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Defining the roles and responsibilities of public school assistant principals in Virginia

David William Gaston

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**Defining the Roles and Responsibilities of
Public School Assistant Principals in
Virginia**

A Dissertation

Presented To

**The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia**

**In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements of the Degree
Doctor of Education**

by

David William Gaston

May 17, 2005

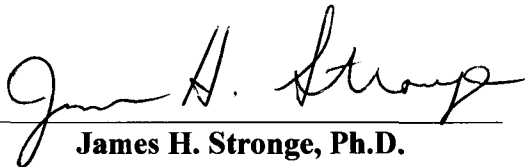
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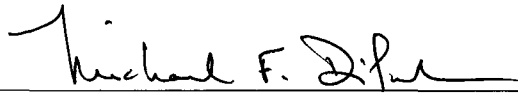
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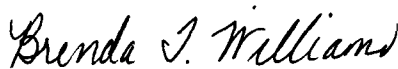
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Dedication

My doctoral program has stretched over eight years of my life. Through this time, I have had the opportunity to become the father of two wonderful sons, find rich opportunities for professional growth within three school divisions, and come into contact with professors, colleagues, and friends, who have made this entire journey satisfying beyond imagination.

My wife, Susan, and sons, John and Henry, have been a source of constant strength. This dissertation is dedicated to them and the enormous patience they have demonstrated in living with me, my program, and my dissertation. They made it bearable and fun, and provided me with the focus and motivation that is required to complete this rigorous process.

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Finally, I dedicate this work to all of my colleagues who serve Virginia's public schools as assistant principals and principals. The scope and breadth of our work will never be fully comprehended; however, the importance of our work cannot be overstated. It is my hope that this research can provide insight and understanding as we face the 21st century and its many challenges.

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Defining the Roles and Responsibilities of
Public School Assistant Principals in Virginia

Abstract

The major purpose of this study was to identify and document the responsibilities of current assistant principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia and compare them to those found in the extant literature on the assistant principalship, as well as the responsibilities outlined in the Code of Virginia. Additionally, the responsibilities of current assistant principals were compared to the responsibilities of current principals in Virginia.

A survey instrument adapted from the Maine Principals' Study of 2001 was used to collect data from a random stratified sample of 50 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high school assistant principals, and 50 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high school principals from Virginia. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine whether any significant differences existed between the mean averages that assistant principals reported for seven Activity Clusters when considering the gender, school level, or ethnicity of assistant principals ($p < .05$).

Student discipline, supervising and evaluating teachers, responding to teachers' needs, contacting parents about their children, and working with special needs student issues were reported as the top five responsibilities performed by assistant principals. However, the data also confirmed that assistant principals in Virginia occasionally to often perform duties in the Activity Clusters of personnel and student management, instructional leadership, professional development, interactions with education hierarchy, and public relations. Further, assistant

principal respondents consistently reported that they rarely to occasionally perform duties in the Activity Cluster of resource management and lack exposure to the responsibilities of budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures. Assistant principal respondents seemed to have a clear picture of the duties that they reported performing and complimented the duties of their principals in 15 out of 38 identified individual responsibilities. These results did not support the findings reported within the literature, which portrays assistant principals as devoting the majority of their time to student discipline and personnel supervision and evaluation.

No significant differences were reported in the responsibilities of assistant principals when compared by gender and ethnicity. The Activity Cluster of instructional leadership reported a significant difference between the mean averages of middle and high school assistant principals at the .05 confidence level.

Virginia assistant principals perform a wide variety of duties that fulfill the 15 expectations set forth for principals in the Code of Virginia. However, they reported that they lack preparation in resource management, particularly in areas dealing with the budget, budget preparation, and accounting procedures.

Assistant principals and principals in Virginia showed strong comparability among the seven activity clusters. No significant differences were reported between the reported mean averages of assistant principals and principals within these seven Activity Clusters. Assistant principals in Virginia reported spending less time than their principals in budget and purchasing procedures.

Ninety-five percent (95%) of assistant principal and principal respondents reported that assistant principal duties are assigned by the principal. Two-thirds (66%) of current assistant principals aspire to a principalship. The remaining assistant principals indicated that they desire

to become career assistant principals, retire, or assume a central office position, such as a superintendency.

DAVID WILLIAM GASTON

PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY, PLANNING, AND LEADERSHIP

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA

Chapter 1

The Problem

When asked about what it was like to be vice president of the United States, John Adams once remarked that in his position he was potentially everything but absolutely nothing. This paraphrase from one of our Founding Fathers can aptly be applied to today's public school assistant principal. Popular culture has stereotyped the assistant principal as an administrative workhorse who deals almost exclusively with discipline and student attendance, often pursuing both duties with ruthless zeal. That is, assistant principals are generally portrayed as the "heavy," whose primary functions are to dole out disciplinary decisions, patrol the hallways and bathrooms, monitor student attendance and truancy, and attend all athletic events, dances, and student activities. Conversely, the principal is usually found evaluating, hiring, and firing faculty and staff, working with budgetary issues, and maintaining important community contact for the school. The principal also liberally exercises the right and responsibility of assigning the assistant principal any remaining managerial responsibilities that are either too time-consuming or too lackluster in their appeal.

This widespread, popular portrayal is not far from the truth. For example, Marshall (1992) found that the assistant principal is an individual at the bottom rung of the administrative career ladder who tends not to engage in duties involving instructional leadership. While the assistant principalship may be a necessary proving ground for future principals, the position carries the unfortunate reputation as being an undesirable but necessary step on the career ladder of educational administration (Austin & Brown, 1970; Marshall; National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 1991). The responsibilities that assistant principals

perform often are assigned to them by the principal. These prescribed duties tend to be those that principals find undesirable or often do not wish to perform because they do not afford the opportunity to maintain maximum visibility and leadership (Marshall; Roberson, 2003). As a result, the job description for assistant principals tends to be ambiguous, inconsistent, and difficult to define (Marshall).

Not surprisingly, the assistant principalship position is misunderstood by its practitioners, colleagues, and the general public. It struggles to find its identity among responsibilities that are stereotyped by the public, assigned to them by the principal, and practiced by assistant principals as they struggle to derive meaning and purpose from their work (Marshall, 1992).

In addition to the difficulty that assistant principals have in dealing with countless duties in the course of their busy days, little attention has been given to their training and selection, job satisfaction, and motivation (Marshall, 1992). Thus, the assistant principal has been referred to as the “neglected actor in practitioner literature” (Mertz & McNeely, 1999, p. 3). In contrast, the principalship has been a strong topic of research and literature focused on how principals can redefine power relationships, delegate responsibilities, and develop collaborative, decision-making processes (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). While considerable focus has been placed in recent years on the principalship, its current challenges, and changing job responsibilities, little has been written about the assistant principal. Greenfield (1985) concluded that current research on assistant principals and their responsibilities “has added little to the knowledge base informing the practice of educational administration” (p. 23).

In a review of 756 articles published between 1993 and 1999 that focused on educational administration and leadership, only eight, or 1%, dealt with the role of assistant principals

(Kaplan & Owings, 1999). Even texts employed in administrative classes have neglected the role of the assistant principal. For example, *The Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (Boyan, 1988) only mentions the assistant principalship as a stop on the educational career path. Similarly, *The Encyclopedia of School Administration and Supervision* (Gorton, Schneider, & Fisher, 1988) does not even mention the assistant principalship in a discussion of school administration positions (Hartzell, Williams, & Nelson, 1994).

What literature that does exist on the assistant principalship shows a cloudy conceptualization of its role in the school organization with limited opportunities for the assistant principal to develop as an effective instructional leader (Wells, Rinehart, & Scollay, 1999). The assistant principalship remains mired in duties that focus predominantly on building operations and management -- a purely non-instructional role (Kaplan & Owings, 1999).

Ironically, while principals seek duties that bring them into greater contact with the school community and focus on instructional leadership, it is the assistant principal who interacts more with students, is more visible to them than the principal, and can be more influential in their day-to-day school life (Glanz, 1994; Hausman, Nebeker, McCreary, & Donaldson, 2002; Marshall, 1992). This is mostly because assistant principals deal heavily with student discipline. Thus, the assistant principal's time primarily is spent interacting with students (Austin & Brown, 1970; Hausman et al.).

Traditionally, the work of assistant principals has been defined by duties that the principal assigns to them or by responsibilities that are open to negotiation with the principal (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995). In most cases, these duties promote the stability of the school organization, rather than effect change. However, there is evidence in some research on the

assistant principalship that assistant principals desire to expand their responsibilities beyond simple managerial and organizational duties in order to contribute to effective instructional and educational leadership (Harvey & Sheridan).

The lack of a conclusive set of duties and responsibilities for assistant principals, as well as their inability to find their place in the leadership structure of the school community, raises a vital question regarding the readiness of assistant principals to assume the challenges and responsibilities of the principalship. This is of importance, considering that the assistant principalship is the most common entry-level position for administrative careers in education (Austin & Brown, 1970; Hausman et al., 2002; Marshall, 1992; NASSP, 1991). Roughly 80% of principals served as assistant principals before becoming principals (Scoggins & Bishop, 1993), and data from as far back as the 1970s show that a majority of assistant principals see their position as a necessary stepping stone to higher administrative positions (Marshall). This hierarchical view of the assistant principalship contributes, in part, to the difference between the responsibilities of assistant principals and principals because they are placed on different levels of the school's organizational structure (Hausman et al.).

The assistant principal position deserves closer study because it is one step directly behind the principalship and is often a stepping stone to it. It also is the first position for most entry-level school administrators, yet it remains largely neglected in the literature. Considering its importance, the assistant principalship is in need of a solid base of research and knowledge in order to help assistant principals better understand their role in educational administration and the school organization, and therefore better serve students.

Statement of the Problem

The lack of attention to the assistant principalship within the literature has contributed to a limited knowledge and understanding about the position and its responsibilities. Studies show that assistant principal duties are largely assigned by the principal, have increased over the past 50 years, and consist of a combination of responsibilities that are expected, assigned, or assumed (Mertz, 2000). Currently, assistant principals struggle with an inability to gain an understanding of their duties with relation to the preparation and socialization of the position, their degree of career mobility, and their role in an environment of change. Further, many assistant principals report being hampered by a lack of resources, an inability to problem-solve, and consequences that they might face from their principals if they deviate from their assigned responsibilities (Michel, 1996), however random these may be.

The purpose of this research was to identify the key job responsibilities of assistant principals in the state of Virginia. Specifically, this study discussed and identified the responsibilities of assistant principals found within the extant literature along with the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings by school level (elementary, middle, and high school), gender, and ethnicity. These duties are in turn compared to those of Virginia principals specified within the Code of Virginia (8VAC20-131-210A&B), which serves as the basis for the evaluation of school-based administrators across the Commonwealth. Finally, the identified duties of assistant principals are compared to those of current principals, to the responsibilities enumerated in the Code of Virginia, and the extant literature.

Research Questions

1. What assistant principal responsibilities are described in the extant literature?
2. What are the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings by school level, gender, and ethnicity?
3. How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and the principal responsibilities identified in the Code of Virginia?
4. How do the duties of practicing assistant principals compare to those of practicing principals in the state of Virginia?

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Assistant principals question their feelings about their positions, their significance and place in the school organization, and their specific roles and responsibilities within the school and its culture. While assistant principals interact with many levels of personnel within their schools, their position has a continual dependence on the activities of other people (Hartzell et al., 1994).

One of the most important and significant relationships that an assistant principal must assume is the relationship with their principal. Assistant principals serve at the pleasure of the principal and often perform duties that are assigned to them by these individuals. The relationship between an assistant principal and his or her principal is based upon a leadership paradigm that establishes the principal at the top position in the hierarchy. This individual determines the structure for those individuals underneath them (Hartzell et al.).

The theoretical framework for this study was based upon a sociological perspective that assumes that since they enter their positions from a variety of roles, assistant principals are

socialized into their positions. According to Lindsey and Beach (2000), most socialization takes place through a continual process of social interaction. When these efforts break down, deviant behavior can result.

Further, within the sociological perspective, the functionalist paradigm, which grew out of the work of Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, Vilfredo Pareto, and Talcott Parsons, assumes that all social groups relate to one another in an interdependent system (Lindsey & Beach, 2000). Thus, change in one area of this interdependent system can lead to change in every other element of the system. In order for the system to operate, however, each individual or group must perform particular functions or roles. Classic functionalism also assumes that social systems remain largely unchanged as long as the individual parts or individuals continue to effectively and efficiently function in their individual capacities.

The assistant principalship is one position within an interdependent relationship that must function properly in order for the larger school culture to function smoothly. By gaining insight and understanding into their roles and responsibilities assistant principals gain an understanding of their place within the larger, interdependent system of the school community, the school culture, the relationship with their principal, and their ability to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. This study sought to fill a void in the literature by helping to define the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals to assist them in gaining a better understanding of their position and its place or function in the school organization.

Significance of the Study

Assistant principals hold a wide range of mostly managerial and administrative responsibilities. These duties can vary greatly on a day-to-day basis and do not present a clearly

defined set of responsibilities which creates a considerable amount of role ambiguity and frustration (Marshall, 1992). While there is a great misconception regarding the duties of assistant principals among the general public and educators, “the assistant principal is possibly the least understood by those wearing the shoes with the well-worn soles – assistant principals themselves” (Johnson, 2000, p. 85).

The responsibilities of assistant principals can come from a variety of competing sources, such as teachers, superintendents, and parents; however, the main source of assistant principal duties remains the principal (Michel, 1996). While assistant principal duties have grown over time, little attention has been given to how the assistant principal is socialized into the position, introduced to the responsibilities, and allowed to operate within the context in which they serve (Mertz, 2000; Michel, 1996). Additionally, the traditional responsibilities of an assistant principal do not allow much, if any, opportunity to make programmatic or systemic changes in school administration (Zellner et al., 2002). Assistant principals are not allowed to develop strong familiarity and general knowledge in areas of leadership that are vital to the survival of today’s principals, and they do not have a method of evaluating the outcomes of accomplished tasks (Black, 1980; Celikten, 2001; Marshall, 1992; Reed & Conners, 1982).

Despite the increasing demands that have been placed on principals and the attention that the literature has given to the adverse effects this has had on the principalship, scant attention has been paid to the demands and responsibilities of the assistant principalship (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). It is imperative to understand the duties and roles that assistant principals perform, as well as the abilities that they must possess to be successful (Celikten, 2001). Additionally, such information is important for preparing assistant principals for their positions (Celikten).

By defining the responsibilities of assistant principals, an important door can be opened to a better understanding of the position, its complexities, challenges, and factors that could drive reform efforts that focus on how building administrators interact and meet the increasing demands that are placed on them and the administrative team. To make this possible, principals must be willing to institute changes in their relationships with their assistant principals that allow for openly collaborative team approaches, and provide their assistant principals with the opportunity for greater input, dialogue, and independent authority.

A position designed over a century ago to assist the principal has evolved into a position that has remained largely undefined. Research that clearly defines the responsibilities of assistant principals is vital because currently assistant principals perform an “ad hoc set of tasks that are not grounded in a clear conceptualization of the purpose of the role in the school as a place of learning” (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995, p. 70). The unique viewpoint of the assistant principal requires further exploration, as there is still uncertainty as to what it is assistant principals actually do, what they see, and how they are affected each day by the responsibilities that they perform (Marshall, 1992).

While existing research on the assistant principalship reveals some common or shared responsibilities, these responsibilities vary widely according to the size and type of the school, the relationship between the assistant principal and the principal, and the instructional trends in public education. Most recently, through the 1980s and 1990s, the demands that high-stakes standardized testing programs have placed on administrative teams, particularly in instructional domains, have increased the workload and pressures placed on building administrators. For

example, new responsibilities delegated to the assistant principalship include teacher evaluations, observations, accountability, and testing (Kaplan & Owings, 1999).

Assistant principals traditionally have not been charged with instructional responsibilities and have not had many opportunities to develop their experience in instructional leadership, teacher evaluation, and curriculum development. This is due in great measure to the fact that the role description for the assistant principalship is not clear and comprehensive (Celikten, 2001). As changes continue in public education, the responsibilities of assistant principals will undoubtedly see further additions or deletions. However, without a firm sense of what they do, assistant principals share a position that is uncertain as to its identity, expectations, preparation, relationships, and place in the learning community. The small body of research and literature that focuses on the assistant principalship recognizes the importance of this position; however, despite this emphasis, “the knowledge base remains inadequate to meet the needs in understanding this vital role that the assistant principal plays in educational administration” (Hausman et al., 2002, p. 137).

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions will apply:

Assistant principal: the administrative assistant to the principal of a public school serving any combination of grades pre-kindergarten through 12.

Principal: the chief educational officer of a public school serving any combination of grades pre-kindergarten through 12.

Responsibilities: duties or actions that a principal or assistant principal performs. This includes the manner in which an assistant principal or principal interacts with parents/community, students, teachers, administrators, and one another. Throughout this study, the terms *roles*, *responsibilities*, and *duties* will be used interchangeably.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations may impact the interpretation of the results of this study and generalization to all assistant principals in Virginia:

1. The surveys that each assistant principal and principal were requested to complete were collected during one limited portion of the academic year. While the study attempted to list a comprehensive set of responsibilities performed by the respondents, there are specific times during the academic year when certain responsibilities are more prevalent than at other times. For example, the number of disciplinary cases that are processed by assistant principals and principals is often lower during the beginning of the year, but more common during the spring months. Therefore, the respondents may have had difficulty gauging the overall amount of time devoted to a particular duty mentioned in the survey, thus providing an inaccurate record of the responsibility in the reported data. This perceptual screen potentially may have affected the accuracy of the respondents' replies to the survey instrument.
2. The study was limited to the responsibilities outlined in the Code of Virginia in 8VAC20-131-210 Sections A and B, as well as the assistant principal responsibilities found in the extant literature, as the basis of comparison to the completed respondent surveys from the

sample population. Legislation in other states may outline, require, or emphasize different areas of responsibility.

3. In some cases, assistant principal and principal respondents in this study performed multiple duties concurrently. This may have created role conflict or difficulty in reflecting on and recording the responsibilities on the survey instrument. Additionally, the description provided for these responsibilities in the survey may not have allowed for total accuracy in assigning these responsibilities to their respective delineated areas.
4. The study was not a time-on-task study. The assistant principal and principal respondents were asked to self-report their perceptions of the amount of time that they devote to the responsibilities presented on the survey instrument. A time-on-task study would allow for verification of the specific amount of time that a respondent spends on a particular task because the researcher is present to record this time on a standard instrument of measure. The self-reporting measures employed in this study presented possible limitations due to the fact that the data are based on the perceptions of the respondents.
5. The results of this study are generalizable only to assistant principals and principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Chapter 2
Review of the Literature
Background

The position of assistant principal is approximately a century old. Historically, the assistant principal has served as the administrative assistant to the principal, helping to perform duties in the areas of educational policy, school organization, and guidance (Golden, 1997). An equivalent position in the business world or the military would most likely be an office manager, comptroller, foreman, or executive officer (Golden).

As secondary school enrollments increased significantly at the turn of the 20th century, the duties of the principalship increased greatly to accommodate the needs of a larger student population. The “assistant-to-principal” position was created to alleviate the additional pressure placed on the school principal, freeing the principal from many administrative and managerial tasks that interfered with his or her instructional and community roles. This new position was saddled with duties that were predominantly clerical in nature, comprising such responsibilities as checking roll books, stamps, textbooks and, on occasion, administering discipline to unruly students (Gilbert, 1957). Additional tasks assigned to the assistant principal included those that the building principals viewed as less desirable (Scoggins & Bishop, 1993).

