB PYP coordinators in the school. Since the IB PYP model exists between private and public schools, participants for this study were limited to publicly-funded schools in the Mid-West part of the United States. IB PYP schools are required to have the staffing position of an IB PYP coordinator who serves in a

leadership position at the school. The perspectives from the IB staff were not included in the study. The following figure outlines the overview of the participants in the study:

Participant Overview
• All participants' first job as a principal was at an IB PYP school • Schools' student population ranged from 23%-87% of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch • Schools' ESL (English as Second Language) population ranged from 8%-60% of student population • Principal experience range was from 1-8 years in the position • Two principals had IB PYP experience prior to assuming the role as principal • Four principals had served as a specialists at the school, district or state level prior to assuming the role as principal • Two principals served as assistant principals prior to becoming principal • Leadership changes experienced in the school since the school had become an authorized IB PYP school ranged from none to 3 years • Schools' years as an authorized IB PYP school ranged from 2 to 15 years

Figure 3.2. Participant Overview. The figure outlines the details about the participants in the study.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) stated that "…individuals develop subjective meanings of their own personal experience, and that this gives way to multiple meanings" (p. 9). This study attempted to find leadership succession and onboarding processes that were implemented in the IB PYP schools, there was a possibility none were implemented by the school.

Research Design

This study was a phenomenological study based on the leadership succession and onboarding processes incorporated by IB PYP schools experiencing a change in leadership of the principal. The participants of the study were a sampling of IB PYP leaders from IB PYP schools in the Mid-West section of the United States. The requirements for principals to be included in the study were the individuals must have been a practicing principal in an IB PYP school; and must have been hired within the last ten years. The data collected through interviews utilized a semi-structured protocol. All principals were asked the same questions, but the participants were

allowed to share any aspect of leadership succession or onboarding processes they perceived as important or interesting. The data analysis was completed using coding techniques and member checks to triangulate or use multiple perceptions to clarify meeting of the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The participants were given the chance to review the transcripts of their interviews and make changes they deemed necessary. After all participants reviewed the transcripts, there were no changes made to the transcripts.

Maxwell's Interactive Research Design provided an organizational design model for the researcher as a logical progression of the research task (Maxwell, 2013). Figure 3.3 outlines the proposed study research design.

Goals

The goals of this study are to:

1. Identify leadership succession plans and their strengths and weaknesses.

2. Identify onboarding models and evaluate strengths and weaknesses.

3. Identify successful leadership traits of principals.

Conceptual Framework

Existing Literature

Leadership Succession in Education and the Private Sector

On-boarding in Education and the Private Sector

Educational Leadership Traits

Personal Experience as a former IB PYP Administrator

Research Questions

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What percieved changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

Methods

Methodology: Phenomenology-phenomenological research that will investigate the process of leadership transition through the experiences of the new leaders in an IB PYP school.

Methods: Strategies- semi-structured interviews, thematic coding and triangulation

Validity
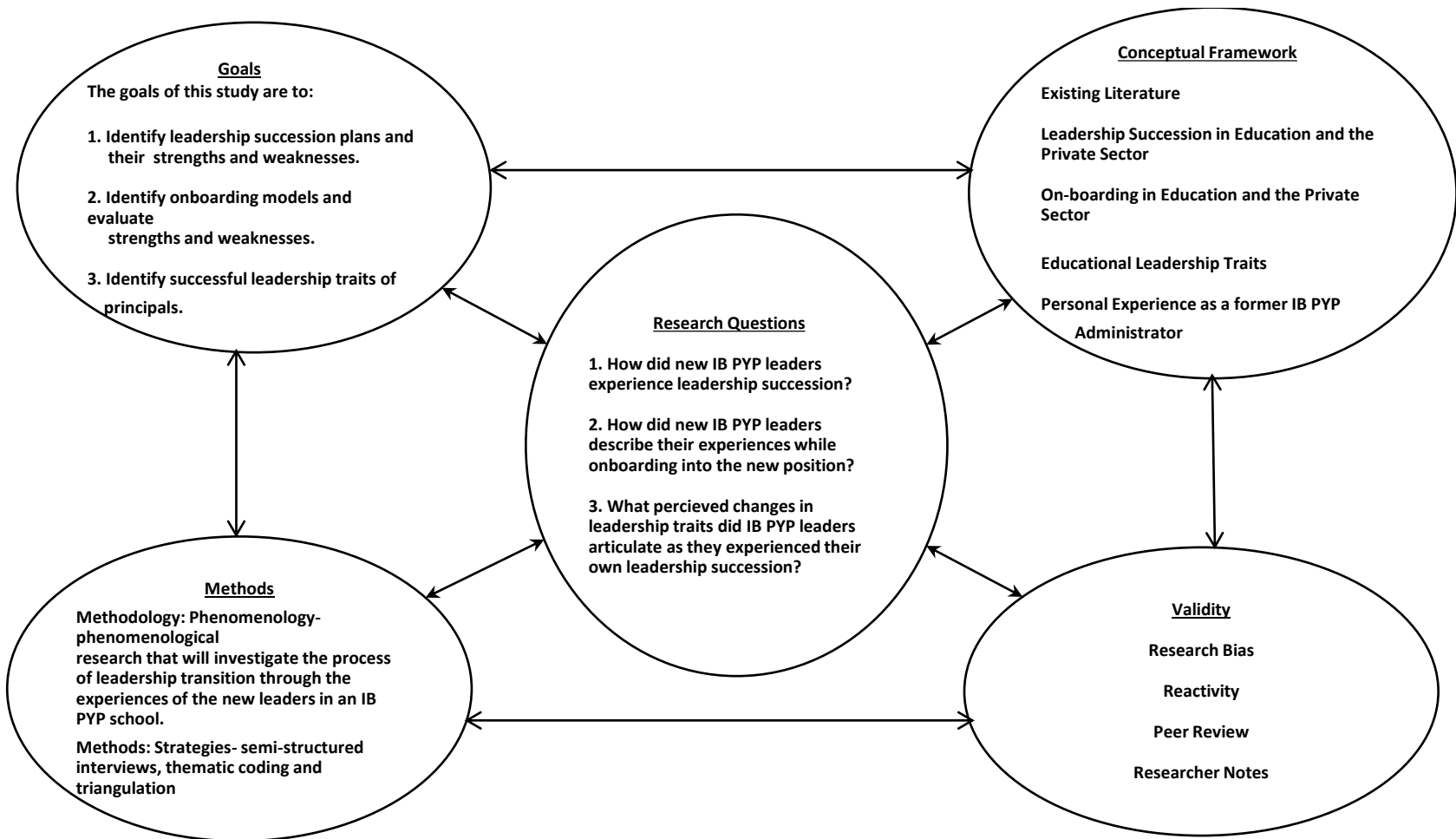
Research Bias

Reactivity

Peer Review

Researcher Notes

Figure 3.3. Interactive Research Design. The interactive design of the study displays the five major components of a qualitative study and their relationship/alignment with each other.

Data Collection Methods

To conduct this study, Institutional Review Board from the University of Arkansas was sought. Once approval was given, participants for the study were identified through the IB community social media platform. Participants were initially contacted through the email listed on the IB website and asked to participate in the study. Informed consent was provided to the participants. The consent included the purpose of the study and time constraints of the interview. See Appendix B for an Informed Consent example that was shared and signed by all the participants.

An email was sent to the participants outlining a set date and time, as well as, an interview delivery method or interview location. Face-to-face or via telephone conversations were the interviewing options used to accommodate the participants. The semi-structured interview model allowed interviewees to elaborate on personal experiences. Each interview was recorded with the understanding it would be deleted at the end of the study. Each participant was asked a list of interview questions. Follow-up questions were asked and varied based upon the researcher's interaction with the participants. A semi-structured approach supported the opportunity for the participants to elaborate on personal experiences. The interview protocol is found in Appendix A.

Maxwell (2013) supported the implementation of a pilot test for the interview questions. Once questions were established, a pilot test was given to determine if the questions worked as proposed and all research questions had been addressed. Modifications and refinements were made to the questions based on reflective feedback from the pilot test.

An interview approach provided opportunities for the researcher to have flexibility with the participants and to build rapport through face-to-face, or via the telephone. This format

supported the opportunity for participants to elaborate on certain topics, which led to follow-up

questions based on responses. Each participant shared a unique perspective about the topics.

Perceptual information relied on the interviewer to uncover participants' descriptions of their

experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

      Additional data were collected for the study. Table 3.1 outlines the overview of

information needed for the study.

Table 3.1

Data Types, Sources and Purposes

Type of Information	Sources and Methods	Purpose
Contextual	*School IB Information - IB website *Number of changes in leadership since the school became an IB World School *Schools policies for new administration support and any leadership succession plans of actions	*Number of years associated with IB PYP *Understanding of the number of leadership changes *Understanding of processes and practices of the IB PYP schools
Perceptual	*Semi-structured interviews-face-to-face or Google Hangout.	*Determine perceptions on leadership succession and onboarding.
Demographic	*Participant Information (years' experience, positions, trainings, number years as principal, etc.) *School Demographics (size, type of school, location, student demographics)	*Understanding of participants experiences *Understanding of the IB PYP School
Theoretical	*Existing literature review	*To review literature on topics

Note. Table 3.1 provides an overview of data collected for the study, sources, and methods used for data collection, and the purpose of the data.

The schools' IB PYP authorization information was reviewed from the IB Website. This information was used to determine the school's IB timeline of when the leadership transition occurred for the school and the number of years of the school's IB authorization.

The participant profile helped to provide an overall picture of the leader. The position held prior to becoming the principal was used to help to identify the new leader's experience

with IB PYP model of education. To understand the participants' view of IB education, professional development training received by the participants was compiled.

School demographics consisting of location, languages spoken, and student profile helped the researcher complete an overall picture of each school in the study.

Gathering data related to the number of leadership changes experienced by the school, helped the researcher develop a better perspective about the school. The researcher looked at the number of changes in principals since the school received IB authorization. The intent was to determine if leadership succession and onboarding processes were created as the result of the number of changes in leadership.

School policies and practices focusing on leadership succession and onboarding models were reviewed. This information provided a background of the school or school district's focus on leadership succession and onboarding models. This also helped with creating strengths and weaknesses of each from the participant's perspectives.

Other information for the study was collected from the school's website, school, district, and a school or state informational system containing student demographics. Additionally, the IB website was used to identify the date of authorization and any other pertinent information about the school's IB PYP status. All information was transcribed, collected, and organized in Excel to allow for ease of analysis. All participant information was kept confidential. The list of participants, recorded interviews, researcher's notes, and Excel files were kept in a password protected computer file in a locked room.

Data Analysis Methods

The data were recorded, transcribed, collected, and organized in Excel. The data analysis was completed using coding techniques and member checks to triangulate the data. Bloomberg