This chapter discusses the assistant principalship, its history, and how its duties have evolved over this time. Additionally, a review of assistant principal responsibilities, as outlined in the extant literature, is provided. Finally, the relationship between the principal and the assistant principal, as discussed in the literature, is explored and discussed.

The Evolution of the Assistant Principalship

The position of assistant principal has developed slowly since its inception as a formal building administration position, yet has changed very little from its first appearance (Glanz, 1994). Duties were added to the list of assistant principal responsibilities as the position evolved, but usually in a fragmented and disjointed manner, due to the fact that these roles were assigned largely by the building principal. Nevertheless, three major role shifts can be documented in the historical evolution of this role within the educational organization. Below we will also look at the corresponding shifts in the research on the assistant principalship.

Major Shifts in Assistant Principal Duties

The first shift in assistant principal duties occurred early. Student attendance, absenteeism, and discipline became the first duties to dominate the responsibilities of the assistant principalship. Initially, the principal had handled these matters. However, with the increasing enrollments in public schools at the turn of the 20th century, the increasing volume of student disciplinary problems, absenteeism, and attendance issues became overwhelming and too time consuming for principals to handle, and were eventually shifted to their assistants (Celikten, 2001). This position quickly became viewed negatively by the public because the assistant principalship dealt almost exclusively with discipline and the execution of punishment in the school building (Celikten).

A second shift took place in the 1940s and 1950s, when some assistant principals became known as “general supervisors” and were assigned the added task of helping the principal complete evaluations of teachers in general subjects, such as science and mathematics (Glanz, 1994). The assistant principal also aided the principal with the logistical operations of the school

(Glanz). While the position remained subordinate to the principal, these added duties related to instructional supervision gave assistant principals the opportunity to perform classroom observations with an eye to improve the instructional quality of teachers.

The third and most recent shift in assistant principal duties occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, when state accountability programs, dominated by high-stakes standardized testing programs, took root in every public education system across America (Wells et al., 1999). The demands for better accountability from both state and federal governments added enormous responsibilities to the school administrative team, particularly in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and staff development.

A Major Shift in the Research on the Assistant Principalship

A noticeable shift occurred in the research focusing on the assistant principalship in the 1980s and 1990s that mirrored a documented shift in assistant principal duties. Prior to the 1980s, the small body of research that existed mostly described the workday of the assistant principal. As the 1980s moved into the 1990s, new research focused on the assistant principalship that sought to explore the assistant principal's growing role in the larger context of the educational organization (Hausman et al., 2002).

The evolution and expansion of assistant principal duties with the new accountability standards that appeared in the 1980s and 1990s represented a break from the formerly heavy managerial and administrative roles that dominated the earlier research on the assistant principalship. Strict accountability standards and measures forced assistant principals to become familiar with data and its use in academic planning, school improvement efforts, curriculum and instruction, school improvement, and testing.

This shift at the turn of the 21st century also presented possibilities for the relationship between the assistant principal and the principal to evolve to a higher level, allowing them to coexist and work in a more complex and systemic organization within the school organization (Marshall, 1992; Marshall & Mitchell, 1991).

Calabrese (1991) found, for example, that assistant principals could act as change agents, ethical models, motivators, care agents, innovators, and prescriptive agents. These roles allowed the assistant principal to take on new and vital roles as community leaders involved in power sharing with their principals. However, Calabrese also noted that the literature on the assistant principalship described a position that still appeared fragmented, lacked substance, remained ambiguous in its job description, and remained segregated from the major goals of most schools.

Koru (1993) documented that assistant principals were rarely given any instructional improvement activities, except for teacher evaluation duties, which were usually assigned to the assistant principal by the principal because of the sheer number of teachers who required an annual evaluation or review. Kaplan and Owings (1999) noted that most teacher evaluations utilized a prescribed form that encompassed a short spot check and did not properly address or reflect instructional excellence.

Undoubtedly, the assistant principalship will continue to evolve as state standards and accountability programs are further refined. However, the relationship of the principal to the assistant principal continues to cloud the future of the assistant principalship's evolution into a viable, significant, and well-understood player in the organizational context of public schools. The research from this era also focused on a discussion of the manner in which assistant

principals were socialized into the organizational context of schools, as well as the context in which they performed their duties (Greenfield, 1985).

Assistant Principals and Their Significance

The manner in which assistant principals view themselves and their position is an important element in the discussion of their responsibilities. The difficulty in delineating the duties of assistant principals is in part rooted in university preparation programs that do not provide for a clear definition of this area for aspiring administrators (Hartzell et al., 1994). These training programs*also have been blamed for generating a feeling of low self-worth among assistant principals because they do not thoroughly expose and prepare administration candidates for the responsibilities that await them in their new positions (Hartzell et al.).

Assistant principals also suffer from feelings of low effectiveness and self-worth due to previous job experiences, particularly from classroom experiences (Hartzell et al., 1994). While not all assistant principals come directly to their positions from the classroom, classroom teaching does not properly prepare aspiring assistant principals for their new-found administrative positions as it offers a very limited range of experiences and a biased view of administrators (Hartzell et al).

Much of the work that assistant principals and principals perform remains out of the range of vision of the classroom teacher. For example, teachers come into the building each morning expecting that their classrooms will have heat and lights that will work, textbooks and instructional materials readily available, substitutes when needed, and assemblies or extracurricular activities that will be covered and go smoothly. They do not see the amount of behind-the-scenes work that must be done in order to ensure these events take place (Hartzell et

al., 1994). Even discipline, which is a prevalent responsibility among most assistant principals, often goes unnoticed despite the amount of time it takes an administrator to remove a child from the classroom, counsel or conference with him, meet with the child's parents, and elicit various support services for that child to help him succeed in the classroom. The missing piece that connects the classroom to administrative office is that most people are not familiar with the actual tasks of assistant principals. Likewise, assistant principals find great difficulty in educating others as to their frame of reference and what they actually do, since their responsibilities remain largely undefined or difficult to quantify.

Some assistant principals enter their positions from the central office. These individuals may possess similar difficulty in grasping the enormity of their duties and the individual identity that assistant principals must inject into their duties (Hartzell et al., 1994).

Since assistant principals interact with many levels of personnel within the school organization, they must be strong team players who are able to effectively and efficiently coordinate services, monitor results, and recommend action to all of these school community members (Michel et al., 1993). Assistant principals must become integral parts of the school community and possess a strong knowledge of how best to work within a synergistic relationship with different players in various capacities. While they remain significant players in the school organization, they often do not realize the significance of their position due to their inability to properly define and describe the duties that they actually perform in the school community.

The Assistant Principalship Within the School Organization

One of the characteristics that distinguish managerial positions from other jobs is the continual dependence of that position on the activities of others (Hartzell et al., 1994). For

example, the support that assistant principals provide to the school organization in their role as disciplinarian extends to the teacher, student, parent, principal, various community support services, central office staff, and the instructional program and mission of the school itself. All of these individuals are touched by the work and disciplinary decisions of the assistant principal. The demands of this situation require that an assistant principal be well versed in all aspects of school management, administration, and leadership. A simple disciplinary task may require complex decision-making, involvement, and follow-through from the assistant principal that can challenge yet assist him in developing the aptitude, experience, and perceptions of a competent and knowledgeable building administrator. It can also considerably raise the assistant principal's level of accountability and responsibility in the school culture, especially when considering the impact that their disciplinary decision for a student could have on student achievement, school improvement, and accountability (Michel et al., 1993).

Despite commonalities in the existing research on assistant principal roles and responsibilities, there are many differences, especially with regard to instruction. Elementary assistant principals, for example, reported that they devoted a greater amount of their time supervising faculty and staff, whereas discipline was more prevalent as a duty among secondary assistant principals (Ricciardi & Petrosko, 2000).

Interestingly, Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000) found that a majority of K-12 assistant principals felt most prepared for their disciplinary responsibility, crediting their experience as classroom teachers. Conversely, they felt that they lacked knowledge in budgetary duties, acknowledging that this was a time-consuming responsibility that they felt least ready to fulfill (Ricciardi & Petrosko).

However, the expansion of these duties, the role of the assistant principal in doling out disciplinary decisions, and the process that must be followed in order to produce a fair and balanced disciplinary action with a student is severely augmented when a teacher becomes an assistant principal. This factor could account, in part, for the feeling of inadequacy that teachers feel as they ascend to the assistant principalship.

Glanz (1994) found that the duties that assistant principals most frequently perform, such as student discipline, lunch duty, school scheduling and substitutes, textbooks, and parent conferences, stood in stark contrast to the duties that assistant principals saw as vital or important. Thus, assistant principals felt that the top five most important duties were teacher training, staff development, curriculum development, teacher evaluation, and instructional leadership. However, these duties do not appear as frequently in the literature as major responsibilities assigned to assistant principals. Student discipline ranked 21st on the list of importance, along with attendance (20), lunch duty (23), ordering textbooks (17), and assemblies (12) (Glanz). Michel (1996) supported the notion that of all of the duties that assistant principals perform, most assistant principals found the highest levels of satisfaction in helping students and receiving strong support from their principals, making good salaries, finding consistency in district policies, and being freed from noninterference in their daily work. In reviewing the roles performed by assistant principals, Glanz (1994) supported further research that explores the functions performed by assistant principals, particularly the work of the elementary school assistant principal, who appears to be the most neglected among all assistant principal positions. Administrative tasks, custodial duties, and discipline are duties that frequently appear on job descriptions for K-12 assistant principals.

Growth Opportunities Within the Assistant Principalship

Assistant principals continue to question how they feel toward their positions, their significance in the school organization, and what their role is in the school's culture. If the assistant principalship is a training ground for the principalship, a general knowledge of a wide range of duties is vital. Calabrese and Tucker-Ladd (1991) revealed that if principals provided opportunities for growth for their assistant principals, they would, in turn, develop confidence and a feeling of self-worth in the assistant principalship. Smith (1987) also found that when superintendents, principals, directors of secondary education, and assistant principals were questioned about the level of involvement in school duties, all parties agreed that assistant principals should be involved in every aspect and duty of building administration, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, and school management. They also should be heavily involved in all areas of instructional improvement.

Assistant principals desire to gain more responsibility focusing on teacher evaluations and professional training (Glanz, 1994). Kaplan and Owings (1999), however, found that when assistant principals performed teacher evaluations, this role often found them conducting cursory classroom spot checks for short periods of time utilizing district-constructed checklists that did not effectively address instructional excellence. While assistant principals seek more time in the classroom working directly with teachers and instructional issues, the evaluation system that is provided for them to fulfill this role may not be effective. Often they do not receive the proper support from the school district or the principal that is required to allow them to effectively perform this role as an evaluator. Additionally, a cursory evaluation checklist or diminutive amount of time spent in the classroom may not provide the tools assistant principals need to

effectively develop their skills as instructional leaders, thus contributing to their ineffective preparation for the demands of the principalship.

Marshall (1992) advocated for further research on the assistant principalship to explore the duties of assistant principals and to reveal how assistant principals feel about these duties. Glanz (1994) reported that 99% of assistant principals felt that their position had significance or importance in the school community, but complained that they rarely had the chance to engage in professional growth activities, instructional supervision, evaluation procedures, and program development. According to assistant principals, student discipline and lunch duty were not and should not be their major responsibilities (Glanz). However, as seen above, a majority of research that has been conducted to date on the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals shows these duties as significantly present in the daily activities of assistant principals.

The changes that state and federal accountability standards have brought to the assistant principalship in recent years point to the evolution of the assistant principal's role from traditional duties, such as discipline, to more instructional and professional development roles (Wells et al., 1999). In schools where shifts in assistant principal duties have been documented, the morale among assistant principals has increased, student achievement has improved, and the time that assistant principals engage in meaningful professional assistance with their teachers has increased (Glanz, 1994; Michel, 1996). Such growth, however, has required changes in the traditional structure of the concept of the administrative team, as well as in the type of duties assigned to many of the school's support staff, such as deans, secretaries, and custodians (Wells et al.). Thus, in order to allow assistant principals more time to concentrate on the general roles of leadership, staff development, and instruction that are vital to their preparation for the

principalship, the more traditional roles that they assumed were actively reassigned by the principal to school staff in order to create time for assistant principals to perform them.

Assistant Principal Roles and Responsibilities

A review of the literature on the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals presents an extremely varied job description. The literature and research on the assistant principal has documented “a noticeable trend in the recognition of the important role the assistant principal plays in schools. Despite this awareness, the knowledge base remains inadequate to meet the needs in understanding” its vital role in educational administration (Hausman et al., 2002, p. 136). This section discusses the various duties that assistant principals perform, as outlined in the literature. Assistant principal responsibilities in research from the 21st century are also identified. Finally, a discussion of the duty of discipline and its prevalence in assistant principal responsibilities concludes this section of the chapter.

While the position of assistant principal is roughly a century old, the literature that documents its duties did not attract national attention until 40 years ago. Since that time, there have been three distinct periods of assistant principal research that have documented assistant principals roles and responsibilities, the impact that state and national accountability standards have had upon the position, and the importance that assistant principals place on their duties. Additionally, shifts in assistant principal roles and responsibilities have been documented through these distinct periods of research and their focus on the assistant principalship.

Assistant Principal Roles and Responsibilities Through 1980

Research focusing on the responsibilities of assistant principals stretches as far back as 1926. Unfortunately, while this body of work possesses a long history, it does not provide

consistent data and conclusions. Reed and Conners (1982) found that since 1926, studies that focused on the assistant principalship dealt with similar research questions attempting to pinpoint the roles of the assistant principal, the relationship of the role of the assistant principal to other administrators, and the role of the assistant principal in the larger school environment.

The first nationwide study on assistant principal roles and responsibilities was co-directed by Austin and Brown in 1965 and sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). The survey of 1,270 assistant principals attempted to produce a composite of the characteristics and duties of assistant principals. Information gained from this study also provided insight into what assistant principals experience, as well as their financial status, working conditions, training, and functions (Glanz, 1994).

Austin and Brown (1970) found 21 duties that were common to assistant principals: student programming, discipline, attendance, alternative education programs, locks and lockers, co-curricular programs, student council, building superintendent and maintenance, awards, supplies, staff support, textbook rentals, fire drills, parking, school pictures, graduation announcements, exam scheduling and supervision, junior high promotion decisions and report cards. Assistant principals also were involved with budget, scheduling, and the preparation of monthly and yearly reports.

In 1973, Schatzman and Strauss reported that assistant principals spent a considerable amount of their daily routine monitoring, supporting, and offering remediation to students. All three were classified as disciplinary duties because they involved behavior modification and maintenance (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Monitoring, for example, meant that the assistant principal was looking for indications that students were following the code of conduct for the

school district, and student support referred to an assistant principal's effort to keep a student from misbehaving during the school day. Overall, discipline was found to dominate the responsibilities of the findings of this research.

Brown and Rentschler (1973) conducted a study in Indiana that focused on assistant principal promotion and identified assistant principal duties. Their findings indicated that dealing with individual student behavior and discipline, parent conferences, counseling students, consulting with guidance counselors, arranging and participating in faculty meetings, and attending professional meetings ranked as the top responses among the junior and senior high school assistant principals. The area of least involvement among the responsibility categories in the study was instructional leadership.

Burgess (1976) found that assistant principals performed duties in five major responsibility categories: discipline, attendance, curriculum development, teacher evaluation, and staff development. Other significant duties included building maintenance, scheduling, budgeting, working with and supervising guidance, school climate, and community relations.

In 1980, NASSP published the results from research performed on the assistant principalship that divided their duties into major categories that included administration, teaching personnel, curriculum, and external relations. Under each of these categories, subcategories further delineated the assistant principal's duties. Under administration, for example, the assistant principal was found to: (a) serve as the principal in the principal's absence, (b) assist in preparing the budget, (c) follow school and district policy, (d) prepare a school calendar complete with school activities, (d) maintain inventory, and (f) make bus duty schedules (NASSP). The category of teaching personnel included observation and evaluation of teachers

and preparing teacher handbooks, while student personnel involved preparing student handbooks, being highly visible, and supervising guidance. Curriculum saw the assistant principal revising and improving testing programs, and external relations involved working with community agencies, law enforcement, court personnel, and the media. In addition to outlining these five broad categories of assistant principal responsibilities, the study also urged assistant principals to be strong advocates for student growth and maturity, teamwork among the administrative team, planning, and ardently supporting the school's vision within the learning community.

In the same year, the Assistant Principals Commission (1980) presented five major professional areas of responsibility for assistant principals: students, administrative team, staff, curriculum, and community. It was advocated that an area of primary focus should be on students and their academic growth, as well as the assistant principal's ability to work in a team. Additionally, the commission urged that assistant principals should be given a significant role in curriculum development, community relations, and co-curricular programming. Discipline was not identified as an area of heavy emphasis or involvement for assistant principals in this study, which represented a significant shift from previous research. While discipline was included among the roles and responsibilities, the significant areas of focus for assistant principals presented in this study were curriculum, student achievement, and team-building (Assistant Principals Commission).

Kriekard and Norton (1980) presented six major task areas for assistant principals: school management, staff personnel, community relations, student activities, curriculum and instruction, and pupil personnel. The researchers noted that the problem behind defining assistant principal

roles and responsibilities stemmed from the failure of many people to see the significance of the position.

Secondary school assistant principals in Maryland were the focus of a study conducted by Black (1980), who identified similarities and differences in the roles of assistant principals as perceived by principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and teachers. Six major roles of secondary assistant principals were found: personnel, pupil personnel, student activities, professional development, and school management, as well as 34 other duties. The study also found that these individuals agreed that assistant principals needed to have considerable involvement in duties that focused on student supervision, arranging faculty meetings, conferring with parents, discipline, teacher assistance, and scheduling.

In comparison, Potter (1980) found four major areas of responsibility for assistant principals: (a) instruction, teacher evaluation, and in-service; (b) attendance and discipline; (c) vocational education and plant management; and (d) athletics and activities. These roles and responsibilities mirrored those found in similar studies by Reed and Connors (1982), Brown and Rentschler (1973), and Panyako and Rorie (1987), which identified counseling, school activities, discipline, building maintenance, curriculum, staff recruitment, lockers, buses, cafeteria duty, and fundraising as major responsibilities of assistant principals. The origin of these duties within these three studies remained firmly entrenched in the managerial and administrative domains. While duties in curriculum and instruction were found in Potter's (1980) study, they took a back seat to the more dominant responsibilities of building maintenance, operations, and student activities.

Table 1

Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship Through 1980

Austin & Brown (1970)

Alternative Education Programs
Awards
Curriculum and Instruction
Building Supervision and Maintenance
Co-Curricular
Discipline
Exam Scheduling and Supervision
Faculty/Staff Selection/ Hiring
Fire Drill/School Safety
Graduation Announcements
Junior High Promotions
Locks/Lockers
Parking
Preparation of Monthly/Yearly Reports
Prepare School Calendar
Professional Development
Report Cards
School Pictures
School/District Policy
Serve as Principal in Principal's Absence
Student Council
Attendance
Textbooks

NASSP (1980)

Building Supervision and Maintenance
Bus Duty
Co-Curricular Programs
Curriculum and Instruction
Discipline
Faculty/Staff Selection/Hiring
Fire Drills/School Safety
Monitoring Students
Observations/Evaluations of Faculty/Staff
Prepare School Calendar
Preparing Teacher Handbooks
Serve as Principal in Principal's Absence
Supervising Guidance
Working with Community and Media

Schatzman & Strauss (1973)

Activities/Athletics
Budget
Curriculum and Instruction
Discipline
Student/Teacher Attendance

Brown & Rentschler (1973)

Discipline
Parent Conferences
Counseling Students
Consulting with Guidance Counselors
Arranging Faculty Meetings
Attending Professional Meetings
Activities/Athletics
Building Supervision and Maintenance
Observation/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Professional Development

Burgess (1976)

Discipline
Attendance
Curriculum Development
Teacher Evaluation
Staff Development

Assistant Principals Commission (1980)

Students
Administrative Team
Staff
Curriculum
Community

Kriekard & Norton (1980)

School Management
Staff Personnel
Community Relations
Student Activities
Curriculum and Instruction
Pupil Personnel

Table 1
Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship Through 1980 (Continued)

<u>Black (1980)</u>	<u>Potter (1980)</u>
Activities/Athletics	Athletics/Activities
Curriculum and Instruction	Alternative Education Programs
Monitoring Students	Building Supervision and Maintenance
Observation/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff	Discipline
Parent Conferences/Communication	Observation/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Professional Development	Professional Development
Scheduling	Attendance

Assistant Principal Roles and Responsibilities from 1980 to 2000

State accountability standards began appearing across most states during the 1980s and created a shift in assistant principal responsibilities. This change was reflected in the literature, which began to document new responsibilities in instructional domains, as well as the job satisfaction of assistant principals, the relationship of assistant principals to principals, and the place of assistant principals in the school organization.

Reed and Conners' (1982) field research found that assistant principals supervised students, performed student discipline, counseled students, created and updated the school calendar, and supervised extracurricular activities.

Similarly, Rodrick (1986) found that assistant principals primarily performed duties that were managerial and administrative in nature. Specifically, the duties that assistant principals performed included: supervising buses, monitoring the cafeteria, checking the hallways and restrooms, counseling students with regard to their difficulties with teachers, listening to teachers as they documented their concerns and problems with students, student attendance, consulting with guidance counselors and school psychologists over student concerns, discipline, and maintaining and updating information on student records with their teachers.

In a study conducted in Washington state by Smith (1987), secondary assistant principals, principals, superintendents, and directors of secondary education were surveyed to develop a list of duties for secondary assistant principals. The results indicated that student discipline and attendance were major responsibilities, as were attendance, supervising athletic competitions and extracurricular events, performing classroom visitations, consulting with community agencies for security, consulting with guidance counselors, helping with teacher planning, organizing the school schedule, and counseling students.

Panyako and Rorie (1987) confirmed the notion that the assistant principal is very familiar with roles and responsibilities that are wholly administration and management-related. Since most assistant principal duties are assigned by the principal, the duties that Panyako and Rorie documented in their research tended to focus predominantly on administrative and management domains and included the major tasks of maintaining the school's textbook inventory, supervising students and bus transportation, and disciplining students (Michel et al., 1993; Panyako & Rorie, 1987). Put more directly, assistant principals were mainly responsible for the three B's: books, buses, and butts (Michel et al.).

Staff (1988) performed research in Michigan that focused on secondary school assistant principal responsibilities as perceived by both assistant principals and principals. The results indicated that secondary assistant principals monitored student attendance, disciplined students and dealt with student behavior, acted as the principal in the principal's absence, performed teacher observations and pre- and post-conference meetings, and worked with the student discipline code.

Although these studies were conducted in separate states, they revealed strong commonalities between the responsibilities performed by assistant principals. Briefly, student discipline dominated the findings. The majority of the roles that assistant principals were performing were managerial or administrative in nature (Rodrick, 1986; Smith, 1987; Staff, 1988). Only the additional duty of taking care of the school building in the absence of the principal was a new duty among the other common duties of assistant principals (Rodrick; Smith; Staff).

A second NASSP study conducted by Pellicer, Anderson, Keefe, Kelley, & McCleary (1988) analyzed high school leaders and their schools and utilized the same duty categories from previous research by Austin and Brown (1970). Of the original 59 categories in Austin and Brown, 58 were retained (Pellicer et al., 1988). The category of pupil personnel was renamed student services and seven new duty categories were added: special education, teacher motivation, instructional methods, instructional software, computer services, staff in-service, and graduation activities (Pellicer et al.). Student discipline, school policies, teacher evaluation, student attendance, and special arrangements dominated assistant principal responsibilities (Pellicer et al.). The assistant principal was viewed as a strong member of the administrative team who performed a wide range of duty categories and exhibited a strong correlation between the duties that they performed and the perceived importance of these duties to the school organization (Pellicer et al.).

At the beginning of the 1990s, Hassenpflug (1991) found student discipline, textbooks, monitoring athletic and extracurricular activities, monitoring students in the cafeteria and throughout the building, and assigning lockers to be the predominant duties among assistant

principals. Hassenpflug suggested that many of these duties could be delegated to administrative staff to free up assistant principals for stronger leadership roles.

Pellicer and Stevenson (1991) produced a top 10 list of assistant principal duties that included student discipline, teacher evaluation, student attendance, school policies, special arrangements for the opening and closing of school, orientation of students, building use issues, scheduling, instructional strategies and training, and school safety/emergency procedures, such as fire drills. These duties differed from previous findings since school safety was included as a separate category. Previously, school and student safety had been merged with other categories, such as student discipline, building operations, or maintenance.

As the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals gained more clarity through the 1980s and the 1990s, Marshall (1992) sought to document these general duties and the frequency of the duties that assistant principals performed on any given day of their professional life. Specifically, Marshall studied 50 assistant principals and their responsibilities and pieced together from this information a typical work day for an assistant principal.

Normally, the average work day for an assistant principal began with meetings, usually with parents, teachers, or other administrators, followed by monitoring duties in the hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms (Marshall, 1992). These monitoring duties would continue throughout the day. Once the students left the building, the assistant principals would spend long hours completing various professional duties, such as paperwork or reports. The majority of the day was devoted to managerial duties, personnel issues, student activities, and discipline. However, it was also noted that in effective schools, individuals, including assistant principals, assumed more leadership roles in curriculum, instruction, and professional development. Unfortunately,

assistant principals simply did not have the time to engage in these responsibilities because the majority of their day was taken up with administrative and management duties.

Michel et al. (1993) found that the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals could be categorized into broad areas with discipline as the chief duty. It was noted, however, that the size and type of school (i.e., elementary or secondary) were major factors in determining the level of involvement of the assistant principals in discipline. It was also noted that assistant principal duties interlocked at various points, providing support for other roles and responsibilities that were found to be part of the assistant principalship. For example, the responsibility of overseeing activities was given significance as a role vital to the safety of the school community, just as curriculum was important to the type of textbook selected in the textbook adoption process within the school or school district.

Calabrese (1991) pushed for an expanded role for the assistant principal, but found that the limitations of the responsibilities as determined by the principal stifled opportunities for assistant principals to engage in instructional leadership roles. Assistant principals exercised leadership as disciplinarians, instructional leaders, innovators, motivators, change agents, care takers, and professionals within the school organization, which contradicted the traditional roles and responsibilities of assistant principals. They also needed to possess certain qualities, among them visibility, problem-solving skills, initiating community awareness, supporting staff, communicating a vision, optimizing school resources, conducting teacher inservice, developing the school schedule to enhance instructional time, and promoting a positive school climate with high expectations for staff and students in order to restructure the role of assistant principals and to allow for greater instructional leadership opportunities (Calabrese). Despite the multifaceted

role of the assistant principal, this position still suffered from an inability to break out of its traditional role and evolve into a co-principal model, mainly due to the manner in which the principals treated the assistant principal (Calabrese). These findings challenged the concept of the principal as boss and presented the possibility of the assistant principal becoming a stronger co-equal in the administrative team.

The concept of the administrative team was the focus of Williams (1995), who proposed that principals and assistant principals share a greater burden of responsibilities in staff evaluation, discipline, and curriculum supervision. In order to allow for this shift to occur, assistant principals would need to fulfill new roles within the school organization, most notably as team partner, visionary leader, communicator, change agent, motivator, climate controller, and an advocate for excellence (Williams). This concept sharply challenged the traditional relationships between principals and assistant principals and advocated for sweeping change in the realm of assistant principal responsibilities with the shifting of traditional duties, such as discipline, to both positions. This would allow assistant principals to have the opportunity to operate in a position that functioned more as a co-principalship (Williams).

A meta-analysis of all of the research on assistant principals through 1993 performed by Scoggins and Bishop (1993) found that 26 separate studies documented 20 common roles and responsibilities among assistant principals. The prevalent duties included discipline, attendance, student activities, athletics, community agencies, master scheduling, filling in for the principal when absent, building operations, budget, reports, transportation, curriculum, communication, cafeteria monitoring duties, school calendar and appointments, and locks and lockers.

Elementary and secondary assistant principals in New York City were the subjects of research by Glanz (1994), who found that they desired to perform duties that included teacher training, staff development and inservice, curriculum development, teacher evaluation, and instructional leadership, but predominantly found themselves dealing with student discipline, monitoring the cafeteria, working with the school schedule, confirming and filling teacher absences with substitutes, ordering textbooks, conferencing with parents, organizing assemblies, and performing a wide range of mostly administrative duties. Ninety-nine percent felt that their position had significance or importance in the school community, but complained that they rarely had a chance to engage in professional activities, instructional supervision, evaluation procedures, and program development. They also felt that student discipline and lunch duty were not and should not be the main responsibilities of any assistant principal.

Two years later, a study by Toth and Siemaszko (1996) led to findings that contradicted what Glanz (1994) had found. Assistant principals in New York City did handle student discipline, teacher observations, school safety, maintenance and operations, and student placement and testing programs, as well as the managerial and administrative tasks that Glanz had documented in previous research. However, assistant principals also taught one to three classes per day, depending on the size of the separate departments that they supervised within a school (Toth & Siemaszko, 1996). Additionally, New York City assistant principals developed and wrote curriculum, created enrichment programs for students, made decisions regarding policy for their divisions with the assistance of the principal, trained and developed teachers within their departments, and even functioned as guidance counselors for their school or department (Toth & Siemaszko). While still representing some familiar roles, the description of

the roles and responsibilities of these assistant principals also presented some exciting new responsibilities that allowed them a greater presence in the school organization and the instructional program for their buildings. Specifically, the duties that were documented by Toth and Siemaszko gave assistant principals considerable opportunities to work directly with teachers and students, especially through direct student instruction, but placed a tremendous amount of duties squarely on the shoulders of the assistant principals to the point where the researchers found that assistant principals' performance in disciplinary and attendance suffered or became nearly impossible to complete (Toth & Siemaszko). Ultimately, the authors issued a call for reform proposing that the responsibilities of student attendance and discipline be divided among teachers, clerks, and counselors, which would free more time for assistant principals to devote to instructional duties (Toth & Siemaszko).

Table 2

Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship from 1980 to 2000

Reed & Conners (1982)

Activities/Athletics
Discipline
Monitoring Students
Prepare School Calendars

Smith (1987)

Discipline
Attendance
Activities/Athletics
Monitoring Students
Observation/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Parent Conferences/Communication
Professional Development
Scheduling
Supervising Guidance
Working with Community and Media

Staff (1988)

Monitoring Students
Discipline
Serve as Principal in Principal's Absence
Observation/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Parent Conferences/Communication
Remediation/Student Support
Attendance

Hassenpflug (1991)

Activities/Athletics
Discipline
Monitoring Students
Textbooks
Locks/Lockers

Marshall (1992)

Discipline
Activities/Athletics
Personnel
Paperwork and Reports
Monitoring Students

Rodrick (1986)

Bus Duty
Curriculum and Instruction
Discipline
Monitoring Students
Professional Development
Remediation/Student Support
Attendance
Supervising Guidance

Panyako & Rorie (1987)

Building Supervision/Maintenance
Bus Duty
Discipline
Monitoring Students
Textbooks

NASSP (1987)

Discipline
School Policies
Observations/Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Attendance
Building Supervision/Maintenance
Curriculum and Instruction
Fire Drills/School Safety
Remediation/Student Support
Scheduling

Pellicer & Stevenson (1991)

Discipline
Teacher Evaluation
Attendance
School Policies
Opening/Closing of School
Student Orientation
Building Use
Scheduling
Fire Drills/School Safety

Table 2
 Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship from 1980 to 2000
 (Continued)

<u>Scoggins & Bishop (1993)</u>	<u>Glanz (1994)</u>
Activities/Athletics	Discipline
Budget	Monitoring Students
Building Supervision and Maintenance	School Schedule
Bus Duty	Attendance
Co-Curricular Programs	Textbooks
Communicating Vision/Mission	Conferencing with Parents
Curriculum and Instruction	Substitutes
Discipline	<u>Harvey & Sheridan (1995)</u>
Monitoring Students	Student Discipline
Observations/Evaluations of Faculty/Staff	Clerical Duties
Parent Conferences/Communication	Student Services
Preparation of Reports	Clinical Services
Prepare School Calendars	Building Use
Attendance	Planning/Policy-Making
Serve as Principal in Principal's Absence	School Budget
	Staff/Curriculum Management
<u>Toth & Siemaszko (1996)</u>	<u>Wells, Rinehart, & Scollay (1999)</u>
Activities/Athletics	Activities/Athletics
Discipline	Building Supervision
Teacher Observations	Discipline
Parent Conferences	Fire Drills/ School Safety
Student Support	Graduation Announcements
Scheduling	Evaluation of Faculty/Staff
Working with Community/Media	Parent Conferences/Communication
Attendance	Teacher Handbooks
	Professional Development
	Serve in Principal's Absence
	Special Education Services
	Attendance
	Working with Community/Media
	Building Maintenance

A Shift in the Literature of the 1990s

The focus of the research on the assistant principalship again shifted in the 1990s with studies that isolated assistant principal responsibilities and measured the importance that assistant principals placed on these responsibilities. Just as Toth and Siemaszko (1996) found that there were certain responsibilities that assistant principals desired to perform, Harvey and Sheridan (1995) found that deputy principals in Australia preferred performing responsibilities in the areas of planning and policy making, staff and curriculum management, and administrative routines. Student discipline and management, student services, and external relationships ranked lower in importance among the deputy principals. Interestingly, principals and teachers in the sample overwhelmingly agreed with the perception of their deputy principals that duties of lesser importance were assigned to them (Harvey & Sheridan). Unfortunately, many of the responsibilities that received a lower priority ranking by these individuals, most notable among them student discipline and clerical duties, were also recognized as the most demanding in terms of time required to complete in the course of the deputy principal's daily routine.

Significant shifts in duties between principals and assistant principals also were documented by Harvey and Sheridan (1995). Most notably, duties in the administrative realm, such as clinical services and school-related building use, planning and policy making, and school budget were relatively new responsibilities for deputy principals in Australia that once had been exclusively the domain of principals. However, duties that deputy principals performed in human resources, staff and professional development, and new teacher training, as well as curriculum management and development, were found to give deputy principals an opportunity to promote school level change. Additionally, deputy principals experienced a shift in the focus of their

work to new organizational duties that were relinquished by principals and provided more opportunities for leadership, such as leading the new student orientations or gaining responsibility for the school newsletter. Overall, however, deputy principals still performed duties and responsibilities in the administrative domains that ranked at the lower end of the perceptual continuum in importance within the school organization.

Assistant Principal Research in the 21st Century

The role of the assistant principal as a stabilizing force in the school organization is one major explanation why we do not see much change in assistant principal duties into the 21st century. Mertz (2000) reported that the tasks of assistant principals were mostly managerial in nature, focused on maintaining the efficient and effective operation and control of the school building and student body. Thus, this stabilizing effect, which the position was originally created to maintain, continues in an effort to allow schools to be efficiently run by the principal. The instructional duties that many assistant principals desire to practice in their daily work have been curtailed, mostly due to the historical forces at work from the days when the position first came into existence.

At the beginning of the 21st century, teacher evaluations and hall duty were equally dominant among assistant principal duties and were practiced in many cases with as much frequency as discipline (Mertz). Assistant principals also were responsible for a number of managerial duties that were divided among them, including parking, athletics, lockers, dances, plays and other school events, open houses, new teacher support, intern supervision, graduation, acting as liaisons to other community agencies, cafeteria duty, reporting of state information, and special programs and projects that included accreditation and school improvement plans (Mertz).

While there are instances where instructional duties, professional development, and curriculum writing have become part of the increasing lists of responsibilities of assistant principals, Mertz concluded that the historical precedence of the position has kept any widespread expansion into leadership and instructional responsibilities to a minimum.

Wells et al. (1999) pointed to a possible shift in assistant principal duties due to larger and more current educational reforms and influences that have allowed for an evolution from more traditional duties, such as discipline, to more instructional and professional development roles for assistant principals. In schools where these shifts have been documented, the morale among assistant principals has increased, student achievement within the school building has improved, and the time that assistant principals engage in meaningful professional assistance with their teachers has increased (Glanz, 1994; Michel, 1996). In order to allow for these shifts to occur, however, changes had to be made in the traditional structure of the administrative team, as well as in the actual duties that were assigned to many in the support staff of the school organization, such as deans, secretaries, and custodians (Wells et al., 1999).

Despite the commonalities that appear in the existing research on assistant principal roles and responsibilities, there are differences noted in job responsibilities for the assistant principalship, especially with regard to instruction. Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000) found that elementary assistant principals reported devoting a greater amount of time to supervising faculty and staff than did their secondary counterparts. In contrast, discipline was more prevalent among secondary assistant principals than their elementary counterparts (Ricciardi & Petrosko). Interestingly, a majority of all of the K-12 assistant principals felt most prepared for their disciplinary responsibilities and credited their experience as classroom teachers as their best

preparation for their disciplinary responsibilities (Ricciardi & Petrosko). Assistant principals also noted that they lacked knowledge of budgetary management and felt that this was a time-consuming responsibility that principals exclusively handled and were least prepared to fulfill in their training before assuming the assistant principalship (Ricciardi & Petrosko).

This presented a stark contrast to Michel (1996), who found that assistant principals gravitated toward disciplinary duties because of their perceived lack of preparation for more visible leadership duties in their administrative preparation. Teaching and university administration preparation programs offer different programs of study with a mixture of hands-on experiences, such as practicums, and theory-based coursework that might not provide for much interaction with K-12 students (Michel). Teacher responsibilities include a role as a disciplinarian that provides a structure to their classroom and strives to ensure the maximization of instructional time. Assistant principals who enter their positions from teaching positions have had experiences that provide them with some familiarity with disciplining students and disciplinary support. However, the expansion of these duties and the role of the assistant principal in doling out disciplinary decisions, as well as the procedures that must be followed in order to provide due process to students, become severely augmented when a teacher assumes an assistant principal position.

Celikten (2001) qualitatively examined the varied instructional leadership tasks of secondary assistant principals and found that they had a solid idea of what they did and that one of the most important general functions that they served was to do whatever was necessary to help the principal maintain a safe environment that promotes student learning (Celikten). Ninety-two percent of the assistant principals were school disciplinarians and experienced great amounts

of frustration in this role, as it took inordinate amounts of time away from their ability to focus on curriculum and instruction. Eighty-eight percent felt that their principals had a strong influence on their professional work as role models, especially in instructional leadership activities. A large number of assistant principals also reported that activities, such as reading educational journals and newspapers, talking with colleagues, and reviewing class materials helped them to strengthen their leadership abilities. Assistant principals also felt that they needed to work as a team with all people and departments in the school organization to successfully complete their responsibilities. Major obstacles toward fulfilling any instructional leadership activities were: (a) a lack of a job description for the position, (b) performing a wide range of general duties, (c) a rapidly growing student population, (d) frequently changing school law, (e) dealing with politics, (f) high or low expectations from students and parents, and (g) a lack of resources and time to attend professional conferences and seminars.