and Volpe (2012) supported this approach believing coding is essentially a system of classification, noting interests, identifying differences, and labeling. Members checking was provided by the participants to have the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interviews and make changes they deemed necessary. Once final approval by each participant was given, the information was analyzed and coded to find themes. The researcher felt it was necessary to become more familiar with data and conducted another reading of transcripts, while listening to the recorded interviews. According to Maxwell, the goal of coding is not to produce counts of things, but to *fracture* the data and rearrange it into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and between categories (Maxwell, 2013). This process allowed the researcher to identify common themes. Once the themes were identified, the data were shared collectively where no individual could be identified in the data analysis. A peer-review was conducted to review coding to ensure consistency. The data analysis method conducted during this study attributed to the rigor of the study. The following Figure 3.4 outlines the analysis method process.
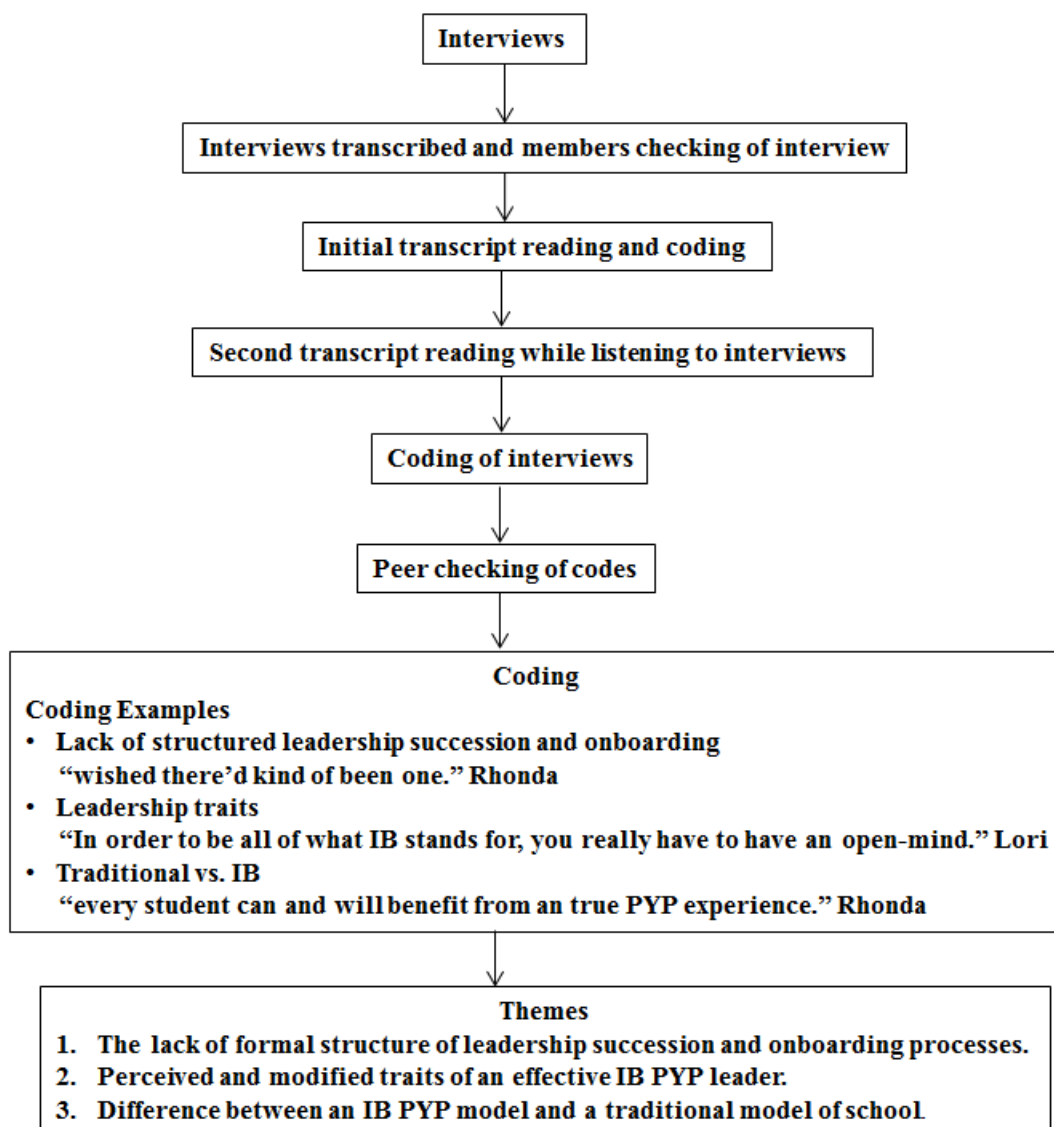
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                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │  Interviews  │
                        └──────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
      ┌────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
      │ Interviews transcribed and members checking of interview │
      └────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
          ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
          │   Initial transcript reading and coding   │
          └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
      ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
      │ Second transcript reading while listening to interviews │
      └──────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
              ┌──────────────────────────┐
              │    Coding of interviews     │
              └──────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
              ┌──────────────────────────┐
              │    Peer checking of codes   │
              └──────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
```

Coding

Coding Examples
- **Lack of structured leadership succession and onboarding**
  "wished there'd kind of been one." Rhonda
- **Leadership traits**
  "In order to be all of what IB stands for, you really have to have an open-mind." Lori
- **Traditional vs. IB**
  "every student can and will benefit from an true PYP experience." Rhonda

Themes
1. The lack of formal structure of leadership succession and onboarding processes.
2. Perceived and modified traits of an effective IB PYP leader.
3. Difference between an IB PYP model and a traditional model of school.

Figure 3.4. Data Analysis Process. The figure outlines the data analysis method used to conduct the study.

Ethical Issues

One of the main ethical issues in the study was confidentiality. Since participants shared personal leadership succession and onboarding practices, or lack of practices implemented by his/her schools, it was important no one could trace the interview responses to specific persons. A consent form was used for each participant. All the participants in the study were given

pseudonym, so their quotes could not be traced back to them, or to their school. A list of the

original names and the assigned pseudonyms were kept in a password protected file with a hard

copy of the information in a locked room. Another ethical issue was maintaining a positive

outlook for principals who were not involved in a leadership succession process, onboarding plan

or did not exhibit effective leadership traits. Great care was taken to ensure principals' thoughts

and feelings were kept in the utmost regard. The researcher's bias of what type of leadership

succession, onboarding processes, and leadership traits for a new IB PYP leader was constantly

monitored during the study. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) advised researchers to continually

monitor their own subjective perspectives and biases by recording reflective field notes or

keeping a journal throughout the research project. This process allowed personal opinions to be

checked. The researcher maintained a password protected journal with a hard copy in a secure

room location. The researcher was cautious not to introduce bias into the study by valuing some

of the models supporting the researcher's belief of a successful leadership succession,

onboarding model, and leadership traits needed for an IB PYP principal.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was paramount in the research study. All participants were asked to

review their transcripts, so accurate accounts of their thoughts were collected. Interviews were

digitally recorded and transcribed. Members checking of transcriptions was provided with no

participant voicing concerns about the transcript. At the conclusion of each interview, the

researcher documented in a journal the overall impressions of the interviews, including the body

language the participant conveyed during the interview. Peer checking was used to examine the

data to ensure the codes and conclusions accurately portrayed the phenomenon described by the

participants. The interviews and notations were used to triangulate the data collected about how

the new IB PYP principals felt about their personal experience with leadership succession and onboarding processes, as they transitioned into the new role. As a researcher using a constructionism approach, it was important for the researcher to acknowledge personal background as a former IB PYP school administrator, and leadership change process occurring at a previous school. Through the use of journaling, the researcher's reflection and beliefs were supported and helped to maintain a focus on the findings of the study.

Limitations

The leaders in the study experienced a leadership transition into an IB PYP school in the Mid-West United States within the last ten years. Limitations exist in every study that may weaken the study impact. In this particular study, there was a limitation of the sample not encompassing IB PYP principals/heads of school from a global perspective with the IB model being offered in 149 countries. In other words, the findings of this study are not generalizable to the larger population of IB leaders' experiences. Another limitation was the geographical location of the participants, as face-to-face interviews were conducted when appropriate; however, in some cases this was not possible based on the participants' location. Due to the geographical location of the participants, some of the interviews occurred via telephone.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership succession of IB PYP leaders, onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to the IB PYP leaders. The focus was on IB PYP schools in the Mid-West United States experiencing a change in leadership within the last ten years. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews to explore the perceptions of the IB PYP principals regarding leadership succession, onboarding, and effective leadership traits. The interviews were transcribed, and the transcriptions and recordings were analyzed, coded, and themed. The process was then repeated. As information was coded and analyzed, the following themes emerged:

1. The lack of formal structure of leadership succession and onboarding processes

2. Perceived and modified traits of an effective IB PYP leader

3. Differences between an IB PYP model and a traditional model of school

All the participants in the study were given pseudonym, so their quotes could not be traced back to them or to their school. Table 4.1 outlines each participant and his/her pseudonym.

Table 4.1

Qualitative Research Study Participants

Participant	Pseudonym
Participant 1	Lori
Participant 2	Nancy
Participant 3	Abbie
Participant 4	Ashley
Participant 5	Mary
Participant 6	Rhonda

Note. The participants of the study by pseudonyms.

Lack of Formal Structure of Leadership Succession and Onboarding

The lack of participation in a formal structure of leadership succession and onboarding processes was evident in narratives of the participants. One of the six participants shared, she experienced a formal leadership succession process that included IB experience prior to assuming the role of IB PYP principal. All participants' first role as a principal was at an IB PYP school. The training most participated in was on the job training and taking it upon themselves to learn more about the IB PYP model. Two participants shared they were involved in an aspiring principal program and had prior trainings on effective leadership practices, but none focused on IB leadership. Table 4.2 outlines the leadership succession plans strengths and weaknesses experienced by the leaders.

Table 4.2

Leadership Succession Models as Experienced by the Participants

Strengths	Weaknesses
Aspiring Administrators	Lack of not being involved in an official plan
Personal focus and goal development	Learning from mistakes
Understanding of the district as a whole	Lack of focus for students with special needs

The participants' perceptions on leadership succession planning varied based on their prior school experiences. One participant, Lorie, shared her leadership succession experiences as an assistant principal. She voiced her former principal practiced a team decision approach, which helped her transition into the IB PYP principalship. Lori shared the following experiences about leadership succession:

> I was with a principal who believes in team decision making and not really in a dictatorship, so I learned very quickly, how to process more collaboratively, and how to bring in teacher leadership and do those kinds of things through his mentorship.

Aspiring principal training was a practice mentioned. One participant attended a formal aspiring administrator training in the district, even though it was not directly related to IB PYP philosophy; however, it did address leadership. Ashley shared her experience:

> Not necessarily though IB, but I did, our school district offers leadership training that I did two years before deciding to get my Masters in Administration. Like an aspiring administrator's type, focus on goals and where you see yourself in however many years, you know how you see being a leader in our school district basically.

Participants also voiced personal experiences of not having a structured leadership succession planning process. Lori shared:

> That you're learning through mistakes, by making mistakes. You try and do everything right and then you find out afterwards that oh you messed that one up and you messed this one. We just don't have a lot of things in place to help assistant principals gain the knowledge and the skills before you are actually doing it. I think what our district expects us to do and expects me to do as a leader, is start building the capacity in teachers now. Because by when they get the job, you really have to already be ready of the job.

The participants shared the district trainings were not focused toward the IB PYP philosophy. Two of the six participants had IB PYP experience in an IB PYP school prior to assuming the role as IB PYP principal, one as a teacher and instructional leader, and the other as an assistant principal (Nancy and Ashley). These two participants received IB training prior to assuming the role as principal, only because they were at the school prior to assuming the role as IB PYP principal. The participant who was a teacher at the IB PYP school had more IB training than the participant who served as an assistant principal. Two of the participants became principals prior to the school becoming an authorized IB PYP school and were involved in the decision for the school to become an authorized IB PYP school (Abbie and Mary). Two principals had no IB experience before entering the positions (Lori and Rhonda). All participants were in districts with IB and traditional model schools.