A study of assistant principals in Maine by Hausman et al. (2002) found that assistant principals devoted the largest portion of their time to student management, such as intervening with student problems and working with parents and teachers on student behavior. Supervising co-curricular activities was also a predominant assistant principal activity. Assistant principals also spent time building relationships with fellow educators and in personnel management roles, with less time spent on public relations and professional development. Two domains in which assistant principals devoted the least amount of time were instructional leadership and resource management. This supported earlier work by Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000), who found that assistant principals do not have a strong familiarity with budgetary domains. It also confirmed that assistant principals do not have a large hand in many of the instructional duties that have

been thrust to the forefront of the educational scene due to state and national accountability demands.

Female assistant principals reported higher engagement in professional development activities, instructional leadership and personnel management, including running faculty meetings, and public relations and less involvement in student management than their male assistant principal counterparts. Assistant principals with more years of teaching experience also reported greater success with duties in instructional leadership than those who had less years of teaching experience; however, additional years of administrative experience did not equate to more overall success as an instructional leader. This did not come as a surprise to the researchers, who noted that women in leadership roles act in a more personalized and participatory style, whereas males are more directive and authoritative in their tasks. Overall, the basis of the assistant principalship seems to be the organization and management of individuals in the school community. The instructional leadership domain and an understanding of this aspect of the assistant principal's role in the school organization remains cloudy.

Student discipline continues to dominate the rankings of assistant principal duties among assistant principals. Other dominant duties include teacher appraisals, school safety, student attendance, and working with school policies (Roberson, 2003). In a study of secondary school assistant principals in Texas, school safety was found to be a responsibility of great importance and high priority, especially in the wake of the Columbine High School and 9/11 terrorist attacks (Roberson). Additionally, assistant principals were responsible for special education, development of improvement plans, instructional methods, curriculum development, teacher

selection, staff development, and new teacher orientations, as well as custodial duties (Roberson).

These data support the notion that duties instructional leadership might be gaining ground in the work of assistant principals. However, the inroads that assistant principals may be making in instructional domains continue to be slow. Female assistant principals seem to have more ability to practice duties in instructional domains than their male colleagues.

Even though assistant principals perform a wide variety of duties, the position continues to require study and reconceptualization that aims at providing assistant principals with the opportunity to gain greater involvement in curriculum and instruction (Gorton & Kattman, 1985; Kaplan & Owings, 1999; Roberson, 2003).

Table 3
Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship from 2000 to 2004

Mertz (2000)

Parking

Athletics

Lockers

Activities/School Events

New Teacher Support

Intern Supervision

Graduation

Liaison to Community Agencies

Cafeteria Duty

State Reports

Special Programs (Accreditation and School Improvement Plans)

Ricciardi & Petrosko (2000)

Elementary assistant principals supervise staff more than secondary assistant principals

K-12 assistant principals felt most prepared for their responsibilities and disciplinarian

Assistant principals felt least prepared in area of budget management

Celikten (2000)

Secondary assistant principals have a solid idea of what they must do

Usually perform whatever is necessary to help principal promote learning and maintain a safe environment

Discipline was most widely performed duty for secondary assistant principals

Principals, collegial interaction, and professional reading strengthened assistant principals' leadership abilities

Obstacles prevented assistant principals from fulfilling instructional leadership role:

Lack of a job description

Performing a wide range of general duties

Growing student population

Changing school law

Politics

High or low expectations from students and parents

Lack of resources and time for professional conferences and seminars

Table 3
Summary of the Literature Published on the Assistant Principalship from 2000 to 2004
(Continued)

Hausman et al. (2002)

Student management dominates assistant principal duties
Supervising co-curricular activities also predominant among assistant principal duties
Assistant principals build relationships with colleagues
Least amount of time spent in personnel management, professional development, resource management, and instructional leadership
Basis of assistant principalship is organization and management of individuals in school community

Roberson (2003)

Student Discipline	Curriculum Development
Teacher Appraisals	Teacher Selection
School Safety	Staff Development
Student Attendance	New Teacher Orientation
School Policies	Custodial Duties
Special Education	
Development of School Improvement Plans	

Discipline and the Assistant Principalship

Despite the varied interests, backgrounds, experiences, duties, and qualifications of assistant principals, the main responsibility that most find themselves performing on a daily basis is student discipline (Gorton, 1988). Panyako and Rorie (1987) saw the role of discipline as one that principals did not want and, as a result, assigned it almost exclusively to their assistant principal. Hartzell et al. (1994) found that over 90% of high school assistant principals nationwide were charged with some disciplinary responsibility or function. Mertz and McNeely (1999) found that discipline and discipline-related duties at the high school level were the dominant tasks among assistant principals, with most assistant principals processing an average of 25 disciplinary referrals from teachers every day, along with holding disciplinary meetings with parents, patrolling the hallways, supervising lunch periods, and clearing the hallways of

students before and during each class period. Of all of the duties compiled to date in the research on the assistant principalship, discipline continues to be a major function (Austin & Brown, 1970; Brown & Rentschler, 1973; Glanz, 1994; Gorton, 1988; Hassenpflug, 1991; Marshall, 1992; Michel, 1996; Ricciardi & Petrosko, 2000; Roberson, 2003; Scoggins & Bishop, 1993; Smith, 1987).

Michel (1996) studied the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals and concluded that assistant principals were poorly prepared for their roles as new building administrators, specifically in their newfound role as a disciplinarian. A review of university programs in school administration found that there was no requirement for students in administration certification programs to study the administration of discipline (Hartzell et al., 1994). Most assistant principals suffer from a lack of resources, an inability to problem-solve, poor selection processes among school districts, and an inability to understand the consequences that their actions might have upon a school (Michel). Although assistant principals are faced with these obstacles, they often find validation in their assigned role as a disciplinarian (Michel).

When most assistant principals transition into their new positions, they do not seem to have any idea as to what awaits them or how to approach their new duties, such as discipline. Much of what the assistant principal learns with respect to their roles and responsibilities remains on-the-job training for which no university program can properly prepare a candidate.

Assistant principals enter their positions from a variety of former positions, such as teachers or central office personnel. When they enter this new position, they are forced to give up their former perspectives and must assume new ones (Hartzell et al., 1994). Just as a new assistant principal is not sufficiently prepared for what happens in their new position, university

programs are steeped in technical skill training and tenets of leadership that can leave newly certified assistant principals surprised and shocked because they are not adequately prepared for the transition that they must undergo in moving from their former positions to the assistant principalship (Hartzell et al.).

Most of what assistant principals do is support work that remains behind-the-scenes. When considering discipline as an assistant principal duty, much of what is involved with the performance of this duty goes unnoticed when considering the amount of time that an assistant principal must take in removing a child from the classroom, counseling or conferencing with them, meeting with the child's parents, and eliciting various support services for that child to help them succeed in the classroom. Assistant principals find great difficulty in educating others as to their frame of reference and their actual duties, as they remain largely undefined and difficult to quantify. This factor, combined with the scant research and discussion of assistant principal roles and responsibilities, does not allow assistant principals to properly define their duties and to prepare for their roles in the school building.

For a new assistant principal, new duties, such as student discipline, can be intense and unsettling. Michel (1996) indicated that when people are placed in middle management positions, the equivalent of the assistant principalship, they frequently feel that they are ineffective, experience hectic and fragmented days, and feel a tremendous sense of responsibility for the smooth operation and functioning of the organization.

Gorton (1988) found that most assistant principals would welcome an increase in their involvement in curriculum improvement, public relations, budget preparation and execution, and work with parent groups within their school communities. Glanz (1994) found that over 90% of

assistant principals enjoyed and gained satisfaction from working with teachers in training, curriculum development, and staff development and lamented that they had very little time to devote to these activities because of the current amount of existing duties that they must perform each day, most notably student discipline.

Assistant principals find validation and satisfaction from their positions in having a broader range of responsibilities that include instructional supervision, community interaction, and budget preparation and execution (Glanz, 1994; Hausman et al., 2002). Defining the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals provides a depth of understanding of the work of assistant principals, assists in determining whether school districts make the maximum use of this position, allows assistant principals the opportunity to gain a higher level of professional respect for their position, and helps in breaking down current stereotypes that surround the assistant principalship and its duties. Further exploration into assistant principal responsibilities would also provide insight into the interests and talents of assistant principals and assistant principal candidates to provide them with an opportunity to develop a stronger identity. Identifying and exploring the roles and duties of the assistant principalship would also allow assistant principals to gain more effective training and experiences that can help them to better adjust the duties of their positions and to gravitate away from the duty of discipline.

Allowing assistant principals the opportunity to expand their roles and responsibilities places them at a much higher level of interaction with faculty and staff and visibility in the school community. Marshall (1992) found that most of the current tasks of assistant principals, such as discipline, “are routine, possess low visibility, lack evaluation and review, and provide

no opportunity for creative, risky projects and...no opportunity for special recognition and reward” (p. 10).

Traditionally, principals assume the roles within the school organization that maintain higher visibility (Michel, 1996). However, the duty of discipline might provide a much larger and important service to the school community than realized. Spady (1985) believed that while assistant principals saw discipline as a large part of their responsibilities, it provided a stabilizing force in the school community that allowed the assistant principal to fulfill a role as the enforcer of social order. Disciplinary duties keep schools calm, focused, and able to carry on with a stronger and more deliberate pace of instruction. This, in turn, can positively contribute to overall school achievement, teacher effectiveness in classroom instruction, and increased student learning.

The debate over discipline and its role among the responsibilities of the assistant principal is important. Teachers are inclined to desire strict and consistent discipline as a way to keep order in the overall school environment and disruptions to a minimum in their classroom. This, in turn, allows for a steady flow of instruction during the school day, which is a significant contribution to the instructional life of the school program in light of current state and federal accountability programs. In this sense, therefore, the assistant principal plays an integral role in the instructional life of a school community and must interact with a number of community members, from teachers to students to parents, in order to perform this role successfully.

As illustrated in the preceding review of the related literature, discipline remains a pervasive duty among assistant principals.

The Relationship Between the Assistant Principal and the Principal

The nature of the relationship between the assistant principal and the principal was determined by historical forces and needs that gave rise to the assistant principal's position. In this section of the chapter, an overview of the relationship between the assistant principal and the principal, as discussed in the literature, will be provided. Additionally, in an effort to better understand the current state of principals in Virginia for the purposes of comparison to assistant principals, a discussion of the demands on Virginia principals and the expectations that are outlined for this position in the Code of Virginia follows.

From the outset, the duties assigned to the principal and the assistant principal forged a relationship of boss and subordinate, respectively. The assistant principal served at the pleasure of the principal and performed duties assigned by the principal. Usually, these were duties that the principal did not have the time nor the inclination to perform. Hartzell et al. (1994) stated that current leadership paradigms assume that an individual who is a leader occupies the top position in the hierarchy. Once this relationship is established, little attention is paid to the secondary position of follower. The individual at the top of the hierarchy tends to dominate the scene and determine the structure for those individuals underneath them (Hartzell et al.).

A significant body of research and literature describes the current state of the principalship and documents the duties and increasing demands that have been placed on this position. Conversely, the literature on the assistant principalship is lacking, leading Mertz and McNeely (1999) to characterize the assistant principal as the "neglected actor in practitioner literature" (p. 3). With a subordinate role to the principalship established from its creation, the position of assistant principal has not seemed worthy of close study. It simply existed in the

school structure, and the individuals who served in the position did so at the pleasure of the principal.

The assistant principalship is the first administrative position that most administrative professionals must negotiate on their way to promotions in the hierarchy of educational administration. It has been viewed by many as a position that is a stepping stone, with 80% of assistant principals usually advancing to the principalship (Austin & Brown, 1970; Scoggins & Bishop, 1993). Principals' willingness to work with their assistant principals to provide them with the experiences necessary to prepare them for this promotion is one of the largest factors in preparing assistant principals for the advancement to the principalship (Scoggins & Bishop).

Glanz (1994) noted two major problems with the view that the assistant principalship is a stepping stone to the principalship: (a) the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals remain very different from those of principals, and (b) the assistant principalship does not provide appropriate training for anyone aspiring to become a principal. Indeed, a marked difference has been noted between assistant principal and principal duties through research that spans 30 years (Austin & Brown, 1970; Hartzell et al., 1994; Pellicer et al., 1988).

In the relationship between assistant principal and principal, each represents one half of a whole. The effectiveness of this relationship depends on how well each knows the other's strengths and weaknesses, what each desires, and the characteristics of each individual's personal style in creating an understanding of the self and the other (Hartzell et al., 1994). The current relationship between principal and assistant principal continues to be described as one where there is a distinct hierarchy, with the principal occupying the top spot and assigning duties to their subordinate assistant principal.

The Administrative Team

Assistant principals and principals often speak of the administrative team, and many assistant principals note that they work as a team member with their principal (Mertz, 2000). In defining a teamed relationship, both assistant principals and principals describe “the notion of delineated, non-overlapping duties that allow the administrators to cover what needed to be done in the school without impinging on one another’s areas...and allowed for using [each other’s] strengths” (Mertz, 2000, p. 7). Additionally, Michel (1996) defines a teamed relationship as one that sees the principal and assistant principal applying leadership and management concepts to their school and concerning themselves with the decisions that they must make with their teachers, students, staff, and parents.

Wells et al. (1999) confirmed that assistant principals, while part of an administrative team, tend to assume more of the role of an organizational manager, than that of instructional leader. Also evident in their research is the fact that assistant principals have a significantly lower degree of involvement in their duty responsibilities than principals, perhaps because principals feel that by virtue of their position they feel ultimately responsible for all of the tasks that must be performed within the school (Wells et al.). Assistant principals merely play one part or role in these responsibilities.

In areas where there may be overlapping jurisdictions in principal and assistant principal duties, such as in student discipline, the work that a principal might perform in this duty category would encompass hearing appeals of cases handled originally by the assistant principal or dealing with the student’s parent, who might be upset over a decision made by the assistant principal (Hartzell et al., 1994). Therefore, many of the overlapping jurisdictions are follow-up

from previous decisions made by the assistant principal. Ultimately, this forces the principal to assume duties that lead them into closer contact with the public through a hierarchical system that places them in a seat of ultimate responsibility for actions that have been taken by other members of the school's staff.

Marshall (1992) discussed the concept of the assistant principal and principal team and how it can effectively manage any school. Management teams in schools must include the assistant principal acting in an elevated role with the principal. This arrangement would profoundly raise the professionalism of the assistant principal and his or her role in the administrative team (Marshall). Michel (1996) found that by promoting a more collaborative model and improving the interpersonal skills of assistant principals, schools became higher achieving institutions as the principal and assistant principal worked as a cohesive team to improve the school's overall leadership. Calabrese (1991) also confirmed this idea and found that assistant principals in effective schools were dynamic, enthusiastic, creative, and caring, and had support from their principals that went beyond the traditional role. These principals encouraged their assistant principals and allowed them to become equal partners in an administrative team where the assistant principal could use his or her talents and skills to offset any areas of weakness in the principal's professional or interpersonal skills (Calabrese).

Principals and assistant principals who share similar views of leadership can work well together as a team (Michel, 1996). For example, assistant principals can be a valuable asset for providing input on ways to improve individual teacher effectiveness in the classroom and energize the administrative team to help raise a school's achievement scores (Michel et. al., 1993). The duties of the assistant principal should not rely merely on the whim of the principal;

rather, the responsibilities should be solidly defined, delineated through a true team approach, and overlap in their jurisdiction to give the administrative team a greater opportunity for collaboration, therefore creating better cohesion within the organizational culture of the school.

While the principal is ultimately responsible for what happens in his or her building, transferring responsibility and ownership of some of these responsibilities to a shared team model assists assistant principals in several ways: They gain a better perspective of what the principal experiences, a better grasp of what the principal must do in his role, and experience a wider range of responsibilities that will help them obtain a promotion to the principalship.

Breaking with Tradition

It is clear that any shift from the traditional relationship between the principal and the assistant principal team must be driven by the principals themselves. The historical forces that shaped the nature and duties of the assistant principalship remain strong. Breaking from this traditional view may hold a key to allowing assistant principals to find truer meaning and significance in their roles, glean a clearer definition of their responsibilities, and build a stronger team relationship with their principals. However, Michel (1996) reported that many assistant principals fear the consequences that they might have to face should they deviate from the relationship established by the principal. Assistant principals work extremely hard to sell new ideas, programs, and roles to their principal, but find more often than not that their ideas and proposals are dismissed or put on hold by their administrative teammates (Zellner et al., 2002).

According to Mertz and McNeely (1999), while duties were largely assigned to the assistant principal by the principal, assistant principals decided what their roles would be, creating a sphere of control that allowed them to inject their own unique qualities, strengths,

personality traits, and administrative styles into their responsibilities. In other words, assistant principals have little control over the number and type of duties that are assigned to them.

However, they do possess a much larger arena of authority over their specific duty realms that allow them to place their own personal signatures or styles on how they complete these assigned tasks (Mertz & McNeely). Unfortunately, while they are allowed to develop their own personal style, assistant principals ultimately do not gain a wide exposure to the general duties and responsibilities that would help them to assume the larger responsibilities of the principalship.

Rodrck (1986) studied whether assistant principals were being utilized efficiently by their principals and whether they were gaining experience in a wide variety of responsibilities that could prepare them for the principalship. As often found, Rodrick noted that many principals often employ their assistant principals to fulfill duties they simply do not wish to perform. This builds on the ideal that the assistant principal remains subordinate to the principal in their relationship, and that the assistant principal remains one step below the principalship in the administrative hierarchy (Michel, 1996). While the history of the assistant principalship roughly spans a century and has evolved with regard to the variety of roles and responsibilities, there is great potential for the 21st-century assistant principalship to develop and change into a restructured position that will allow greater access to duties typically encountered as principals. Assistant principals will need to know and familiarize themselves with as many facets of the position as possible to be able to negotiate the difficult terrain of the principalship (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

The question of whether the assistant principalship properly prepares its practitioners for the principalship is couched in the traditional roles and positions of principal and assistant

principal. Positive outcomes, such as enhanced student achievement and greater school cohesiveness, have resulted when the traditional relationship of the assistant principal as subordinate to the principal is modified (Glanz, 1994; Michel et al, 1993; Michel). However, traditions are resistant in a culture that is slow to embrace change. Most assistant principal duties are assigned by the principal and continue to be non-overlapping in their lines of authority (Mertz, 2000). These clear boundaries prevent assistant principals from sharing responsibility with the principal and fail to provide them with opportunities to complete these duties independently, without interference from their principals. The universality of such duties as monitoring hallways or cafeterias finds assistant principals fulfilling these tasks almost exclusively, while principals perform separate responsibilities that appear to dominate instructional and leadership domains (Mertz). It also becomes difficult to reform the structure and relationship between the principal and assistant principal when assistant principals continue to struggle with the identification of their roles and responsibilities within the school organization (Marshall, 1992).

Current Expectations and Demands on Virginia Principals

The context of the responsibilities of assistant principals can be better defined when one gains a general knowledge and insight into the role of the principal (Scoggins & Bishop, 1993). Historically, the assistant principalship was created due to increased demands placed on school principals at the turn of the 20th century (Gilburt, 1957; Glanz, 1994; Mertz & McNeely, 1999; Scoggins & Bishop). As demands and expectations increased on the principalship throughout the 20th century, the roles of the principal became even more complex and multifaceted.

Principals in the 21st century find that even with assistant principals working with them in their buildings, their workloads remain unmanageable, and they are quickly approaching their limits in terms of what they can accomplish (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). Principals are also experiencing an increase in job ambiguity and complexity and have seen a decline in morale and enthusiasm (Hartzell et al., 1994; Kaplan & Owings). Assistant principals continue to struggle with their position, their identity, and the many responsibilities that make up their post. In addition, they must struggle to gain a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the principalship, since a large majority of assistant principals aspire to and move into principal positions at some point in their administrative careers (Scoggins & Bishop, 1993).

Assistant principals and principals in Virginia comprised the sample population for this study. Principals and assistant principals exist in a co-dependent relationship in building administration. Whether a team relationship or a relationship of subordinate and overlord, the assistant principalship depends upon the principalship and vice versa: therefore, the interaction of these two positions determines much of the manner in which assistant principals perform their duties.

In order to gain a clear understanding of the expectations for building administrators in Virginia, it is important to consult the Code of Virginia, which outlines the expectations for principals in the evaluation process, as well as the current state of the principalship, as evidenced by a recent study conducted by DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003) in conjunction with the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP), the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP), and a grant from the Virginia Department of Education. An exploration and discussion of this information will provide a basis of comparison for Virginia

assistant principals to their administrative counterparts in the school building; specifically, the principal. The results of this study will also provide assistant principals with an opportunity to understand the current state of the principalship in Virginia and what the Commonwealth expects from their principals in terms of minimum competencies and expectations.

The Code of Virginia and Principal Expectations

The Code of Virginia outlines the expectations and roles of principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia (8VAC20-131-210). According to the Code, “The principal is recognized as the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for effective school management that promotes positive student achievement, a safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn, and efficient use of resources” (Code of Virginia, 8VAC20-131-210-A).

As the instructional leader, the principal is responsible for maximizing instructional time and learning opportunities for their students. The principal must also: (a) keep distractions and interruptions to a minimum in order to protect academic instructional time, to enable the teachers to maximize their instruction time, and to reduce the amount of clerical responsibilities that the teachers must perform, (b) enforce the student code of conduct and to maintain a safe school environment, and (c) analyze and disaggregate the school’s test data (Code of Virginia, 8VAC20-131-210).

Disaggregation of test data is required of all Virginia principals to allow them to provide intervention and remediation opportunities to students who do not pass the State Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. Principals also are entrusted to train their staff in methodology that will enhance student achievement and ensure that the staff knows how to disaggregate data and

improve their instruction. Finally, principals must analyze classroom instruction and offer ways to improve individual instruction in the classroom (Code of Virginia 8VAC20-131-210).

Further, as the leader of a school community, the principal is expected to: (a) ensure that all student records are updated and maintained, including intervention strategies, student performance, and placement and promotion, (b) monitor and evaluate teacher instruction, provide staff development, and ensure that all students have the proper basic knowledge of the SOLs, and (c) maintain records of students who drop out of school and work to prevent them from dropping out of school (Code of Virginia 8VAC20-131-210).

The Code of Virginia also outlines expectations for the principal as the school manager; specifically: (a) working with staff to create a collegial environment and establishing a handbook with procedures and policies that promote effective communication, (b) working with the community to involve parents in reform efforts for the school and to communicate with them all information, such as the code of conduct and school expectations, (c) maintaining the records of staff licensure and professional development of the staff, and (d) keeping the financial records for the building, which are audited annually by the school board (Code of Virginia 8VAC20-131-210).

As illustrated, the Code of Virginia clearly outlines managerial and administrative expectations for school administrators in Virginia. It also sets forth clear expectations for instructional leadership and encourages principals to maintain close contact with the community and the student body for remediation and drop out prevention efforts. School safety is emphasized in these expectations, as well as the creation of an overall environment that supports instruction and the maximization of instructional time for teachers and students. Finally,

principals are expected to provide professional development and training in their buildings that enhances instruction and improves the quality of the teaching in the school.

Table 4
Principal Expectations Outlined in the Code of Virginia

The principal is the instructional leader of a school and is responsible for effective school management that:

- Promotes positive student achievement
- A safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn
- Efficient use of resources
- Protects academic instructional time from unnecessary interruptions and disruptions
- Ensures that the code of conduct is enforced
- Analyzes the school's test scores by grade and discipline
- Provides intervention and remediation to student below grade level or below SOL performance level
- Involves the staff in providing staff development to help the improvement process
- Improves instruction, classroom practices, and instructional methodology
- Ensures student records are properly maintained
- Maintains records of students who drop out of school.

Additionally, as school manager, the principal will:

- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect and facilitate constructive communication with a current handbook of policies and procedures
- Work with the community and involve parents and citizens in the educational process, including explaining the expectations of the school to the community
- Maintain a current record of licensure, endorsement and training completed by staff
- Maintain records and receipts of all funds that shall be audited annually

(Source: Code of Virginia, 8VAC20-131-210. Role of the principal. [Available online: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reh+8VAC20-131-210+402193>])

The Virginia Principals' Study

In the spring of 2001, a comprehensive statewide survey of Virginia principals was conducted. A similar study was completed in 1988. The driving force behind the study was the “recent emphasis on improving school leadership [which] returns us to a concentration on the principal’s role, a role that has been evolving during the past two decades” (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003, p. 3).

The results of the Virginia Principals' Study revealed that the increased accountability measures and instructional leadership responsibilities in public schools have placed tremendous additional duties and pressure on school principals as they strive to ensure that all children are meeting the benchmarks for Virginia's state accountability program (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Further, increases in student behavior problems, paperwork, managerial tasks, and communication via electronic mail have placed complex and new demands on principals (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran). In sum, principals have seen an increase of upwards of 30% of their time devoted to special education meetings, 25% more of their time taken up with discipline, and a greater focus on accountability measures and test scores as compared to five years ago (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran).

Increasingly, Virginia principals feel that increased demands have left them with insufficient time to be instructional leaders and inadequate support from their school divisions to meet these new challenges (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). This, in turn, has left many principals frustrated, with low enthusiasm and morale. Indeed, this frustration has resulted in high rates as principals take early retirement or leave their posts and school divisions (Doud & Keller, 1998). As a result, 26% of Virginia principals reported that they plan to retire in the next five years (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran). As an increase in the number of vacancies in the principalship become widespread, it becomes difficult to find qualified replacements who can assume these vacant principal positions.

The average Virginia principal is most likely female at the elementary level and male at the secondary level (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Prior to entering the principalship, 95.4% of principals were classroom teachers and 76.4% previously served as assistant principals

(DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran). Virginia principals credit their former experiences as teachers and assistant principals as the greatest preparation for their principalships (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran).

A large majority (84%) of Virginia principals work an average of 50 or more hours each week, noting that increasing student achievement on standardized tests, effective use of instructional time, analyzing classroom practices, staff development, curriculum alignment, and improving staff morale were the largest challenges that they faced in their positions (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). These challenge areas for Virginia principals are also the most prevalent domains and expectations outlined in the Code of Virginia.

Virginia principals spend more time on paperwork and email than five years ago and perceived that special education meetings, student discipline, and instructional leadership were responsibilities on which they were spending an increased amount of time (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Interestingly, assistant principals in Virginia, who also were included in this study, agreed with their administrative superiors that special education, student discipline, email, and paperwork were taking inordinate amounts of time in their positions (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran). Assistant principals were found to spend less time on instructional leadership responsibilities than principals (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran).

The most significant change in the Virginia principalship was strongly identified as the greater focus on test scores and accountability measures over the past five years (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Two-thirds of principals in Virginia also reported that they had neither the necessary time nor personnel to meet the accountability mandates and expectations as instructional leaders, and did not have adequate support from their school division in terms of

administrative personnel (e.g., secretaries or administrative assistants) to fulfill the management duties of their position (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran). Additionally, Virginia principals did not feel that they possessed the authority to make decisions in their responsibility areas and that their influence in policy areas was limited (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran).

The data from this study reveal that building principals in Virginia need help with the managerial tasks that keep them from performing the responsibilities in instructional leadership that state accountability measure and that the Code of Virginia demand (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Interestingly, participating principals indicated that they do not wish to delegate these responsibilities, but cannot see any other way to maintain their increased demands for the total school program. They enjoy their contact with students, teachers, peers, and parents, find the greatest satisfaction from these relationships, and would become principals all over again if given the choice (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran).

The Virginia principalship has experienced an increase in demands and expectations that has made it impossible to perform all of the required duties. Instructional leadership remains an area of utmost significance. However, managerial duties conflict with these instructional duties and require delegation to other personnel to allow principals to concentrate on the school program, professional development, and accountability standards that they must meet. Virginia assistant principals did not report an increase in instructional duties; however, they did indicate that student discipline, special education, email, and paperwork had increased significantly in their positions over the past five years.

Summary

The assistant principalship was created at the turn of the 20th century to help principals meet the increased duties and responsibilities that had been placed on them with increased public school student enrollments. The position has largely remained in the shadow of the principalship and has maintained a prominent focus on responsibilities that are managerial and administrative in nature. While duties have been added to the list of assistant principal responsibilities, student discipline, monitoring of extracurricular and athletic events, student attendance, teacher evaluation, buses, textbooks, and building supervision and maintenance have remained constant.

The advent of accountability measures has brought some instructional leadership roles to the assistant principalship. However, these roles remain largely focused on teacher observations and evaluations, which emerged as duties of assistant principals as early as the 1940s and 1950s. While assistant principals continue to perform evaluations and remain visible in the classroom, this responsibility often finds them conducting cursory classroom spot checks for short periods of time that utilize district-constructed checklists that do not effectively address instructional excellence (Kaplan & Owings, 1999).

The assistant principalship is an important entry-level administrative position that encompasses important and greater tasks of maintaining the norms and rules of the school culture, keeping the school climate positive with regard to student discipline and safety, and contributing to the school's safe and orderly learning environment. In these instances, assistant principals in Virginia are meeting the expectations as outlined within the Code of Virginia, which sets forth the expectations for school leaders and their evaluation. However, the instructional leadership domains that are established for administrators are lacking among the

responsibilities of assistant principals. Interestingly, however, Virginia principals also are finding it difficult to fulfill many of the instructional leadership directives set forth within the Code of Virginia, as they have experienced burgeoning paperwork, e-mail communication, and managerial and administrative duties and expectations in their work that place additional pressure on them in their role as the leader of the school community. As these duties increase, the principals are forced to delegate many duties to be able to meet the increasing demands of state and federal accountability measures.

Although the assistant principalship is seen as a transitory, entry-level position that is a training ground for the principalship (Wells et al., 1999), there is debate over whether the assistant principalship properly prepares its practitioners for becoming principals. Assistant principals continue to struggle with their lack of a clear conceptualization of their relationship and place in the overall school organization and the many responsibilities and multi-faceted tasks that they must perform.

Research on the responsibilities of assistant principals is lacking. Educational researchers have put forth a call for research that not only focuses on defining assistant principal responsibilities, but also on how assistant principals view their work, how they feel about their responsibilities, and how the principal and assistant principal interact and could restructure their relationship to create a co-principalship model. Such a model would allow assistant principals and principals to share responsibilities, allow assistant principals to experience duties in areas with which they have not historically had contact, such as budgeting and instructional leadership, and focus on helping assistant principals become better-prepared for the challenges that await them in the principalship. The benefits of such a renewed vision of shared leadership between

principals and assistant principals in the school organization are more collaboration between administrative team members, an increase in student achievement, and an increase in the overall effectiveness of the administrative team (Michel et al., 1993). Principals will undoubtedly play a key role in helping their assistant principals develop these open and collaborative partnerships by breaking down the traditional role of the assistant principal as a subordinate to the principal.

The assistant principalship is a dynamic position that is occupied by energetic and caring individuals. The duties that they perform have a significant and positive impact on students and teachers and fulfill important roles within the school organization. However, assistant principals continue to struggle with their positions and often have difficulty clearly conceptualizing their own responsibilities and how they relate to the overall school environment. Many assistant principals report being hampered by a lack of resources, an inability to problem-solve, and potential consequences that they might face if they deviate from their assigned roles (Michel, 1996). Further research that focuses on the assistant principalship is necessary to help them gain a clearer understanding of their sense of place and to define their roles, skills, satisfaction, opportunities, and relationships in the larger learning community.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study was designed to identify and document the responsibilities of current assistant principals in Virginia and compare them to those found in the Code of Virginia, which specifies the responsibilities of principals in Virginia, and the extant literature on assistant principals. Additionally, the responsibilities of current assistant principals were compared to the responsibilities of current principals in Virginia. The methodology and procedures used to investigate the research questions of this study are summarized in this chapter.

Research Questions

1. What assistant principal responsibilities are described in the extant literature?
2. What are the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings by school level, gender, and ethnicity?
3. How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and the principal responsibilities identified in the Code of Virginia?
4. How do the duties of practicing assistant principals compare to those of practicing principals in the state of Virginia?

Sample and Accessible Population

The population for this study was K-12 assistant principals employed by the 134 school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In order to draw a comparison population for the responsibilities of K-12 assistant principals and principals, a similar population of K-12 principals also was employed, randomly drawn from the general available population of the assistant principals and principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Assistant principals and principals were randomly selected from elementary, middle, and high schools across the Commonwealth. In an effort to compare the responsibilities of current assistant principals and principals in Virginia, the subjects selected for this study were drawn from each building as an administrative team. An equal size stratified random sample of 31 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high school assistant principals was selected from the current membership lists in the 2004 Virginia Educational Directory published by the Virginia Department of Education. These membership lists were accurate and complete as of October 31, 2004, and included all of the public schools in Virginia, the assistant principals, and the principals currently employed in these buildings.

Once the school buildings and their administrative teams had been selected, each school district website for the chosen buildings and teams was visited to gather the most current contact information for the sample subjects. In an effort to increase the response rate of the survey instrument employed in this study, an a priori identification and contact system was used. The assistant principals and principals selected for the sample population were contacted by the researcher to identify, introduce and review the study and to secure a verbal commitment from them to complete the survey instrument by the established due date. If the subjects did not agree to complete and return the survey instrument after this a priori contact, another assistant principal and principal was selected from the membership directory and contacted.

The principals selected for the study were the principals who served with the assistant principals chosen in the equal-size stratified sample population. This provided an opportunity to explore whether assistant principals were predominantly assigned their duties by their principals. It also assisted the researcher in gauging the level of the teaming relationship that existed

between the assistant principal and principal subjects with regard to the hierarchical or co-principalship model discussed in Chapter 2.

Generalizability

The results of this study were generalizable to all public school assistant principals and principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Comparisons to the extant literature and the expectations for principals, as enumerated in the Code of Virginia, assisted in increasing the generalizability of the results.

Instrumentation

The purpose of this study was to identify the duties that assistant principals perform and how these duties compare with those found in the Code of Virginia and the extant literature on assistant principal responsibilities. This study also attempted to compare these assistant principal duties with those of their principal counterparts to determine if there was any correlation between assistant principal and principal duties, and how principals and assistant principals work in their teamed relationships.

Borg and Gall (1989) recommended the use of a cross-sectional survey because it has value in collecting descriptive information from respondents. The use of the survey instrument in this research provided a standardized format for the respondents, thereby increasing both the generalizability and the consistency of the information provided by the respondents.

The survey used in this study was based upon The Maine Principals' Study of 2001. In the section that follows, the Maine Principals' Study of 2001 is reviewed and discussed to provide an overview of this instrument and the sections of it that were utilized in the survey

instrument that was administered to the sample population of assistant principals and principals in Virginia.

The Maine Principals' Study 2001

Through the 1980s, concerns about school principal quality, recruitment, and turnover gave rise to studies aimed at uncovering the state of the principalship. In 1998, a national study of principals was conducted. The results were published in a report by Doud and Keller (1998), who found, among other results, that the principalship was: (a) not attracting the best educators, (b) too focused on management and crisis, (c) not focused enough on instruction, and (d) not attracting women and minorities in representative numbers. These concerns led researchers at the University of Maine to further explore the principalship and provide additional data that could shed light on the challenges that faced principals in Maine. The Maine Principals' Study was launched in 1997, with assistance from the Maine Principals' Association and the Center for Educational Research and Evaluation at the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine.

The first study was the Maine Principals' Study, which surveyed all Maine principals and assistant principals in a wide range of impacting issues (Donaldson, Buckingham, & Coladarci, 2003; Hausman et al., 2002). The study was created by Gordon Donaldson, who previously served as a school principal in the state of Maine and who currently is a professor of education at the University of Maine, Orono.

In April of 2001, Gordon Donaldson, along with colleagues Ted Coladarci, professor of education at University of Maine, Orono, and Don Buckingham, an elementary principal at Sedgwick Elementary School in Sedgwick, Maine, conducted a survey of all Maine principals

using the same instrument as in the 1997 study. This longitudinal study resulted in data that were published by Hausman et al. (2002). The results of this research paid specific attention to assistant principals, as there was an identified vacuum or void of research that focused specifically on the duties of the assistant principalship. The sample of 125 Maine assistant principals produced ground-breaking data that focused on the challenges and successes of this position in Maine (Hausman et al.). Further research that focuses on the assistant principalship and principalship in Maine, utilizing the survey instrument first developed in 1997, has been slated for 2005 and 2009 in an effort to provide longitudinal data and comparisons.

Permission to use the most recent 2001 version of this survey was secured by the researcher from Gordon Donaldson in September 2004 (see copy of letter of permission in Appendix A).

The adaptation of the Maine Principals' Survey that was used in this research consists of mainly closed-form items that allows for ease of response and comparability. This survey instrument has been utilized twice in the state of Maine and was developed, in part, based on a review of the extant literature on assistant principals. Since the intent of this survey was to identify the roles and responsibilities of current assistant principals and current principals and to provide a basis of comparison for these roles according to school level, gender, and ethnicity, an abridged version of the Maine Principals' Survey was employed.

The original Maine Principals' Survey consisted of seven sections that focused on: personal demographic information, school demographic information, personal information for the respondents, professional preparation and background, prior experience and how it relates to their success as a building administrator, the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals and

principals, and the level of agreement among respondents to a series of statements. For the purposes of the present study, sections A, B, C, and F of the Maine Principals' Survey were reviewed and revised. All questions within these sections were reviewed and edited.

In an effort to increase the reliability and validity of the edited survey instrument, it was reviewed by three assistant principals in the state of Virginia. Their feedback provided a basis for further revision to ensure accuracy and relevance to this study. The three assistant principals employed in this process were also asked to complete the final version of the survey in an effort to calculate an average time that it would take to complete the revised survey instrument. The average time to complete this survey was established at 18 minutes. This information was included in the cover letter to the sample population of assistant principals and principals in an effort to increase the survey response rate.

The Maine Principals' Survey was divided into seven sections. The first section (A) provided demographic information for the assistant principals and principals. Specifically, questions #1-6 asked respondents to identify: (1) their current position, (2) years in their current position, (3) years in school administration, (4) years that they have worked at their current schools, (5) years of teaching experience, and (6) the type of school where they have spent the majority of their career (Urban, Rural, Suburban). This section was used in the revised version of the survey, with the exception of Question #6, which focused on demographic information that was not germane to the current research. In an effort to address the second research question in this study, this question was revised to ask whether the principal or assistant principal respondent worked at an elementary, middle, or high school in Virginia.

The second group of questions in Section B asked the respondents to provide information on the school and its demographics. Specifically, items in this section enumerated: the total school enrollment, the grade levels at the school, the number of staff, and the percentage of enrollment on free/reduced-cost lunch. This section was eliminated from the revised survey, as these questions did not have any relevance to the research questions.