An overarching view that resonated was having experience in an IB PYP school prior to assuming the role as IB PYP principal. This supports the finding from Day et al. (2015) that the leaders who had previous PYP teaching experience were better able to assure fidelity than those with no PYP experience. Five of the participants voiced the need for the leader experience the IB PYP program first-hand by working at the IB school prior to assuming the leadership role as principal. The following quote outlined the perception of the principal with the most IB PYP experience:

> I can't imagine having come into this role having not been a part of the school for a number of years. I feel like that would have been really challenging to understand the whole philosophy of IB. Because I lived it as a teacher and as a curriculum resource instructor, I feel like I can better serve and help the teachers because of that, it's so beneficial to be able to be in the school system as a teacher and then stepping out of it and taking a different role, to truly understand, to be able to support. Because it is a big philosophy I would see a lot of challenges on somebody coming in who's never been a part of an IB school. (Ashley)

The need for IB PYP experience prior to assuming the role as the principal, was highlighted by the participants who had no IB PYP experience. Lori voiced her perception:

> I think at the very least, it would be good to be in the school for a year or two before you take over as leadership, so you truly know what is going on. You honestly, I think the best thing you would need is someone who has been an assistant principal in an IB school or a teacher in an IB school.

Even with limited IB PYP experience, the concern was still evident as Nancy outlined with the following:

> Probably my biggest wish would be that I had more, experience with it, you know, being a principal after just two years of IB and one training, I do wonder sometimes if that was enough, to really be an effective leader.

By having IB PYP experience, it was viewed as valuable when establishing trust with the staff. The trust of teachers was voiced by the participant with the most IB PYP experience; Ashley shared her perception through the following:

> I feel like teachers also have trust in me because they know that I've been through it. They know that I've gone through the whole process and I'm not just putting expectations on them without having the experience in the classroom. And I hear that from teachers, well we appreciate that you've done this, you understand.

All participants stated participating in a leadership succession plan would have been beneficial as they transitioned into the role as IB PYP principal. All the participants believed the transition into a leadership role would have been more successful if they participated in a structured leadership succession plan, including IB philosophy prior to assuming the role as principal.

The interview process for the IB PYP principal was discussed. Of the four participants who entered the principalship in an authorized IB PYP school, only one participant shared their interview had questions addressing the philosophy and practices of an IB PYP school. One participant, Abbie, felt that candidates applying who do not have IB experience, need to have

information about IB and their interview needs to be about IB philosophy and the IB PYP

practices.

IB PYP training was another factor that emerged in which all participants had received

through IB. Only two of the six participants attended IB PYP training prior to becoming an IB

PYP principal. All participants believed training must be ongoing for the leader to continue to

grow and be effective. Mary addressed her view of continual training through the following,

"training, so even though you start it, you've got to keep up with it; it's got to be continual, it is

not like a one and done thing."

The official school district sponsored onboarding was provided to participants after

assuming the role as IB PYP principal, which was very specific to the district practices. One of

the six participants interviewed stated she had participated in a formal onboarding process when

becoming an IB PYP principal. The onboarding process varied with some of the participants,

some mentioned mentors from district administration and attendance at district principal

meetings to gain an overview of the culture and climate of the district. The one principal who

participated in onboarding processes listed the following as part of her school's onboarding plan:

collaboration meeting with others, team leadership meetings, district principal meetings, IB

training and visiting other IB schools. A common point emerged from all participants was to be

self-driven to read and to learn on their own about the IB PYP philosophy. Mary shared her

viewpoint about onboarding:

> The framework is so detailed and so developed, but there is a lot to know there, so for
> me, that base was a real struggle and something that I was having to go and do a lot of
> work on my own, which is probably why I learned it so well, but there was just a lot to
> know, to even be able to converse about PYP.

The various onboarding experiences yielded the following strengths and weaknesses of the onboarding plans. As shown in Table 4.3 are the responses of strengths and weaknesses identified by the participants.

Table 4.3

Onboarding Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Understood district expectations	Lack of learning about educational experiences through situations
Collaboration with school team	No onboarding
Visiting other IB schools	Lack of understanding procedures or guidelines

Visiting other IB PYP schools was revealed through the interview processes as being a beneficial part of learning about IB PYP. Five of the six participants visited other IB PYP schools after assuming the role as principal. Many of the principals visited other IB PYP schools in connection with attending an officially sponsored IB training. One participant shared, she connected with IB PYP schools through skype and social media. By connecting and visiting other IB PYP schools, it helped the new principals with no IB PYP experience affirm the practices of their school. One of the benefits of visiting other IB PYP schools was revealed from a principal with no prior IB PYP experience. Lori shared:

> We were reassured about all of the things that we were doing that were right, we actually felt like we had probably as much, if not more going on with our school as far as true ownership for the curriculum, and the way our units were built, and we got to see how different schools personalize PYP, it is not just a canned program.

Another participant, with no prior IB experience, believed that visiting other IB PYP schools was where she learned the most about the IB PYP. Nancy shared:

> Visiting other schools and talking to the leadership, teachers, and students, was where we probably learned the most, and really kind of got the whole awareness that this is what

our school was doing, and that it looked like what other schools were doing as well. It kind of helped us buy into the philosophy.

Authorized IB PYP schools are required to have a staff member designated as an IB PYP coordinator. Through the data analysis, the IB PYP coordinator was identified as a key figure in helping the new leader transition into the IB PYP school. The importance of the IB PYP coordinator was confirmed by Mary with the following view:

> Having a strong PYP coordinator is key, especially for a principal, because there's a lot of a time that she's working those pieces and then comes to us for support or guidance in implementation. I know we rely on her heavily, I often wonder what in the world we would do if our IB coordinator left.

In addition to the IB PYP coordinator, the participants voiced the benefits of reaching out to grade level team leaders and school leadership teams as the new leaders' transition into the IB PYP school. Lori stated how she depended on the grade level team leaders with the following, "So in each grade level I would rely on the teachers that were most seasoned and kind of knew the program."

Relying on the PYP staff to assist the new leader transition into the school practices was evident during the analysis. Collaboration was a common practice in all the schools. Ashley shared her viewpoint of collaboration as she transitioned into leadership:

> Team lead, our teaching and learning specialists, our gifted coordinator, all the principals, literacy coach, our PYP coordinator, all meet together every week and discuss different areas and things that we need to be focusing on to support our school as an IB school.

Since participants did not engage in a structured leadership and onboarding plan, the participants shared their perspectives of what should be included in an effective IB PYP leadership succession and onboarding plan. The participants' responses of an effective IB PYP leadership succession and onboarding plan are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Leadership Succession and Onboarding

Leadership Succession Plan should include for aspiring IB PYP principals	Onboarding Plan should include
Philosophically believe in IB PYP	Scope and sequence with very specific goals outlining the onboarding plan. The scope and sequence would include a visual framework with key vocabulary and definitions identified.
Aspiring Administrators Program	Connect with IB PYP schools, IB leaders, and visit multiple campuses
Leadership succession scope and sequence identifying goals and required training	IB Training
Visit other IB PYP schools	Assigned IB mentor and school to collaborate
IB Training	Team collaboration within the school setting
Intern Principal	
Official IB Mentor	

It was evident from the research analysis the lack of formal structure in leadership succession and onboarding plans. Rhonda stated her beliefs on leadership succession planning, "I just wish there'd kind of been one". All participants believed their transition into the PYP principal role would have been more successful if they would have experienced a structured plan focusing on leadership and the IB PYP philosophy.

Effective Leadership Traits

Participants were asked when they were hired as the IB PYP principal what leadership characteristics they possessed, their qualifications, and what leadership traits they changed or had to eliminate after assuming the role as an IB PYP principal. Table 4.5 is a combination of the

participants' responses to their perceived leadership traits, qualifications, and perceived

leadership traits or practices that were changed or eliminated after assuming the roles as IB PYP

principal.

Table 4.5

Leadership Traits, Qualifications, and Changed Traits

Leadership Traits possessed when hired	Qualifications When assuming the position	Perceived leadership traits or practices that were changed	Perceived leadership traits or practices that were eliminated
Open-minded/Flexible	Experience in elementary and junior high	Not so concrete in addressing the standards	Being data driven and standards focused
Servants Heart/Humble	Building Relationships	To trust the teachers	Amount of control
Innovative Mindset	Prior experience at the school	Embrace more freedom for students	Drop preconceived notions and be open to IB PYP
Risk taking	Extensive training in literacy foundation	Shift from peer to leader	
Support of teachers/develop people	New ideas	Identify the experts to support, can't do it all	
Experience	IB training (2 who were at IB Schools)	Become a cheerleader for teachers	
People person (relationships)	I can do this attitude	Become more of a self-learner	
Self-learner	Love a challenge		
Driven and organized/ Fixer	Love kids especially those with personal barriers		
Role Model	Instructional coach		
Culture of Learning-Collaboration, communicator	Advanced Educational Degree		
IB Learner Profile			

Participants believed when they assumed the role as an IB PYP principal they were

effective leaders and shared common leadership traits of being supportive, belief in the IB

philosophy, self-learner, open-minded and other IB learner profile traits. Participants identified

effective leadership traits an IB PYP principal should possess based on the IB PYP philosophy

and their personal experience. The following list reflects the combined traits from the

participants' perceptions:

1. Collaborative leader
2. Empower teachers
3. Reflective
4. Open minded/Adaptable
5. Honoring/valuing teachers
6. Trusting
7. Looks at data and leads teachers
8. Self-learner
9. Create a climate everyone is willing to share/ team player
10. Provide opportunities for teachers and students
11. Communicator/ Listener
12. Collaborative
13. Risk Taker
14. Global perspective
15. Be firm and be able to say does it fit the IB philosophy

The attribute of being an open-minded leader was a frequent leadership trait identified.

Rhonda, a principal with no prior IB experience, shared her perspective of a leadership trait

needed for an IB PYP principal:

> I think for a PYP administrator, I think deep down if he or she does not truly believe in
> the value of global perspective and a progressive open-minded perspective, it will be very
> difficult to be a leader in an authentic way, in a PYP school. But for PYP if we're really
> going to embrace international mindedness, every member of the staff and faculty truly
> has to believe in that.

Expanding on the viewpoint of being an open-minded leader, Lori shared:

> But in order to be all of what IB stands for, you really have to have an open mind to
> things that are just maybe a little bit different and outside of the box of what you're used
> to doing. You have to empower teachers to own their curriculum because the teachers
> have to be willing to let students own the work, which means that teachers are not doing

all the same thing all of the time, you have to be someone that is reflective, and that values reflection. That is the thing that is easiest to skip over, but it is a huge part of what you do with IB because they have got to reflect on the units, so they can improve the next year.

The IB learner profile attributes include being an inquirer, knowledgeable, thinker, communicator, caring, principled, open-minded, risk-taker, balanced, and reflective ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009) were connected by one participant as she described her effective leadership traits. Ashley, who was a former IB teacher and curriculum resource instructor felt the learner profile was her identified leadership traits. Ashley explained, "I mean, that's the great thing about the learner profile, I mean it fits really who we all want our children to be that way, but that is who we need to be also."

When participants identified what characteristics/traits they had to modify or change after assuming the role as an IB PYP principal, they identified control as one overarching trait. Participants with no prior IB experience felt control was one of the main practices eliminated. Nancy shared the following:

> Just trusting that they are able to put all these pieces together that I haven't had actual experience in. If I had been a teacher here, I would understand how to do it, but I wasn't, so I've had to really trust that their experience is leading them, so that had to change or give up. It's something I had to embrace, because you can walk in classrooms and I love seeing the kids working on projects.

Two participants who were involved with the school's transition into becoming an authorized IB PYP school identified they had to modify their amount of control. Mary, the participant with the most IB PYP principal experience shared her viewpoint:

> You can't be a controlling person, though, I mean, I don't think so I think even as a principal, you've gotta have some flexibility. I think control and collaboration are huge. Because if we're really asking teachers for reflectiveness and student choice and really about conceptual teaching, it's not about always adult control. It really becomes about collaboration, in order for all those things to happen.

Abbie expanded on the issue of leadership control. She believed the control should be with the

teachers, not the principal. Abbie shared:

> I think that you as an IB principal have to let go of control. The control is 100% with the teachers, as long as they are doing things that are growing students and you can see the evidence of learning, you kind of have to let go of that. You know, so it's pretty much modeling for them.

It was evident from the analysis the participants had experienced change in their

perceived leadership traits and practices once they assumed the role of IB PYP principal. The

obvious change or elimination was control of ownership to staff and students. The participants'

willingness to change helped the participant's transition from a traditional school model into an

IB PYP school model.

Traditional Versus IB School

The differences of an IB PYP school and a traditional model were the third theme that

emerged during the analysis. All participants interviewed had previous experience in a

traditional school model. Participants shared their perspectives on the difference between a

traditional and IB PYP school model. From the analysis four overarching differences became

evident: 1) curriculum and instruction, 2) learning environment, 3) ownership by staff and

students, and 4) barriers.

Curriculum and instruction in an IB PYP school focuses on transdisciplinary units of

study constructed around six transdisciplinary themes ("Making the PYP Happen," 2009).

Participants shared the curriculum and instruction was one main difference in an IB PYP school

and a traditional school. The key differences voiced by participants included the conceptual

based curriculum teaching, equitable education, and student engagement. Conceptual,

transdisciplinary curriculum is the foundational piece of the PYP unit development. Mary, a

principal who helped the school transition into an authorized IB PYP school, shared her thoughts

about a conceptually designed curriculum through the following:

> When you go into PYP and IB, it is, I mean it's mind-blowing, especially if you haven't really thought conceptually, never taught conceptually. It is deep and it's exhausting and it twists your brain, but then once you make the shift, it's hard to think back the other way.

An equitable education for all students was another point conveyed by Mary based on her

school experience as the leader. Mary realized the school's IB PYP curriculum afforded students

an equitable education and explained her view through the following statement:

> The curriculum and the overall program of a school is the equitability. I know even though I have several 3rd grade teachers no matter what class I put a child in I know that they're going to have an equitable experience. I don't have to worry about Ms. Smith this year is going to do this play and do this field trip and have this experience, where Ms. Jones next door might not do any of that. As a principal I think that has been one of the best benefits, that I just know that my team is really tight.

Student engagement in the classrooms was another notable characteristic shared by

participants. An IB PYP school promotes an inquiry approach to learning for students ("Making

the PYP Happen," 2009). The following participant explained the various ways students are

engaged in their learning. Mary explained the excitement she sees in her school, she shared:

> All the time, we've got kids that are so excited, they're going home, they're doing their own research projects, and they're coming back. Ms. Smith, you know we noticed that they were mowing over there and they're ruining the habitat, so can we write letters to the grounds people to tell them to start pruning the habitat?

Nancy shared her viewpoint of her prior educational experience in a traditional school to

her experience in her current IB PYP school through the following:

> They're more engaged in their learning here; they are more engaged because they own their learning. They get to talk about things. They get to ask questions about things that they want to learn about, and the teachers are really good about, I mean that's what IB is about is inquiry-based, inquiry-driven, and so I think I see a happier learner here.

The school's learning environment was another difference conveyed by the principals.

Participants discussed the learning environment from both views of the teacher and the learner.

The PYP learning environment for teachers supports collaboration, creating units of study, and

reflection of the units of study. Ashley shared her experience and belief on establishing the

teaching learning environment. Ashley shared:

> I have to be able to help create that environment for the teachers too, that they need to have an open mind, that their colleague may do it a little bit different, it doesn't mean that they are doing it wrong or they're doing it wrong, but it is, just the uniqueness of being an IB school. You all have the, we have the same philosophy, we have the same goals, end goals, but creating that environment where we have the flexibility to look at what our students need most within our classroom. It's not a cookie cutter experience.

A part of the teachers' learning environment was the focus on the establishment and

practice of the effective collaboration by teachers. Collaboration included openness, support,

honesty and willingness to learn from other teachers. Abbie shared her viewpoint of the

collaborative learning environment in the following:

> Create a climate where everybody's willing to share their successes because sometimes you have that climate where it seems like people are bragging instead of sharing out, and we've tried lots of different things in order to allow teachers to feel confident in saying, "you know what, I did this, and it was good" instead of someone saying. "Oh well you did that again." It's, we have a climate where, "tell me more, I want to know, I want to do it too." And so I think that's another important piece. I think teachers 100% need affirmation all the time because I think that again they feel like they're not doing it sometimes and you know, "I'm not doing IB". Well you are. Look at this.

The student learning environment was also addressed as a difference between IB PYP

schools and traditional schools. The IB PYP school supports the student learning environment

where students can develop the IB learner profile. Rhonda further expanded on the outcome of

the learner profile to be internationally minded in her statement:

> But I quickly realized, and what I now say to them when you talk about PYP, when you're looking at IB in an elementary setting, the most beautiful thing about it is that it truly is for everyone, every student can and will benefit from a true PYP experience. Which is why I think it's a shame that it's not just how we do business in every school.

Because it should be, because this is what's good for kids. It's so clear, when you walk into the classroom; this is what good educational settings for kids should be like.

The fourth difference between the IB PYP model versus the traditional model that materialized was ownership of students and teachers. Through the school's transdisciplinary curriculum and focus on student action, IB PYP students develop ownership of their learning. Abbie detailed her PYP school experience with the following, "I just love the way that we're training students to think outside of themselves, think globally, and really be self-learners and inquirers." Lori shared her viewpoint, in order for student ownership to exist in the school the principal must have an ownership mindset. Lori stated, "I think a characteristic is having someone who believes in student ownership, because it's really all about student agency."

Student choice is one way for students to exhibit ownership of their learning. Mary's example of fourth-grade summative assessment is an example of student choice. Mary identified a personal and relevant example of student ownership:

> All I can even say is our performance today. It was totally student choice. As part of the Sharing the Planet summative, they decided to take the book and put it to a performance, so they got to choose whether or not they wanted to be a part of the art and the set and they wanted to be the music, and the speaking. If they wanted to be the action and the dancing, and so we totally rearranged schedules for two weeks. Everybody got to choose if they wanted to go, where they wanted to go, they came up with the script; they come up with the art pieces. I've been super nervous, I am not gonna lie, it was very risk taking and it was very kid driven. It's taken us a long time to get there.