The third section of the survey instrument focused on personal information for the respondents in the following areas: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) whether the respondent lives in the district where they work, (d) marital status, (e) average amount of time spent at work per week, (f) hours per week respondents commit to an outside activity, such as a hobby or leisure activity, (g) whether the respondent would go into public education again if given the opportunity, and (h) whether the respondent would choose to become an assistant principal or principal again. A separate space was provided to allow respondents who answered “definitely not” or “probably not” to briefly share their reasons for these replies. For the purposes of this research, the questions that focused on gender, age, and average amount of time spent at work per week remained in the survey instrument. A question was added that asked the respondents to identify their ethnicity.

The fourth section of the Maine Principals’ Survey focused on the professional preparation of the respondents and specifically asked them: (a) highest level of education, (b) the university that they attended for preparation as an administrator, (c) the relevance of the graduate coursework that was completed, and (d) the number of professional development programs they had completed over the past two years. Since this section of the original study did not have any

relevance to the research questions in the present study, it was eliminated from the survey instrument.

The fifth section of the survey asked respondents to rank, using a 4-point Likert scale, the degree to which their experience as a teacher, their graduate training, their internship experiences, mentoring assistance, professional readings, and professional development participation has contributed to their success as an assistant principal or principal. The Likert scale utilized a rating of 1: for very little, 2: for some, 3: for substantially, and 4 for a great deal.

The role of various support staff in assisting their work as an assistant principal or principal was also gauged in this section. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to determine if the teachers in the school, the central office/superintendent, other principals or assistant principals, guidance counselors, parents, school board, maintenance staff, secretaries, universities/professors, professional associations, or spouses have influence on their responsibilities. The scale was reported as 1: for Provided sustained help to me, 2: Often been helpful when I needed it, 3: Negligible influence on my work, 4: Sometimes makes my work more difficult, and 5: Has been a regular obstacle for me. Once again, because this entire section did not have any relevance to the research questions employed in this study, this entire section was eliminated from the survey instrument.

The sixth section of the survey concentrated on the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals and principals. Two sets of responses were provided for the respondents. The first employed a 4-point Likert scale that indicated how often the respondents were engaged in each activity listed. The responses are 1: rarely, 2: occasionally, 3: often, and 4: very often. The second set or column of responses employed a 4-point Likert scale aimed at gauging the level of

direct positive impact that the respondent believed they had on the school's success in each activity. Specifically, the ratings were 1: none, 2: very little, 3: moderate, and 4: a great deal. A total of 38 responsibilities were listed. Responsibilities focused on instructional leadership, personnel management, interaction with the education hierarchy, professional development, resource management, public relations, and student management. A comparison of these responsibility categories confirmed that the requirements found within the Code of Virginia were present within these 38 categories. Because of the relevance of this information to the research questions for this study, this entire section was included in the survey instrument; however, the responses in the second column that gauged the level of direct positive impact on the school's success in each activity were eliminated, as they did not have any direct relevance to the research questions employed in this study. Additionally, two questions were created for this section that asked assistant principal respondents to: (a) identify who primarily assigns their responsibilities, and (b) identify their future career goals.

The seventh and final section of the survey asked respondents to rate their levels of agreement with a series of 31 statements that gauged how respondents felt about their professional commitment, their community support, their sense of efficacy, goal congruence, and their balance between their personal and professional lives. Again a 4-point Likert scale was used to provide a response: 1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: agree, and 4: strongly agree. This section was removed from the survey instrument because it did not have any relevance to the research questions used in this study.

Two final free-response questions in the Maine Principals' Study asked the participants (a) what they felt were the three most rewarding aspects of their work as an assistant principal or

principal and (b) to list three aspects of their work that they found most difficult or challenging. These questions were removed from the survey instrument due to their irrelevance to the research questions presented in this study. Instead, the respondents were given an opportunity to indicate on the revised survey whether they desired to receive a copy of an Executive Summary of the findings.

The survey instrument for this study included an acknowledgment to Dr. Gordon Donaldson for his assistance and agreement to have the Maine Principals' Study utilized in part or in its entirety for the purposes of this research.

Data-Collection Procedures

The purpose of this research was to define the responsibilities of assistant principals in the state of Virginia and compare them to the duties of principals specified by the Code of Virginia and the extant literature. The duties that current assistant principals perform also were compared to those of current principals to gain a better understanding of their position and their relationship with the principal.

An equal-size stratified random sample of 131 assistant principals and 150 principals was employed. Each participant was asked to complete a survey that was adapted from a survey developed by Charles Hausman, Ava Nebeker, and Jason McCreary of the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, and Gordon Donaldson, Jr., of the University of Maine, Orono.

The survey was based upon a review of the extant literature that isolated 38 assistant principal activities organized into seven broader Activity Clusters or scales representing these major roles of assistant principals. The seven Activity Clusters or scales employed by the Maine Principals' Study were as follows: Student Management, Personnel Management, Interactions

with Educational Hierarchy, Resource Management, Public Relations, Instructional Leadership, and (7) Professional Development. For the purposes of maintaining consistency with the Maine Principals' Study, these seven Activity Clusters or scales were utilized in reporting the data gathered in the present. These Activity Clusters also provided an organizational framework for the extant literature and the Code of Virginia for the purposes of comparison in Chapter 4 of this research.

The survey instrument was reviewed by the researcher and three assistant principals to ensure that the roles and responsibilities that were identified also included the duty categories required of administrators in the Code of Virginia. The survey instrument also employed only those sections described above that had direct relevance to the research questions used in this study. Questions that were specific to the state of Maine, in which the original survey instrument was administered, were also changed or eliminated.

The surveys were administered anonymously to the sample population of assistant principals and principals. The principals selected to participate in this study were the administrators who served with the assistant principals who were the focus of this study. Each assistant principal and principal respondent was identified using the Virginia Department of Education Membership Directory. Once the individuals were identified, the individual website for the school district was visited to confirm the individual's name, position, and contact information. An a priori identification system was used to identify and directly contact the sample respondents before the survey instrument was mailed to them. This allowed the researcher to contact individual prospective respondents to confirm their identification, review the research study, and secure their commitment to completing the survey instrument within the

given time frame. If a respondent did not agree to participate in the sample population, another assistant principal or principal was contacted to complete the sample identification process. Once the respondents were secured, a followup letter was sent to confirm their verbal commitment to complete the study survey, along with a copy of the survey instrument and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return mailing to the researcher.

All information collected was held in the strictest confidence. None of the personal and demographic information provided by the respondents was released and the information was used solely for identification and calculation purposes by the researcher. It also was the intention of the researcher not to share specific information from the pairs of assistant principals and principals to prevent compromising or damaging any working relationships as a result of such a breach of confidence. Guaranteed secrecy, respondents were encouraged in the cover letter to respond truthfully and honestly to the questions.

The surveys were coded to allow for accountability in completing and returning the surveys. The coding process consisted of an assigned number and letter combination affixed at the top of the survey instrument. This was the only identification that appeared on the survey instrument. The number and letter code also allowed the researcher to provide an Executive Summary to any respondent who requested this information by indicating this on the survey.

A cover letter was sent to the participants, thanking them for agreeing to participate in this research, outlining the nature and background of the study, reviewing the survey instrument, and reminding them of their verbal commitment to completing and returning the survey as a result of the a priori identification process. The letter also provided a general idea of how long it would take to complete the survey, which was established at 18 minutes. This time was

determined by the researcher through a trial completion of the revised survey instrument conducted by three assistant principals in a member checking process. A copy of the survey was attached to this information for the respondents to complete. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included with this packet of information for the respondents to return their completed surveys. Each subject was given a two-week period to complete and return the survey.

Data Analysis

The Code of Virginia (8VAC20-131-210), which outlines the role of the principal in the Commonwealth of Virginia, was reviewed for the purposes of this research. The duties for principals outlined in the Code were compared to the survey instrument for accuracy and inclusion. Additionally, the extant literature on assistant principals also was reviewed to provide validation and confirmation of the duties and responsibilities that were found on the survey instrument. The cross-comparison of these duties verified that the duties listed on the original instrument from the research by the University of Maine included all responsibility categories reviewed and discussed with the extant literature and the Code of Virginia.

The survey instrument utilized a 4-point Likert scale that gauged the level of involvement of the participants in 38 independent duty categories. A rating of 1 indicated that the respondent rarely performed the duty described, a rating of 2 indicated that the respondent reported performing that duty occasionally, a rating of 3 indicated that the respondent reported performing the duty often, and a rating of 4 indicated that the respondent very often performed the duty that was identified. As the completed surveys were reviewed, the mean averages and standard deviations of the assistant principal and principal responses for each statement category were calculated.

The employment of an equal-size stratified random sample of assistant principals in Virginia allowed for a one-way between-groups (independent groups) analysis of variance (ANOVA) to be applied to the survey information. The mean averages and standard deviations were calculated in order to provide a statistical analysis for the comparison of the data for the groups identified in the research questions. An ANOVA allowed cross-comparisons to be calculated that determined whether the school level (i.e., elementary, middle or high school), the gender of the sample respondents, and the ethnicity of the assistant principals had any effect on the responsibilities that they performed. ANOVA was also utilized to compare the mean averages of the assistant principal and principal responsibilities.

The significance level for each one-way between-groups (independent groups) ANOVA was established at $p < .05$. When $p < .05$ is selected as the significance level for the ANOVAs, it establishes that there will be a 5 in 100 chance of making a Type I error. In other words, there is a 5 in 100 chance of obtaining a value that leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is actually true. A one-way multilevel design was chosen over an independent t test for these comparisons because the t test possesses two major limitations; specifically, the independent t test can be used to compare the means of only two groups at a time and the multiple, repetitious employment of an independent t test can introduce a greater possibility of error in the results of the analyses (Kieiss, 1996).

Responses provided on the survey instrument for assistant principal and principal participants were used to determine the grade level, gender, and ethnicity of each assistant principal respondent. The data completed and returned from each respondent were grouped into categories based on grade level (elementary, middle, or high school), gender, and ethnicity. The

mean averages and standard deviations were calculated, presented, described, and discussed in table form. Cross-comparisons between the assistant principal respondents were then conducted by reviewing the mean average and standard deviation data calculated. An ANOVA was then used to determine if there were any significant differences within the seven Activity Clusters of the assistant principal respondents in these categories. A Tukey (HSD) post-hoc analysis was employed to analyze any significant differences that were documented in these comparisons.

The results of the assistant principal and principal surveys were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics; specifically, the mean averages and standard deviations of the responses. Additionally, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine if there were significant differences between the seven Activity Clusters of duties performed by assistant principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. An ANOVA was also employed to determine if there were significant differences between the seven Activity Clusters of assistant principal duties according to gender and ethnicity. Finally, ANOVA was employed to determine if there were any significant differences between the responsibilities of assistant principals and principal respondents within the seven Activity Clusters. A Tukey (HSD) test was used to conduct post-hoc analyses for each of these comparisons in the event that a significant difference was determined from the data that was collected and compared in each of these analyses. All specific calculations in this research were performed through the use of SPSS version 12.0.

Research Question 1

In order to answer the first research question, "*What responsibilities are described for assistant principals in the extant literature?*," the responsibilities for assistant principals outlined in the extant literature on assistant principals were isolated and enumerated. A frequency count

was utilized to provide a rank order from most to least as mentioned and reported/practiced by assistant principals. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 provided a comprehensive list of the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals that were determined and discussed in the extant literature.

Research Question 2

The second research question, “*What are the responsibilities that current assistant principals fulfill in their buildings as determined by school level, gender, and ethnicity?*,” was answered using the data collected from the assistant principal respondents. Specifically, the mean averages and standard deviations of the ratings provided by the respondents from the Likert scales in the Roles and Responsibilities section of the survey instrument were calculated, along with the standard deviations for each, and presented in table form for discussion and comparison. A grand mean and standard deviation for each of the seven Activity Clusters was also calculated and presented in table form for each of the comparison groups. Finally, this information was analyzed using ANOVA to determine if there was a significant difference between statistical data presented for the Activity Clusters for the comparison groups of school level (elementary, middle, and high school), gender, and ethnicity. A Tukey (HSD) was run as a post-hoc analysis for any significant differences that were found for each comparison.

Research Question 3

The third research question, “*How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and the principal responsibilities identified in the Code of Virginia?*,” was answered by comparing the responsibilities that were ranked from an analysis of the responses to Research Question 2. Specifically, the duties that were identified from the

review of the literature were rank ordered based on frequency counts, and expectations outlined in the Code of Virginia were reviewed and enumerated for comparative purposes. For example, an analysis of this information found that student discipline, which correlated in the Code of Virginia with the requirement of ensuring that the school division's code of conduct was enforced, was highlighted and discussed in 93% of the literature that focused on assistant principal duties. Therefore, this responsibility category was a primary duty identified for assistant principals in this study. These duty categories and their rankings were compared to the rank order of duties of current assistant principal respondents determined from the roles and responsibility section in the survey results.

Research Question 4

The final and fourth research question, "*How do the duties of current assistant principals compare to those of current principals in the state of Virginia?*," was answered by comparing the mean averages and standard deviations of the data from the assistant principal and principal respondent surveys. Specifically, the mean averages and standard deviations of the responses of the assistant principals from the Likert scale in the roles and responsibility section of the survey were compared to the mean averages and standard deviations for the principal responses from the Likert scale in the roles and responsibility section of the survey in table form. The grand means and standard deviations for each of the seven Activity Clusters were then calculated from this data and presented in table form. Finally, an ANOVA was performed for each of the seven Activity Clusters and a Tukey (HSD) provided post-hoc analysis for any significant differences found as a result of these comparisons.

Ethical Considerations and Safeguards

Every effort was made in this research to protect the anonymity of the respondents. The responses did not have the respondent's name attached, unless the respondent volunteered this information on the survey instrument. Further, each respondent log was coded with a number and letter code that indicated whether the respondent was an assistant principal (A) or a principal (P). Additionally, the surveys were coded with a corresponding number that identified the assistant principal and principal pairs in the sample population.

The coding system was not known to the respondents and did not compromise the relationship between the assistant principal and the principal. This coding system also provided the researcher with the opportunity to determine which respondent logs had been completed and returned. The employment of an individual electronic mail reminder message for followup to each respondent further protected the subjects' anonymity. The respondents did not have any access to or knowledge of the overall response rate for the study; nor did they have any knowledge of who the other participants in this study might have been, unless any of the principal and assistant principal pairs elected to compare their data or discuss the survey instrument in the course of their professional or personal interaction.

In addition, all procedures for approval from the Human Subjects Committee from the College of William and Mary were followed in order to guarantee the ethical standards of this research. The cover letter that accompanied the survey instrument explained to the participants that their responses would be kept in strict confidence and that no names or other identifying information would be released in the course of this research.

The information and conclusions from this research were made available to the subjects for review once the study was complete through an Executive Summary that respondents were eligible to receive. The study was conducted using all acceptable research practices. All materials received from the respondents were kept in a secured container to which only the researcher and any research assistants had access. All records were tabulated and kept in confidence by the researcher during the data collection and analysis process.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Results

The major purpose of this study was to identify and document the responsibilities of current assistant principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia and compared to those identified and discussed in the extant literature that focuses on the assistant principalship, as well as those responsibilities outlined in the Code of Virginia. Data were also compared based on the gender, ethnicity, and school level of the sample population of assistant principals. Additionally, the responsibilities of current assistant principals were compared to the responsibilities of current principals in Virginia.

An equal-size stratified random sample of current assistant principals and principals across the Commonwealth of Virginia was used for this study. The principals and assistant principals were randomly selected according to their administrative teams from each building for the purpose of comparing their responsibilities. A total of 281 surveys were sent to assistant principals and principals; a total of 170 were returned fully completed, representing a total response rate of 60.5%.

A total of 131 surveys were sent to elementary, middle, and high school assistant principal subjects. It must be noted that the original random stratified sample targeted 50 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high schools for a total of 150 assistant principal subjects. The principal subjects to be surveyed as part of this research were to be the principals who served with the selected assistant principals from the sample population. Unfortunately, at the elementary school level in Virginia, it was found that not every elementary building had an assistant principal assigned to work with the principal. Elementary schools, therefore, were less

likely to possess an active assistant principal. Since the goal of the equal-size stratified random sample was to closely resemble the larger, generalizable population of Virginia assistant principals and principals, the reduced number of elementary assistant principals employed in this research was supported for reporting the overall results of the research. Nineteen of the elementary schools that were selected in the equal-size stratified random sample did not have an assistant principal assigned to the building. This reduced the number of elementary assistant principal surveys from a target of 50 to an actual respondent pool of 31. At the middle and high school level, the majority of schools had more than one assistant principal assigned to the building, so the target number of 50 middle school and 50 high school assistant principals was readily achieved.

Response Rates

Twenty-two elementary assistant principals (71%), 24 middle school assistant principals (48%), and 23 high school assistant principals (46%) returned the completed surveys to the researcher in usable form. One entirely incomplete elementary school assistant principal survey was returned to the researcher and was not counted among the completed surveys. The total rate of response for the assistant principal sample population was 52.67%.

A total of 150 surveys were sent to principals who represented the sample population for this study. Thirty-four elementary principals (68%), 29 middle school principals (58%), and 38 high school principals (76%) completed the surveys in usable form. The total response rate among the principals selected for the sample population was 67.33%.

The subjects were asked to identify their current position (assistant principal or principal) and their school level. The percentage of elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals

were almost evenly split between the three instructional levels. Among the assistant principal respondents, 31% were elementary assistant principals, 36% were middle school assistant principals, and 33% were high school assistant principals. As mentioned, the number of elementary school assistant principals was slightly lower, largely due to the fact that not every elementary school had an assistant principal. Middle school assistant principals represented the largest number of completed responses among the three school levels. The response rates and school level data for all of the subjects appear in Table 5.

Demographic Information

Personal Demographics

Section B of the survey instrument asked for gender and ethnicity.

Gender. The majority of assistant principal respondents were female. Thirty-nine respondents (57%) in the assistant principal sample population were female and 28 respondents (41%) were male. Two survey respondents did not indicate their gender on the completed surveys. The majority of principal respondents were male. Thirty-four respondents (34%) were female and 66 respondents (66%) were male.

While females dominated the ranks of the assistant principal respondents, they did not have an even distribution across the school levels. Whereas the vast majority of elementary assistant principals (76%) were female, only 24% of elementary assistant principals were male. As the school level increased, the number of females assistant principals decreased and the number of male assistant principal respondents increased. However, at both the middle and high school level, female and male respondents were evenly split. That is, 50% of middle school assistant principals were female and 50% of high school assistant principals were female.

Similarly, 50% of middle school assistant principals were male and 50% of high school assistant principals were male.

Overall, the large majority of principal respondents were male. Male respondents represented the majority of principal respondents at all three instructional school levels: 66% were male and 34% were female. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of elementary principals were male and 42% were female. At the middle school level, 66% of principals were male and 34% were female. At the high school level, almost three-fourths (74%) of principals were male and only 10 respondents (26%) were female. In contrast to the assistant principal respondents, the gap between the number of female and male principal respondents widened as the school instructional level increased. Unlike the assistant principal data, the gap between female and male principals was at its lowest among principals at the elementary level. As the school level increased, the number of male respondents at the principal position increased dramatically. The results of this data appear in Table 5

Ethnicity. The ethnicity of all respondents was overwhelmingly Caucasian. The assistant principal respondents were divided among three of the five noted categories as follows: 11 (16%) were Black, 2 (3%) were Hispanic, and 56 (81%) were Caucasian. Among the principal respondents, 11 (11%) were Black, 1 (1%) was Hispanic, 87 (87%) were Caucasian, and 1 (1%) was indicated as other (Native American). One returned survey response for principals did not indicate ethnicity.