Equally important in an IB PYP school is teacher ownership through a distributed leadership mindset. Teachers are continually collaborating, creating, and reflecting on their practices. Because of this learning environment, teachers' experiences lead to ownership in their work. For the participants who assumed the role of principal with no prior IB experience, they faced some questions from the staff. The schools' staffs were concerned about remaining an IB

school. Lori shared, "Faculty really had ownership for it. So it ran itself without really me doing anything for a while because the teachers were so bought into PYP."

Participants conveyed teacher ownership was an integrated part of the schools' culture. Even though the district's direction for the school was provided to the principals, two of the participants shared that was the faculty's biggest fear, and the staff continued to ask, are we still going be IB? Rhonda shared her response to her staff, "This is an amazing school; I'm not here to change things. I'm here to work collaboratively with you all to continue doing the good work that you're already doing." Nancy expanded the viewpoint and her experience with the importance of teacher ownership through the following comment, "It is a very personalized school. Not only with the teachers, own their curriculum, they own what they are teaching kids. That's one think I love is the teachers own what they're doing."

Throughout the data collection and analysis process, participants described barriers they had experienced as an IB PYP principal. The feeling of isolation of not having another IB PYP school to connect and collaborate, was a factor the principals experienced. Abbie expanded the view of isolation when she shared:

> There's nobody. If I called a school in another district and wanted to ask them about "Hey how are you doing your schedules to help teachers to be able to really dig deep into inquiry, yet build those foundational skills, they're not going to be able to answer that. I would love to have somebody that is that mentor that could say, "You know what, our central idea, we did this and it fit so well into our scope and sequence. Every IB school I'm sure goes through some of the same struggles and some of the same pieces with teachers, so just having that person to run ideas off of I think is invaluable.

Mary shared the same sentiment in her view of isolation. Mary explained, "Isolation from not having another school. There are no peers in another school or another location it is just not a reality for this PYP school."

Another barrier voiced by Rhonda was the community's lack of knowledge and understanding of the PYP school. Rhonda shared:

> We have all kinds of accolades and there are a lot of people that live in our county who have school age children that have never heard of us. That's my biggest hurdle as a principal. If you're sitting at this amazing school with these great test scores, diverse classes, we're meeting the needs, if people don't know about us, that's a red flag to me that our district hasn't gotten the word out more.

The barrier of staff mobility was experienced and shared by the participants. Teachers in an IB PYP school are required to have IB training. When staff changes occur, it brings up the issue of training of staff. Ashley shared her perspective on teacher mobility, "The mobility of teachers I think is a big piece, the turnover rate has been challenging."

All participants in the study work in publicly funded schools. Integrating the IB philosophy and practices into a public school was a concern identified by participants. Finding the balance between the public education requirements and IB practices were addressed by Abbie with the following, "Public education is a very hard line to follow, because there are those requirements and there are those pieces that we have to show data that we're doing, it is just finding the balance."

Ashley shared her experiences and the challenges of connecting her school and the district requirements.

> I think the other challenge I would see is that we have our district curriculum and we've had to be very creative in the way that we tie in our district goals and expectations for the curriculum along with the IB concepts.

Nancy shared the perspective of the differences she experienced between her district and her school, "You have got IB, you have got what the district wants you to do, which are not always they're definitely separate sometimes."

The funding for the IB PYP was a barrier experienced by all participants. Staff professional development through IB training was one of the main barriers identified. Rhonda shared:

> Obviously funding for professional development. But the funding for training, for IB training is really, really pricey. So the price of the IB training is pretty prohibitive, and we'd love to send more and do more, but we just financially can't.

All participants believed IB training is essential, and felt ongoing training was important for the implementation. Nancy shared her viewpoint in the following, "If a district's gonna be committed to having an IB program, I do wish that they would make sure their administrators had even yearly IB training."

Even though the participants voiced concern about the many barriers they faced as an IB PYP principal, there were leaders who were working to eliminate barriers and to find ways to support their teachers and students.

Summary

The participants all concluded being involved in a formal leadership succession plan and onboarding process focusing on the IB PYP philosophy and practices would have made the leadership transition more successful. The participants outlined the components of a scope and sequence including experience in the IB PYP school, IB training, visiting IB schools, mentorship, and school collaboration would be key to a successful plan. The difference in the traditional model and the IB PYP model created many learning experiences, as well as barriers. Because of the IB PYP approach to learning, an effective leader must be a learner who is open-minded and willing to give up control for distribution of leadership and teacher empowerment.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

This dissertation was a phenomenological qualitative study that attempted to relate the IB PYP principals view on their leadership succession, onboarding processes, and effective leadership traits in an IB PYP school. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine leadership succession of the Mid-West United States IB PYP leaders, onboarding processes experienced by the new leaders, and to identify the perceived effective leadership traits unique to the IB PYP leaders. The conclusions from this study are aligned with the research questions. The research questions were as followed:

1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?

2. How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?

3. What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

A semi-structured interview protocol was used for the six IB PYP participants. This chapter will summarize the findings from the analysis of the semi-structured interview process to determine themes addressing the research questions. The data analysis revealed three themes and conclusions: 1) the lack of formal structure of leadership succession and onboarding processes, 2) the perceived and modified traits of an effective IB PYP leader, and 3) the differences between an IB PYP model and a traditional model of school. The findings and conclusions are followed by the researcher's recommendations.

Interpretation of Findings

  Research question *1. How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession*?

Principals of PYP schools cannot rely on formal leadership succession plans and must be

prepared to learn on their own. The first major finding of this research question was

participants' lack of experience with a structured formal leadership succession plan addressing

the process of becoming an IB PYP leader. All six participants' first role as a principal was as an

IB PYP principal. One conclusion found, it cannot be assumed new principals will be

completely prepared to assume the leadership role of an IB PYP school when hired as the

principal.

  Another determined conclusion was aspiring leaders cannot assume schools or school

districts will provide a structured formal leadership succession plan. For the participants in this

study, only one had experience in a formal leadership succession plan prior to assuming the role

as an IB PYP principal. She was also the principal with the most IB PYP experience as a teacher

and curriculum resource instructor prior to becoming the principal. For the remaining

participants in the study, their leadership succession planning was based on their previous career

experiences and educational experiences, not a structured formal leadership succession. Another

conclusion from the findings was principals had to learn on their own in order to lead their

schools. All participants were also viewed as self-starters, to initiate and to continue to learn

about the IB PYP philosophy. During the interview, one participant shared her continuous

learning by referencing the book, *Making the PYP Happen* is always on her desk, and it is used

many times as a reference (Nancy).

  Research question 2. *How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while*

onboarding into the new position?

Onboarding practices focused on district goals and little is usually provided for new IB PYP principals, so the new principal will have to rely on the PYP staff. A major finding was the lack of formal onboarding processes related to IB PYP philosophy and practices. The participants who did experience onboarding practices shared their onboarding was directly related to the district goals, not necessarily the IB PYP philosophy or goals. The onboarding practices ranged from the participants attending district meetings, to mentorships by district administrators. One participant was able to shadow the previous principal for a few weeks prior to assuming the role. The participant with the most IB PYP experience described her transition of onboarding into the role as principal as one with collaborative dialogue with her leadership team and mentoring from the lead principal. A conclusion could be made that new IB PYP principals cannot assume they will experience a formal structured onboarding plan that is directly related to the IB PYP philosophy. One key finding was after the participants assumed the role as IB PYP principal, they all attended IB PYP training, and five of the six participants visited other IB PYP schools. The participants shared this was a valuable experience in developing an understanding of the IB PYP philosophy and practices. The participants believed the IB PYP training must to be ongoing, and not a one-and-done type training experience. Three of the six participants received only one formal IB PYP training. Another conclusion revealed the IB PYP training may not be continuous at the school. Also, without a structured formal IB PYP onboarding plan, a new principal cannot assume visiting and connection with other PYP schools, and formal IB PYP training will be a part of the onboarding plan.

An additional major finding focused on the IB PYP experience prior to assuming the role as IB PYP principal. The analysis of the participants' responses revealed the importance of experience in an IB PYP school was a key factor in a successful transition as an IB PYP

principal. The principal with the most IB experience had a more successful transition into the

leadership role, due to her understanding of the IB PYP philosophy and practices as compared to

the participants with no IB PYP experience. The three participants with no IB PYP experience,

all shared having the prior experience in the IB PYP setting would have made an easier transition

into a leadership role. A conclusion can be made is principals with IB PYP experience prior to

assuming the role as principal have a better transition and less of a learning curve than those with

little or no IB PYP experience. Another conclusion derived is the principals who were involved

with the process of becoming an IB PYP school were self-learners and devoted to the IB

philosophy. One of the participants, Nancy, best illustrated the need for IB PYP experience for

the PYP principal in the following statement:

> If I had come in an as assistant principal and my principal had been here a while, I think