The ethnicity distribution for assistant principals broke down according to school level as follows: 3 elementary assistant principals were Black (14%), 1 was Hispanic (5%), and 17 were Caucasian (81%). At the middle school level, 5 assistant principals were Black (27%) and 19

were Caucasian (79%). At the high school level, 3 assistant principals were Black (14%), 1 was Hispanic (5%), and 20 were Caucasian (81%).

For the principalship, the distributions for ethnicity at each school level disaggregated as follows: 3 elementary principals were Black (9%), 1 was Hispanic (3%), and 29 were Caucasian (88%). At the middle school level 4 principals were Black (14%) and 25 were Caucasian (86%). At the high school level, 4 principals were Black (11%), 33 were Caucasian (87%), and one indicated their ethnicity as Native American (1%).

In summary, the assistant principal respondents were more likely to be female and represented greater ethnic diversity than principals. While Caucasians dominated the majority of the positions among both assistant principal and principal respondents, the assistant principalship contained more Hispanic and Black practitioners than the principal respondents. Hispanic candidates were clearly lacking in the principalship and assistant principalship positions surveyed. Also, there were no Asian/Pacific Islander respondents for either the assistant principal or principal positions surveyed.

The results of the response rates, school level and personal demographic information appear in Table 5.

Table 5
Response Rates and Personal Demographics of Assistant Principal and Principal Respondent

	Elementary School		Middle School		High School		Total	
Response Rate	Respondents	Percentage	Respondents	Percentage	Respondents	Percentage	Respondents	Percentage
Assistant Principals	<i>n</i> = 22	71%	<i>n</i> = 24	48%	<i>n</i> = 23	46%	<i>n</i> = 69	53%
Principals	<i>n</i> = 34	68%	<i>n</i> = 29	58%	<i>n</i> = 38	76%	<i>n</i> = 101	67%
School Level								
Assistant Principals	<i>n</i> = 22	31%	<i>n</i> = 24	36%	<i>n</i> = 23	33%	<i>n</i> = 69	100%
Principals	<i>n</i> = 34	34%	<i>n</i> = 29	29%	<i>n</i> = 38	38%	<i>n</i> = 101	100%
Gender								
AP Males	<i>n</i> = 5	24%	<i>n</i> = 12	50%	<i>n</i> = 11	50%	<i>n</i> = 28	42%
AP Females	<i>n</i> = 16	76%	<i>n</i> = 12	50%	<i>n</i> = 11	50%	<i>n</i> = 39	58%
	<i>n</i> = 21		<i>n</i> = 24		<i>n</i> = 22		<i>n</i> = 67	100%
P Males	<i>n</i> = 19	58%	<i>n</i> = 19	66%	<i>n</i> = 28	74%	<i>n</i> = 66	66%
P Females	<i>n</i> = 14	42%	<i>n</i> = 10	34%	<i>n</i> = 10	26%	<i>n</i> = 34	34%
	<i>n</i> = 33		<i>n</i> = 29		<i>n</i> = 39		<i>n</i> = 100	100%
Ethnicity								
Black AP	<i>n</i> = 3	14%	<i>n</i> = 5	27%	<i>n</i> = 3	14%	<i>n</i> = 11	16%
Hispanic AP	<i>n</i> = 1	5%	<i>n</i> = 0	0%	<i>n</i> = 1	5%	<i>n</i> = 2	3%
Caucasian AP	<i>n</i> = 17	81%	<i>n</i> = 19	79%	<i>n</i> = 20	81%	<i>n</i> = 56	81%
	<i>n</i> = 21		<i>n</i> = 24		<i>n</i> = 24		<i>n</i> = 69	
Black P	<i>n</i> = 3	9%	<i>n</i> = 4	14%	<i>n</i> = 4	11%	<i>n</i> = 11	11%
Hispanic P	<i>n</i> = 1	3%	<i>n</i> = 0	0%	<i>n</i> = 0	0%	<i>n</i> = 1	1%
Caucasian P	<i>n</i> = 29	88%	<i>n</i> = 25	86%	<i>n</i> = 33	87%	<i>n</i> = 87	86%
Other P (Native American)	<i>n</i> = 0	0%	<i>n</i> = 0	0%	<i>n</i> = 1	1%	<i>n</i> = 1	1%
	<i>n</i> = 33		<i>n</i> = 29		<i>n</i> = 38		<i>n</i> = 100	

Professional Demographics

The survey instrument employed in this research contained six questions related to the respondents' professional experience. Specifically, these questions asked each respondent to identify: (a) their current position, (b) the number of years that they have been in their present position, (c) the number of years the subject has worked as a school administrator, (d) the number of years that the subject has worked at their current school, (e) the number of years of classroom experience that each respondent had, and (f) the grade level at which the subject currently works. A separate question in the second section asked respondents to identify the approximate total number of hours per week that they spent in their role as assistant principal or principal. This number included commuting to and from work.

Assistant principals. The assistant principal respondents had been in their current positions for an average of 4.57 years. They had been working in school administration for an average of 5.82 years and had worked at their current schools for an average of 6.03 years. As a whole, assistant principal respondents spent an average of 12.95 years teaching in the classroom before entering school administration.

When broken down according to the school level, the elementary assistant principals had been in their positions for slightly less time than the total averages for the assistant principal respondents. Elementary assistant principals were in their current positions for an average of 3.14 years, had been in school administration for 4.76 years, had worked at their current school for 4.88 years, and had been teaching prior to entering administration for 14.3 years. On average, elementary assistant principals spent a little over 2 additional years teaching in the classroom than other assistant principals before entering into the assistant principalship.

The middle school assistant principals, on average, spent slightly more time in their current positions, but less time teaching in the classroom prior to entering the assistant principalship, than their elementary counterparts. On average, middle school assistant principals spent 5.17 years in their current positions, had been school administrators for 6.21 years, worked at their current schools for 7.23 years, and had 10.9 years of prior classroom teaching experience.

At the high school level, assistant principals maintained steady pace with the averages of their elementary and middle school assistant principal colleagues in the assistant principal respondent profile, but much like their elementary counterparts, they had spent more time teaching in the classroom prior to entering the assistant principalship. High school assistant principals, on average, had 5.04 years in their current positions, had been school administrators for 6.04 years, had worked at their current schools for 5.55 years, and had 14.67 years of prior teaching experience.

The average number of hours that the assistant principal respondents spent in their roles, including commuting time, was 52.23 hours. On average, high school assistant principals devoted the most time per week to their positions with 57.24 hours per week. Middle school assistant principals spent slightly less time per week on the average with 51.06 hours, and elementary school assistant principals reported spending the least amount of time on average in their roles with 48.48 hours.

Principals. In comparison, the average number of years that the principal respondents had been in their positions was 6.54 years. They had worked in school administration, on average, more than twice as long as their assistant principals (13.07 years) and had worked at their current schools for 7.9 years. On average, principal respondents had spent less time in the

classroom teaching (10.36 years) before entering school administration than the assistant principal respondents. Based on these data, the principal respondents represented a more experienced group of school administrators, having worked longer in school administration than the assistant principals and remaining in their positions for an average of two years longer than the assistant principals respondents.

In terms of school level, elementary principals had remained in their current positions for an average of 6.41 years, had worked as school administrators for 12.3 years, had been at their current schools for an average of 6.45 years, and had 10.06 years of teaching experience, which was slightly less than the total average for classroom teaching among principal respondents.

Middle school principals had been in their positions for an average of 5.81 years, had been in school administration for slightly less time than their elementary counterparts at 10.78 years, had worked at their current schools for 6.18 years, and had taught in the classroom for an average of 9.76 years prior to entering school administration.

At the high school level, principals had been in their current positions longer than both their middle and elementary counterparts at 7.21 years, had been in school administration for 15.49 years, had worked at their current schools for an average of 10.46 years, and had an average of 11.07 years of prior classroom teaching experience before entering into building administration. High school principal respondents had served in their positions longer than their elementary and middle school colleagues.

Principal respondents reported spending an average of 55.21 hours per week on the job, which included commuting time. High school principals, much like their assistant principal counterparts, spent the most amount of time per week in their roles with an average of 58.32

hours. Middle school principal respondents reported spending an average of 53.97 hours in their roles weekly. Elementary principal respondents spent the least amount of time, which was consistent with their elementary assistant principal administrative team members, with an average of 53.21 hours. Elementary assistant principal respondents spent the least amount of time in their roles per week than any other group or level of respondents in this survey, and elementary assistant principals and principals spent the least amount of time in their roles than their middle and high school counterparts. Conversely, high school assistant principal and principal respondents reported spending the most amount of time per week on the job than any other group of assistant principal or principal respondents. A summary of these data appears in Table 6.

Table 6
Professional Demographics of Assistant Principal and Principal Respondents

Demographic	Elementary School		Middle School		High School		Total	
	AP	P	AP	P	AP	P	AP	P
Years in Current Position	3.15	6.41	5.17	5.81	5.04	7.21	4.57	6.54
Total Years in School Administration	4.76	12.30	6.21	10.78	6.04	15.49	5.82	13.07
Years of Classroom Teaching Experience	14.30	10.06	10.90	9.76	14.67	11.07	12.95	10.36
Hours Per Week Worked (Includes Commuting)	48.48	53.21	51.06	53.40	57.24	58.32	52.23	55.21

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

Section C of the survey instrument asked respondents to report how much time in their current positions they devoted to 38 identified responsibilities. These duties were taken from the Maine Principals' Study, which had isolated these responsibility categories from a review of the extant literature on the assistant principalship.

The identified responsibilities were assigned to one of seven Activity Clusters, Student Management, Personnel Management, Interactions with Educational Hierarchy, Resource Management, Public Relations, Instructional Leadership, and Professional Development. A 4-point Likert scale was used to allow respondents to indicate whether they 1: rarely, 2: occasionally, 3: often, or 4: very often engaged in these activities. Table 7 presents the Activity Clusters and their assigned activities, along with the mean averages and standard deviations for the responses for both principal and assistant principal respondents, as well as the mean averages and standard deviations for each Activity Cluster. A discussion of the findings in Table 7 appears below.

Assistant Principal and Principal Roles and Responsibilities

Assistant principal respondents reported their highest mean average for the seven Activity Clusters in student management. Principal respondents reported their highest mean average in the personnel management activity cluster. Assistant principals reported the highest mean average for the duty of resolving student behaviors (3.76). Principals reported their highest mean average for the duty of supervising and evaluating their teachers (3.48). A discussion of the findings for each Activity Cluster follows.

Student management. Within the student management activity cluster, assistant principal and principal respondents indicated that the responsibility of contact with parent regarding their child was an area of involvement to which each devoted similar amounts of time in their daily activities. Principal respondents also reported often resolving student learning issues (3.19). Overall for the student management activity cluster, assistant principal and principal respondents reported mean averages showing that they often devote time to working with managing student behavior (3.02), resolving student learning issues (3.19), resolving student behaviors (2.97), and contacting parents with regard to their child's behavior (3.26). Assistant principals and principals also often reported working with special needs student issues.

Personnel management. In this Activity Cluster the responsibilities of responding to teachers' needs, responding to the needs of support personnel, recruiting and hiring instructional personnel, and supervising and evaluating teachers and support staff were reported by both assistant principals and principals as often being performed. Principals indicated that they were also actively involved with scheduling classes and instructional events (3.01), conducting faculty meetings (3.19), and coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis (3.26). Social activities with the staff was assigned the lowest ranking for both sets of respondents. Personnel management was the activity cluster that reported the highest mean average (3.10) for principals among the seven Activity Clusters. Assistant principals reported only a slightly lower mean average (2.86) for the personnel management activity cluster than their principal partners, signifying that they do often perform duties within this activity cluster.

Interactions with education hierarchy. This Activity Cluster saw assistant principal respondents reporting that they spent a good deal of their time completing required reports (3.08)

and consulting with their superiors (3.11). Presumably their principals would be included within this circle of superiors with whom they consult. Assistant principal respondents indicated that they rarely to occasionally attended school board meetings (1.83). This remained consistent with the mean average that principal respondents reported for this responsibility category (2.29). Principal respondents indicated that they spent more time attending district administrative meetings (3.02) and completing required reports (3.22) than their assistant principal team members. Both sets of administrator respondents did not regularly deal with state and community agencies, and principals reported spending only slightly less time consulting with their superiors than assistant principal respondents.

Resource management. This Activity Cluster saw the most disparity between assistant principal and principal respondents. Overall, assistant principals indicated that they rarely to occasionally spent time preparing the budget (1.67) and practicing purchasing and accounting procedures (1.79). Assistant principals reported spending more time monitoring the use and condition of school equipment and materials (2.73) than the principal respondents (2.27). Both principal and assistant principal respondents indicated that they occasionally devoted time to working on fundraisers for the school. Principal respondents reported that they occasionally to often spent time preparing the budget (2.71) and practicing purchasing and accounting procedures (2.71), which was slightly higher than the mean averages reported by the assistant principal respondents for this responsibility. The assistant principal and principal respondents reported spending almost identical amounts of time monitoring the condition of the building and grounds.

Public relations. The mean averages reported by assistant principal and principal respondents for this Activity Cluster were consistent. Both groups reported dedicating the most amount of time in this cluster responding to parent and community inquiries. Principal and assistant principal subjects indicated that they spent comparable amounts of time preparing written information about the school and its events and that occasionally to very often initiate contacts with parent and citizen groups.

Instructional leadership. For this Activity Cluster principal respondents reported that they often engaged in curriculum development and activities, collected and used student assessment data, and engaged in long-range program and curriculum planning. Assistant principals indicated that they spent the largest amount of their time collecting and using student data. Assistant principals also occasionally to often attended meetings and workshops on school improvement, and engaged in curriculum development and activities. Assistant principal and principal respondents consistently indicated that they did not devote significant amounts of their time in direct involvement in teaching and the selection of texts and instructional materials. Principals spent slightly more time evaluating the effectiveness of programs and curriculum than assistant principals. Principals often devoted time on long-range program and curriculum development.

Professional development. Again, strong consistency was found among the reported responses from the assistant principal and principal respondents. Both groups indicated that they occasionally to often engaged in professional reading to remain current, provided inservice programs for instructional personnel, and attended meetings and courses for their professional growth. It must be noted, however, that there was a large degree of variability among the

assistant principal responses with regard to engaging in professional reading to remain current and attending meetings and courses for professional growth. Principals and assistant principals both reported occasionally spending time attending meetings and courses for their own professional growth.

Summary. The Activity Cluster that assistant principal respondents often reported spending time on was student management. Personnel management and public relations were almost even as the second and third activity clusters, respectively, to which assistant principals reported occasionally to often devoting their time. The Activity Cluster that assistant principals reported spending the least amount of time on was resource management. Overall, assistant principals reported occasionally to often devoting their time to each of the seven Activity Clusters and remained fairly consistent with the mean averages reported by their principal counterparts for the amount of time that they devote to these clusters.

Assistant principal respondents revealed that they often spend time completing required reports, resolving student behavior problems, contacting parents about their children, monitoring the condition of the buildings and grounds, dealing with special needs student issues, supervising and evaluating teachers and support staff, responding to the needs of teachers, dealing with state and community agencies, responding to parent and community inquiries, and responding to the needs of support staff as specific responsibilities or duties. They also often devote time collecting and using student assessment data and attending meetings and workshops on school improvement. Budget preparation, purchasing and accounting procedures, direct involvement in teaching, attending school board meetings, and social activities with staff were responsibilities that assistant principals reported rarely to occasionally spending their time on.

Principal subjects often devoted their time toward personnel management, with student management and public relations as the second and third Activity Clusters, respectively, to which they also devote a great deal of time. The area that principals reported spending the least amount of time on was resource management. This remained consistent with the assistant principal respondents and their mean averages for this Activity Cluster. Assistant principal respondents reported occasionally to often working with duties in the personnel management and public relations Activity Clusters.

Principal respondents indicated that they often to very often spent time supervising and evaluating their teachers, responding to the needs of teachers and support personnel, resolving student learning issues, working with special needs students, contacting parents about their child's behavior, responding to parent and community inquiries, monitoring the condition of the buildings and grounds, and engaging in long-range program and curriculum planning in terms of specific responsibilities. They also indicated that they often conduct faculty meetings, initiate contact with parent and citizen groups, and prepare written information about the school and events. Principals reported rarely to occasionally devoting time working on fundraisers for the school, dealing with state and community agencies, teaching in the classroom, and attending school board meetings.

The mean averages for each of the Activity Clusters that were reported by the assistant principal and principal respondents suggest a cooperative relationship forged between the assistant principal and principal respondents. Assistant principals reported devoting time to a wide array of responsibilities across the 38 responsibilities and the seven Activity Clusters. Principals and assistant principals reported occasionally to often spending time dealing with

student management issues, personnel management, and public relations. They also occasionally worked with duties related to resource management and interacted with the educational hierarchy. Assistant principal and principal respondents also occasionally dealt with responsibilities that focus on professional development and instructional leadership.

Table 7
Assistant Principal and Principal Frequency of Engagement in Roles and Responsibilities

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Assistant Principals (n=69)		Principals (n=101)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD
STUDENT MANAGEMENT	3.30	.45	3.02	.22
Resolving Student Behaviors	3.76	.52	2.97	.77
Direct Supervision of Students	3.30	.81	2.97	.86
Resolving Student Learning Issues	2.97	.76	3.19	.71
Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.74	1.07	2.69	.97
Contact with Parent Regarding Their Child	3.70	.58	3.26	.69
Special Needs Student Issues	3.38	.82	3.02	.84
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	2.86	.51	3.10	.43
Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.39	.62	3.48	.61
Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	2.95	.99	3.1	.82
Social Activities with Staff	2.12	.81	2.09	.85
Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	2.58	.96	3.01	.82
Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.44	.93	3.19	.91
Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.67	.56	3.6	.67
Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.30	.90	3.20	.78
Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.44	.99	2.99	.8
Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	2.86	1.04	3.26	.79

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Assistant Principals (<i>n</i> =69)		Principals (<i>n</i> =101)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION HIERARCHY	2.31	.48	2.70	.47
School Board Meetings	1.83	.91	2.29	1.04
District Administrative Meetings	2.33	.93	3.02	.82
Consulting with Superiors	3.11	.95	2.84	.91
Dealing with State/Community Agencies	2.20	.97	2.14	.93
Completing Required Reports	3.08	.95	3.22	.77
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	2.23	.61	2.54	.45
Budget Preparation	1.67	.93	2.71	.82
Monitoring Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	2.73	.97	2.27	.90
Fundraisers for the School	2.03	1.04	1.93	.86
Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.79	.96	2.71	.90
Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	3.06	.94	3.08	.91
PUBLIC RELATIONS	2.80	.45	2.89	.35
Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	3.32	.79	3.26	.88
Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	2.58	.96	2.56	.89
Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.50	.95	2.86	.77

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Assistant Principals (<i>n</i> =69)		Principals (<i>n</i> =101)	
	Mean ^b	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	2.55	.41	2.76	.44
Curriculum Development and Activities	2.74	.88	3.04	.74
Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.21	.88	2.22	.69
Direct Involvement in Teaching	1.89	.93	2.11	.91
Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.12	.96	3.25	.67
Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	2.86	1.04	2.68	.87
Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.48	1.08	2.95	.76
Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.52	.99	3.07	.69
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	2.71	.17	2.74	.17
Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.91	1.00	2.81	.85
InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.59	.91	2.86	.74
Attending Meetings/Courses for my Professional Growth	2.64	1.02	2.54	.80

^a Activity Clusters appear in bold type.

^b Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Assignment of Responsibilities and Career Goals

The final section of the survey instrument posed two questions to the assistant principal and principal respondents.