> it would've been a much smoother process. I think I would've learned more about IB. IB
> is a philosophy not a program, and I think you have to understand it. It comes from
> experience not just reading a book.

One of the studies' findings was the importance of the leaders' reliance on the IB PYP

coordinator in the transition into the leadership role of the IB PYP principal. All participants

shared the IB PYP coordinator was a crucial part of their transition process, especially for those

participants with no IB PYP experience. One conclusion made was the IB PYP coordinator is a

valuable contributor of the PYP school and is a critical part of a PYP principal's transition.

      Research question 3. *What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders*

articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?

All participants agreed that traditional leadership traits are not the same as what is needed

in an IB PYP school and most leaders will have to modify their leadership styles. Participants

shared their experiences and perspectives on effective leadership traits needed to be an effective

IB PYP leader. Through this research study, it was consistently found participants' effective

leadership traits included being an open-minded leader who is a risk-taker, flexible, and a self-learner. A conclusion from this analysis constructed is not all individuals assuming the role of IB PYP principal will possess these identified effective leadership traits.

A major finding was some of the perceived effective leadership traits identified by the participants when they began in the position had to be modified or eliminated after experiences as an IB PYP principal. The participants voiced these modifications or eliminations occurred due to the practices in the school and the IB PYP philosophy. A conclusion derived was even though the participants perceived they had effective traits and qualifications, they still had to change, or eliminate some of those identified traits because of the IB practices and philosophy. All participants revealed the amount of control was a trait they had to eliminate in their leadership practice. With the elimination of control, there came a large amount of trust for the staff. This did not mean there was not a focus on IB PYP philosophy and practices, to the contrary, the principals must provide a learning environment supportive of teacher and student ownership.

Traditional Versus IB PYP School

A common theme throughout the data analysis was the differences between a traditional model and an IB PYP model of schools. One of the major findings was all participants shared their perceptions on the differences in a traditional and IB PYP school in the following areas: 1) curriculum and instruction, 2) learning environment, 3) ownership by students and teachers, and 4) barriers. Due to the differences voiced by the participants, there were obstacles a PYP principal had to overcome. A conclusion drawn was some IB PYP principals may not have the experiences to be able to overcome the obstacles, and will need additional support during the leadership transition.

The difference in curriculum and instruction in an IB PYP school and traditional school was another finding addressed by the participants. The IB PYP curriculum is founded on transdisciplinary and conceptually based teaching and can present a shift in thinking for principals, who have no prior experience with this approach to curriculum and instruction. A conclusion made is the principals with no prior IB PYP experience may have a greater learning curve with the understanding of the curriculum and instruction. Another conclusion was the leaders who have IB PYP experience prior to assuming the principal role had a better understanding of the curriculum and instruction.

The IB PYP learning environment and the practices were identified in the differences between a traditional model and IB PYP model. The main focus of the PYP learning environment is the development of the traits of the IB learner profile and for a learner to become an internationally minded individual. Another determined conclusion was all authorized IB PYP schools focused on utilizing the IB learner profile. In support of this requirement, a PYP principal must be open and supportive of these traits in the learning environment. Another conclusion was the leaders who have IB PYP experience prior to assuming the principal role had a better understanding of the components of an effective PYP learning environment.

A finding from the study revealed all the schools' learning environments supported student and teacher ownership. Student ownership was evident by students having a choice in their learning and supported students taking action. Teacher ownership is through the development and refinement of curriculum and instruction. It can be concluded a new leader will need to be mindful of the importance and practices of ownership of students and teachers in the IB PYP setting.

All participants voiced barriers they had experienced when assuming the role as IB PYP principal. Another conclusion was barriers will always exist, and the new leader should have an awareness of this and seek support and practices to help eliminate the barriers.

Recommendations for Practice

One recommendation is for schools and/or school districts to develop a leadership succession plan intentionally focused on developing an effective IB PYP leader. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) identified the importance of a school/school district planning for succession of leadership. Fink and Brayman (2006) agreed if principal succession is not planned, there can be negative effects on school performance. The district and schools have already invested and committed time and finances in the development of staff and the school for the successful implementation of the PYP philosophy and practices. In order for IB PYP schools to create sustainable leaders, school districts with authorized IB schools should be committed to implementing a leadership succession plan. This plan should include the following: an Aspiring Administrators Program focusing on the IB philosophy and beliefs, visiting other IB PYP schools, networking with other IB leaders, attend IB PYP training, and establish an IB PYP mentor. By preparing the leader and establishing an IB network, this would help eliminate the feeling of isolation of the new IB PYP principal

Another recommendation is creating a pipeline of potential leaders through an Aspiring Administrators Program. To help maintain the integrity and the school's performance and practices, a school or district should focus on identifying teachers and other staff who exhibit potential or a desire to step into the role as principal, therefore creating a pipeline of leaders with IB PYP experience. Harrell (2016) supported the view of identifying internal candidates early on and to begin preparing them to fill the positions.

In addition to the leadership succession plan including an Aspiring Administrators Program focusing on effective leadership skills, schools should consider sending future leaders to the IB effective leaders training. The IB Leadership training focuses on seven interdependent intelligences: 1) strategic intelligence, 2) cultural intelligence, 3) entrepreneurial intelligence, 4) relational intelligence, 5) reflective intelligence, 6) heuristic intelligence, and 7) pedagogical intelligence (International Baccalaureate, 2018d). Another part of the Aspiring Administrators Program is the network and connections with other IB leaders and to visit IB PYP schools. Collaborative dialogue and observation can add a new perspective.

Another recommendation is schools and/or school districts should consider including in their leadership succession plan is a refinement of onboarding with the focus specific to the IB PYP philosophy. Based on participant responses, an effective onboarding plan would include: visiting and connecting with other IB PYP schools, ongoing IB training, and connection with other IB leaders.

The one area within this recommendation which may present difficulty for the district or school would be the role of mentors for the new principals. Mentorship has been identified as a successful method included in onboarding of a new principal. Hargreaves (2009) outlined the need for creating a coach for the new leader. If at all possible a mentor within the district who has IB experience would be preferred. Due to the nature of the IB PYP philosophy and practices, many new leaders may experience a lack of connection with other new principals. A formalized mentorship program may help to eliminate the disconnect and at the same time present some challenges for finding mentors because of the number of authorized IB PYP schools in the United States. The schools or school districts networking with other IB PYP schools are crucial in connecting the new IB PYP principal with a practicing IB PYP principal.

However, seeking mentors from outside the district or state could also be another option for the new leader.

In addition to the recommendations on leadership succession and onboarding planning, it is a recommendation for the school district to reflect on their hiring practices for a leader in an IB PYP school. One hiring practice recommendation is for the perspective leader to visit the IB PYP school and observe the practices. This practice would provide feedback and insight about their observation to gain the candidates understanding. It would be a recommendation a new principal have an understanding of the PYP philosophy and practices, and if at all possible have experience in an IB PYP school. A principal having IB PYP experience was identified as a successful indicator for transitioning into the role as principal. Day, Townsend, Knight, and Richardson's (2015) study on PYP schools identified the leaders who had previous PYP teaching experience were better able to assure fidelity of the program than those with no PYP experience. This study's findings also support this belief. The one participant with prior IB experience as a teacher and curriculum specialists had an easier transition into the PYP principal position.

Another component of the hiring process is the qualifications and interviewing process. An interview tool to analyze the candidates' perspective on IB's effective leadership could include questions focused on the six components. The IB organization defines effective leaders as those who: 1) acknowledge and respond to the complex and interdependent nature of the environments in which they are required to demonstrate leadership; 2) understand how effective school leadership practices are in part determined by the diverse range of economic, political, organizational, cultural and pedagogical factors that impact directly or indirectly on school communities and, ultimately, student learning; 3) recognize the need to respond to complexity, interdependency, and uncertainty through a commitment to institutional and professional

learning and inquiry; 4) are committed learners, who are willing to challenge previously held assumptions and build individual and institutional knowledge and understanding; 5) model and support professional inquiry throughout the school community; and 6) are reflective and strategic, capable of leading people with varied values, beliefs and expectations in order to build communities of learners motivated to create a better world through education (International Baccalaureate, 2018d). Day et al. (2015) study supported the importance of the PYP leader. They refer to the leaders as the "guardian" of the school culture and is the key person in articulating the vision, supporting the staff and others in the implementation of the PYP.

A final recommendation is the establishment of an IB PYP collaborative networking system. The school/school district should connect with other IB PYP schools to provide an avenue for collaboration with principals and staff. This process would help to alleviate the feeling of isolation of the PYP principal.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is recommended by the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of IB PYP leadership onboarding practices and hiring practices of an IB PYP principal and IB PYP teachers. In addition, visiting the PYP schools would allow the opportunity to view various perspectives of the IB PYP leader. Lori shared her view on what traits a new IB PYP principal should possess. Lori shared:

> I think philosophically you have got to get someone who mirrors or really believes in what IB is all about, the whole child and connecting to the world, and teaching those skills that are really transformative and beyond standards.

The following outlines future research topics into two focus areas. The first focus area is the IB PYP hiring practices of key individuals including the PYP principal, PYP coordinator, and PYP teachers. The review and analysis of the school district's hiring practices for a PYP

principal would determine if consideration was given to having IB PYP experience. Also, did the principal's interviewing process include questions related to IB PYP philosophy and practices. In addition, did the principal candidates possess the traits of an effective IB PYP leader. The second hiring practice for research is the IB PYP coordinator. Day et al. (2015) study supported how the PYP leader utilized the coordinator position within the school environment. All participants in this study also voiced the importance of this person during their transition into leadership, as well as, supporting the PYP school. Similar to the research of the PYP principal, would IB PYP experience be a qualification needed for the position. Also, would the interview consist of the understanding of the IB PYP philosophy and practices. The third hiring practice to research would be the IB PYP teachers. Similarly, again, would consideration be given to teachers with IB PYP experience, and would questions address the PYP learning environment, learner profile, PYP curriculum, and reflective practices.

The second research focus area is leadership succession and onboarding. First is the leadership succession and onboarding for a PYP principal/head of school from a global perspective. The second is the leadership succession and onboarding processes for a principal/head of school for a public school versus a private school. Insights gained from this additional research could help to improve leadership succession and onboarding.

Conclusions

When a new leader assumes the role as PYP principal, it is not enough for the person to be ready to be a principal. The PYP practices presents additional challenges for individuals with not prior IB PYP experience. It is a recommendation for districts/schools to create a pipeline of potential IB PYP leaders, provide leadership training, or to hire principals who have IB PYP experience.

The participants from this study revealed barriers they experienced as they transitioned to their new position. During the onboarding process of a new leader assuming the role as PYP principal, additional and specific support should be provided. This support should include visiting other PYP schools, IB networking, IB PYP training, and an IB PYP mentor. The leadership qualities of an IB PYP principal differ from a traditional principal. The IB organization (International Baccalaureate, 2018d) defines effective leaders as those who:

- acknowledge and respond to the complex and interdependent nature of the environments in which they are required to demonstrate leadership
- understand how effective school leadership practices are in part determined by the diverse range of economic, political, organizational, cultural and pedagogical factors that impact directly or indirectly on school communities and, ultimately, student learning
- recognize the need to respond to complexity, interdependency and uncertainty through a commitment to institutional and professional learning and inquiry
- are committed learners, who are willing to challenge previously held assumptions and build individual and institutional knowledge and understanding
- model and support professional inquiry throughout the school community
- are reflective and strategic, capable of leading people with varied values, beliefs and expectations in order to build communities of learners motivated to create a better world through education (para.1).

The difference in leadership qualities and expectations may impact the district/school's hiring processes. In addition, if a new leader does not have an understanding of the PYP expectations, it could affect the leadership adjustment.

This qualitative study was designed to determine the types of leadership succession and onboarding experiences, and the perceived leadership traits experienced by the IB PYP leaders. The results of this study conveyed the participants' first-hand perceptions and experiences of their transition into the IB PYP leadership. This study reinforces the need for more specific training for leaders transitioning into an IB PYP school.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Research Questions and Interview Protocol
Opening Questions   • Describe how you got to this position?   • Tell me a little about your career path?   • What was your position prior to becoming an IB PYP principal?   • Did you have any prior experience in an IB PYP school? If so, tell me about the experience?   • How many years have you been in the role as principal?
Research Question   **How did new IB PYP leaders experience leadership succession?**
• Please describe any IB PYP training prior to assuming the role as principal of school.
• Tell me about the process you experienced to be hired as an IB PYP principal?
• Was there any other leadership in the building that supported you?
• Were you involved in any leadership succession processes to assume the role as a school leader? If so, describe the training? Strengths of training? Weaknesses of training?
• Were you given specific instructions about the direction/path for the school? If so, what was direction?
• Please describe the barriers or challenges you encountered?
• What do you feel an effective IB PYP leadership succession plan should include?
Research Question   **How did new IB PYP leaders describe their experiences while onboarding into the new position?**
• What do you feel an effective IB PYP leadership succession plan should include?

• What type of onboarding processes did you participate? Strengths? Weaknesses?
• What do you feel an effective IB PYP onboarding plan should include?
Research Question **What perceived changes in leadership traits did IB PYP leaders articulate as they experienced their own leadership succession?**
• When you were hired, describe what leadership characteristics you felt you possessed?
• When you were hired describe the qualifications did you felt you had when you took this position as IB PYP principal?
• What traits did you have to change or give up since becoming an IB principal?
• In your opinion, what effective leadership traits does a principal need to possess based on the IB PYP philosophy?

Ending Question:

Is there anything else you would like to share about your leadership succession or onboarding processes?

Appendix B

Leadership Succession and Onboarding Processes of Mid-West IB PYP Leaders
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Principal Researcher: Nandra Campbell
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Ed Bengtson

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
You are invited to participate in a research study about leadership succession and onboarding processes for IB PYP leaders. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are or have been a practicing principal in a public IB PYP school located in the mid-west.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Who is the Principal Researcher?
Nandra Campbell, Doctoral Candidate in Educational Leadership

Who is the Faculty Advisor?
Dr. Ed Bengtson, Assistant Professor Program Coordinator, Educational Leadership
ebengts@uark.edu
479-575-5092

What is the purpose of this research study?
The purpose of the study is to examine leadership succession of an IB PYP leader, onboarding processes experienced by new leaders, and identify effective leadership traits of IB PYP leaders. The focus is on IB PYP schools experiencing a change in leadership within the last five years.

Who will participate in this study?
Elementary Principals who have been principals or who are principals, in a Mid-West International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program within the time span of 2013- 2018.

What am I being asked to do?
Your participation will require the following:
Participating in an interview that will be recorded.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?
There are no anticipated risks to participating in the interview.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
The benefits of this include the contributions to field of knowledge in helping to prepare new IB PYP leaders.

How long will the study last?
The participant will participate in an one time interview lasting approximately an hour.

Will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this study?
No

Will I have to pay for anything?
No, there will be no cost associated with your participation in the study.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?
If you do not want to be in this study, you may refuse to participate. Also, you may refuse to participate at any time during the study. Your job will not be affected in any way if you refuse to participate.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
All information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law. All data collection will be transcribed and securely maintained for three years and then deleted at the end of the time frame. No respondent will be identified individually. All data will be reported and confidentiality will be protected.

Will I know the results of the study?
At the conclusion of the study you will have the right to request feedback about the results. You may contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Ed Bengtson at ebengts@uark.edu or Principal Researcher, Nandra Campbell ncampbel@uark.ed. You will receive a copy of this form for your files.

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?
You have the right to contact the Principal Researcher or Faculty Advisor as listed below for any concerns that you may have.

Nandra Campbell, Doctoral Candidate in Educational Leadership
ncampbel@uark.edu
479-530-5059

Dr. Ed Bengtson, Assistant Professor, Program Coordinator, Educational Leadership, University of Arkansas
ebengts@uark.edu
479-575-5092

You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.

Ro Windwalker, CIP
Institutional Review Board Coordinator
Research Compliance
University of Arkansas
109 MLKG Building
Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201
479-575-2208
irb@uark.edu

I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the investigator. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. I understand that no rights have been waived by signing the consent form. I have been given a copy of the consent form.

Participant Signature   Date

Investigator Signature   Date

Appendix C

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

To:	Mary Nandra Kay Campbell
From:	Douglas James Adams, Chair IRB Committee
Date:	12/06/2018
Action:	**Expedited Approval**
Action Date:	12/06/2018
Protocol #:	1811157395
Study Title:	Leadership Succession and Onboarding Processes of Mid-West IB PYP Leaders
Expiration Date:	12/02/2019
Last Approval Date:	

The above-referenced protocol has been approved following expedited review by the IRB Committee that oversees research with human subjects.

If the research involves collaboration with another institution then the research cannot commence until the Committee receives written notification of approval from the collaborating institution's IRB.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without Committee approval. Please submit continuation requests early enough to allow sufficient time for review. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study closure.

Adverse Events: Any serious or unexpected adverse event must be reported to the IRB Committee within 48 hours. All other adverse events should be reported within 10 working days.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, study personnel, or number of participants, please submit an amendment to the IRB. All changes must be approved by the IRB Committee before they can be initiated.

You must maintain a research file for at least 3 years after completion of the study. This file should include all correspondence with the IRB Committee, original signed consent forms, and study data.

cc: Ed Bengtson, Investigator