The first asked the two groups who primarily assigns the assistant principal responsibilities in their school district. The subjects were asked to check all of the responses that would apply: (a) principal of building, once assigned; (b) assistant principal job description delineated by Human Resources/Central Office; and (c) other. Overwhelmingly, 95% of the total responses to this first question indicated that the principals assigned assistant principal responsibilities once the assistant principal was assigned to the building. Three percent of the assistant principal and principal respondents indicated that the assistant principal's duties were delineated by a job description from Human Resources or the Central Office. Two percent indicated that there was another source for assistant principal responsibilities within their school division other than these first two choices, including the school board, division superintendent, assistant superintendent, a central office director of elementary or secondary education, or a collaborative process between the assistant principal and principal that determined the assistant principal duties.

Career goals. The second question was directed toward the assistant principal respondents. It asked which of the following choices represented their career goal: (a) Advancing to a principalship, (b) Remaining as a career assistant principal, or (c) Other. One assistant principal respondent did not respond to this final question. Forty-four respondents, or 66% of the assistant principals surveyed, indicated that they wished to seek a principalship. Nine respondents, or 13%, stated that they would wish to remain as career assistant principals. Fifteen

(15) respondents, or 21%, indicated that they would wish to pursue another position as their career goal, most notably positions as division superintendents, assistant superintendents, or other administrative positions within the central office.

This question presented some interesting data when disaggregated according to the ethnicity and gender of the assistant principal respondents. Twenty-three percent of the respondents who were Black indicated another choice than aspiring to become a principal or a career assistant principal. Seventy-seven percent of the Caucasian assistant principal respondents also indicated that they would aspire to become something other than a principal or a career assistant principal. Eleven percent of Black assistant principal respondents indicated that they wished to remain a career assistant principal and 15% of Black assistant principal respondents indicated that they would like to enter into a principalship.

Fifteen percent of Caucasian assistant principal respondents indicated that they wished to become career assistant principals, and 80% indicated that they would wish to become principals. Five percent of the Hispanic respondents indicated that they would aspire to a principalship. These data are summarized in Table 8.

Assistant principal responses to this final question were also disaggregated according to gender. Seventy-one percent of the female assistant principals and 29% of male assistant principals indicated that they wished to pursue a principalship. Forty-four percent of the female assistant principals and 56% of the male respondents indicated that they wished to remain career assistant principals. Finally, 57% of female assistant principals and 43% of male assistant principals indicated that they would wish to pursue another career path other than a career assistant principalship or a principalship.

There was a large difference between the first set of comparative data among males and females regarding their desire to ascend to a principalship. The two alternative response options offered on the survey instrument produced a more even distribution across gender lines when considering a career assistant principalship and/or an alternative position to the assistant principalship. Overwhelmingly, a strong majority of female assistant principals wished to pursue a principalship. Male assistant principals seemed to covet a career assistant principal's position or desired to pursue another career path or position within educational administration.

Table 8
Career Goals of Current Assistant Principals

	Principalship	Career Assistant Principalship	Other
Total			
<i>n</i> = 68	66% <i>n</i> = 44	13% <i>n</i> = 9	21% <i>n</i> = 15
Ethnicity			
Black	15% <i>n</i> = 7	11% <i>n</i> = 1	23% <i>n</i> = 3
Hispanic	5% <i>n</i> = 2	0% <i>n</i> = 0	0% <i>n</i> = 0
Caucasian	80% <i>n</i> = 35	15% <i>n</i> = 8	77% <i>n</i> = 10
Gender			
Female	71% <i>n</i> = 10	44% <i>n</i> = 4	57% <i>n</i> = 25
Male	29% <i>n</i> = 4	56% <i>n</i> = 5	43% <i>n</i> = 19

Findings for Research Questions

This purpose of this research was to identify and document the responsibilities of current assistant principals in Virginia and compare them to the responsibilities identified in the extant literature that focuses on assistant principal duties, as well as the duties specified in the Code of Virginia. The responsibilities of current assistant principals in Virginia were compared among school level, gender, and ethnicity to determine if any significant differences exist in the responsibilities performed by assistant principals within these subgroups. Finally, the responsibilities of current assistant principals were compared to the responsibilities of current principals in Virginia.

Four research questions were investigated for this study:

1. What assistant principal responsibilities are described in the extant literature?
2. What are the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings by school level, gender, and ethnicity?
3. How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and the principal responsibilities in the Code of Virginia?
4. How do the duties of practicing assistant principals compare to those of practicing principals in the state of Virginia?

The responses are presented by individually addressing each research question.

Research Question # 1: What assistant principal responsibilities are described in the extant literature?

The review of the extant literature on the assistant principalship as outlined and presented in the literature review (Chapter 2) identified the general responsibilities and roles of assistant

principals. By conducting a simple frequency count for the 33 responsibilities discussed in the 28 articles that made up the review, a rank order was established. Their rank order appears in Table 9.

Assistant Principal Responsibilities in the Extant Literature

A review of the literature indicated that responsibilities focusing on student and personnel management, as well as curriculum and instruction, were prevalent. Student discipline was the most heavily identified and discussed responsibility within the 28 articles that made up the body of extant literature. Assistant principals in these studies reported spending a large majority of their time disciplining and monitoring students, attending athletic activities, and co-curricular programs, monitoring student attendance, and observing and evaluating teaching and support staff. The remaining duties that were identified and discussed appeared only sporadically.

Curriculum, instruction, and school improvement was the only instructional leadership activity that appeared in the entire range of 33 isolated duties from the extant literature on the assistant principalship. While it appeared more frequently than 22 other isolated responsibilities, it received mention or identification in only 43% of the extant literature. Monitoring duties, student attendance, and attending athletic activities, and co-curricular programs outranked this instructional leadership activity consistently throughout the review of the literature. Overall, the clear majority of assistant principal duties fell into the administrative or managerial domains of building administration. The responsibilities isolated and identified in the extant literature focused heavily on resource, personnel, and student management. The extant literature clearly supported the notion that assistant principals spend the majority of their days engaged in

activities that focus on the monitoring and disciplining of their students and the evaluation of their teachers.

The rank order of the assistant principal responsibilities also supports the idea that assistant principal responsibilities involving public relations, personnel management, instructional leadership, interactions with educational hierarchy, resource management and professional development appear or are performed infrequently in the course of an assistant principal's day.

Other assistant principal duties, such as special education services, for example, received identification and discussion in more recent articles within the extant literature on assistant principal responsibilities. Thus, Harvey and Sheridan (1995), Wells et al. (1999), and Roberson (2003) indicated that the duty of special education services was a more recent addition to the collection of duties that assistant principals perform. Before Harvey and Sheridan's article, which was published in 1995, special education services was not identified as a formal responsibility within the daily regimen of assistant principals. The consistency of other duties, however, such as student discipline, evaluation of staff and teachers, monitoring students, and attending athletic, extra-, and co-curricular events clearly and solidly cut across the span of the 35 years of the existing body of literature on assistant principal duties and establishes these duties as perennial or regular ones that almost every assistant principal performs on a consistent and daily basis.

Table 9

Responsibilities of Assistant Principals Within the Extant Literature

Responsibility	Frequency (<i>n</i> = 28)	Percentage ^a
Student Discipline	26	93%
Observations/Evaluations of Teachers and Staff	17	61%
Activity/Athletic/Co-Curricular Programs	16	57%
Monitoring Students	16	57%
Student Attendance	14	50%
Curriculum/Instruction/School Improvement	12	43%
Building Supervision and Maintenance	11	39%
Parent Conferences and Communication	10	36%
Professional Development	7	25%
Remediation/Student Support	7	25%
Scheduling	6	21%
School Safety	6	21%
Media and Community Relations	5	18%
Preparation of Monthly/Yearly Reports	5	18%
School/District Policy	5	18%
Serve as Principal in the Principal's Absence	5	18%
Bus Duty	4	14%
Consulting/Supervising Guidance	4	14%
Selection/Hiring of Faculty/Staff	4	14%
School Calendar	4	14%
Textbooks	4	14%
Alternative Education Programs	3	11%
Budget	3	11%
Graduation Announcements	3	11%

Responsibility	Frequency ($n = 28$)	Percentage ^a
Locks and Locker Assignments	3	11%
Special Education Services	3	11%
New Teacher Orientations	2	7%
Parking	2	7%
Preparation of Teacher Handbooks	2	7%
Staff Development	2	7%
Arranging Faculty Meetings	1	4%
Exam Scheduling and Supervision	1	4%
Report Cards	1	4%

^a Percentage of articles from the extant literature in which the identified assistant principal responsibility is discussed.

Research Question #2: What are the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings as determined by school level, gender and ethnicity?

Table 7 presents a complete overview of the duties that current assistant principals in Virginia reported performing. In response to Research Question #2, the data presented in Table 7 were sorted according to the school level (elementary, middle, and high school), the gender (male and female), and the ethnicity (Black, Hispanic, Caucasian) of the assistant principal respondents in this study. The mean averages and standard deviations for the 38 identified responsibilities appear in Tables 10, 14, and 17. The comparison data for the mean averages and standard deviations for each Activity Cluster for the identified groups (school level, gender, and ethnicity) appear in Tables 11, 15, and 18. The data for the ANOVAs that were performed for the comparison of the mean averages for the seven Activity Clusters for the identified groups appear in Tables 12, 16, and 19. Finally, a Tukey (HSD) post-hoc analysis was employed to analyze the

results of the ANOVAs for the comparison of the mean averages for the activity clusters of school level. The results of the Tukey (HSD) post-hoc analysis appears in Table 13.

Assistant Principal Responsibilities and School Level

The data in Tables 10 and 11 exhibited three noticeable trends for the mean averages reported by elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals.

Higher mean averages for high school assistant principals. High school assistant principals reported higher mean averages in 36 out of 38 identified assistant principal responsibilities and posted higher mean averages in every one of the seven Activity Clusters. Overall, high school assistant principals reported higher mean averages for their responsibilities than their middle and elementary school colleagues, indicating that they perceive themselves devoting more time, overall, to these responsibilities than their elementary and middle school peers.

Only one of the comparisons of the mean averages between elementary, middle, and high school assistant principal Activity Clusters produced a significant difference within the instructional leadership activity cluster at the $p < .05$ level. A Tukey (HSD) post-hoc analysis revealed that the difference between the mean averages of high school and middle school assistant principals for the instructional leadership Activity Cluster was significant at the .05 level. A comparison of the mean averages for the remaining six Activity Clusters revealed no significant differences at the .05 level.

Subtle differences in time spent on duties by level. A second trend in these data speaks to the fact that there are subtle differences in the amount of time that elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals devote to specific responsibilities. This signified that the

responsibilities or duties that assistant principals perform vary according to the needs and subtle differences between the school levels. Thus, the difference between the school levels and the needs of their learning communities, such as the variations in instructional programs, the needs of students and parents, and differences in how teachers and staff are utilized, for example, place different requirements and emphases on different responsibilities among the three levels of assistant principals and the duties that they perform. The responsibilities performed by the assistant principal respondents in this study also represent a variety of duties across each of the seven Activity Clusters, with assistant principal respondents reporting that they occasionally to often practice the 38 identified responsibilities.

Elementary school assistant principals reported the lowest mean average (3.07) in the student management Activity Cluster; whereas, high school assistant principal respondents reported the highest mean average in this cluster (3.65). Elementary school assistant principals reported occasionally to often directly supervising their students (2.90) and organizing and supervising co-curricular activities (2.10). Middle school assistant principal respondents reported the highest mean average for the individual responsibility of resolving student behavior problems (3.92). This mean average was the highest reported average among all of the comparisons for individual responsibilities and activity clusters in this study. Clearly, middle school assistant principals very often deal with resolving student behaviors during the course of their workdays. By comparison, high school assistant principals reported often devoting time to special needs student issues. The mean average that high school assistant principals reported for this responsibility (3.64) was higher than their elementary (3.33) and middle school (3.17). High school assistant principals also reported often devoting their time to directly supervising their

students (3.60). Elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals also reported that they often contact parents with regard to their child. Among the seven Activity Clusters, all three school level assistant principals reported often devoting their time to student management.

Middle school assistant principals reported the lowest mean average of the three school levels (2.65) for the Activity Cluster of personnel management. Additionally, middle school assistant principals reported lower mean averages than their elementary and high school colleagues in seven of nine individual responsibilities within the Activity Cluster of personnel management. The individual responsibilities within this Activity Cluster focus primarily on the observation and evaluation of teachers and support staff. Other individual responsibilities include responding to the needs of teachers and support staff.

Elementary assistant principals reported often devoting their time (3.29) to supervising and evaluating their support staff. The mean average that elementary assistant principals reported for this responsibility was higher than the mean average reported for middle school and high school assistant principals. This may be explained in part because of the difference in the configuration and use of support personnel at the elementary level. That is, instructional assistants and support staff are more directly involved with the instruction of elementary students and require either direct supervision, evaluation, or both from the administrators in the elementary school building. The three levels of assistant principals consistently reported that responding to their teachers' needs was also an activity to which they often devoted their time.

Elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals reported the second lowest overall mean averages for responsibilities in the Activity Cluster of interactions with education hierarchy. For example, all three levels of assistant principals indicated that they rarely to

occasionally attend school board meetings and they also occasionally attend administrative meetings at the district level. High school assistant principals reported often spending time consulting with their superiors (3.41). This mean average was slightly higher than the one reported for elementary (2.95) and middle school assistant principals (2.96). Elementary and middle school assistant principals reported rarely to occasionally dealing with state and community agencies, compared to high school assistant principals, who responded occasionally to often working with state and community agencies (2.86). Elementary and high school assistant principals reported often having to complete required reports, whereas middle school assistant principals reported a lower mean average for this activity (2.58).

Low rating on resource management. The third trend that was noted in the review of the data on assistant principal responsibilities, as compared on the basis of school level, was that resource management received the lowest mean average ratings among all three levels of assistant principals for all of the seven Activity Clusters. Elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals reported that they rarely to occasionally worked with budget preparation, coordinating fundraisers for their schools, and working with purchasing and accounting procedures. The responsibilities of monitoring both the use and condition of equipment and materials and the condition of the buildings and grounds were reported as occasionally to often practiced by the assistant principals at all three instructional levels.

All three levels of assistant principals often responded to parent and community inquiries. They also occasionally reported devoting their time to initiating contacts with parent and citizen groups and preparing written information about the school and its events. Overall, the responsibilities within the public relations Activity Cluster were occasionally practiced by

elementary and middle school assistant principals and reported as often being practiced by the high school assistant principals (3.04).

The activity cluster of instructional leadership revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean average for the cluster reported by middle school assistant principals (2.20) and high school assistant principals (2.92) at the .05 level. Elementary, middle and high school assistant principals rarely to occasionally reported having any direct involvement in teaching. Middle school assistant principals also reported rarely to occasionally engaging themselves in the selection of texts and materials (1.88) and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and curriculum (1.92). They only occasionally reported working in long-range program and curriculum planning (2.13). Conversely, high school assistant principals often engaged in evaluating the effectiveness of programs and curriculum (3.18), attending meetings and workshops on school improvement (3.18), and curriculum development and activities (3.23). Elementary and high school assistant principals often reported collecting and using student assessment data as well. Middle school assistant principals occasionally to often reported engaging in these activities and only occasionally working with responsibilities in this entire activity cluster (2.20).

The three levels of assistant principals reported occasionally to often reading professional literature to remain current, providing inservice programs for instructional personnel, and attending meetings for their professional growth in the activity cluster of professional development. Overall, assistant principals across all three levels reported occasionally to often performing responsibilities and duties in the professional development Activity Cluster.

Table 10
Responsibilities of Elementary, Middle, and High School Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Elementary AP (n=22)		Middle School AP (n=24)		High School AP (n=23)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
STUDENT MANAGEMENT	3.07	.57	3.27	.48	3.56	.24	3.30	.45
Resolving Student Behaviors	3.57	.68	3.92	.28	3.77	.53	3.76	.52
Direct Supervision of Students	2.90	.89	3.42	.72	3.60	.73	3.30	.81
Resolving Student Learning Issues	2.90	.62	2.71	.81	3.32	.72	2.97	.76
Organizing & Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.10	.83	2.79	1.06	3.23	1.02	2.74	1.07
Contact with Parent Regarding Their Child	3.62	.50	3.63	.77	3.82	.39	3.70	.58
Special Needs Student Issues	3.33	1.11	3.17	.70	3.64	.58	3.38	.82
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	2.86	.60	2.65	.48	3.04	.51	2.86	.51
Supervision & Evaluation of Teachers	3.43	.51	3.13	.54	3.64	.73	3.39	.62
Supervision & Evaluation of Support Staff	3.29	.78	2.58	.97	3.0	1.11	2.95	.99
Social Activities with Staff	2.0	.71	2.04	.91	2.32	.78	2.12	.81
Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	2.57	.87	2.42	.93	2.77	1.11	2.58	.96
Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.38	.97	2.25	.90	2.64	.90	2.44	.93
Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.67	.48	3.46	.72	3.86	.35	3.67	.56

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Elementary AP (n=22)		Middle School AP (n=24)		High School AP (n=23)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.29	.78	3.13	1.12	3.5	.74	3.30	.90
Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.19	.98	2.33	.92	2.73	1.03	2.44	.99
Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	2.90	.76	2.50	1.18	2.91	.97	2.86	1.04
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION HIERARCHY	2.33	.65	2.29	.47	2.87	.65	2.31	.48
School Board Meetings	1.71	.90	1.79	.93	1.95	.95	1.83	.91
District Administrative Meetings	2.23	.89	2.13	.90	2.59	1.01	2.33	.93
Consulting with Superiors	2.95	.80	2.96	1.16	3.41	.80	3.11	.95
Dealing with State/Community Agencies	1.71	.90	2.0	.88	2.86	.77	2.20	.97
Completing Required Reports	3.05	.86	2.58	1.06	3.55	.67	3.08	.95
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	1.99	.64	2.07	.74	2.52	.52	2.23	.61
Budget Preparation	1.52	.93	1.46	.78	2.0	.93	1.67	.93
Monitoring Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	2.33	.97	2.79	.93	2.95	.95	2.73	.97
Fundraisers for the School	1.90	.94	2.04	1.12	2.14	1.13	2.03	1.04
Purchasing & Accounting Procedures	1.29	.56	1.71	.91	2.32	.99	1.79	.96

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Elementary AP (n=22)		Middle School AP (n=24)		High School AP (n=23)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	2.90	.89	3.04	.95	3.18	1.01	3.06	.94
PUBLIC RELATIONS	2.7	.47	2.63	.51	3.04	.35	2.80	.45
Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	3.24	.70	3.21	.98	3.45	.67	3.32	.79
Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	2.38	.92	2.42	1.06	2.86	.89	2.58	.96
Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.48	.81	2.25	1.07	2.82	.85	2.50	.95
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	2.55	.41	2.20	.44	2.92	.44	2.55	.41
Curriculum Development and Activities	2.71	.85	2.33	.76	3.23	.87	2.74	.88
Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.33	.86	1.88	.74	2.45	1.01	2.21	.88
Direct Involvement in Teaching	1.90	.77	1.63	.82	2.18	1.14	1.89	.93
Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.19	.75	2.88	1.03	3.32	1.04	3.12	.96
Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	2.81	.98	2.63	1.13	3.18	.91	2.86	1.04
Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.40	.99	1.92	.97	3.18	1.01	2.48	1.08
Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.52	.98	2.13	.90	2.91	.97	2.52	.99

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Elementary AP (n=22)		Middle School AP (n=24)		High School AP (n=23)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	2.68	.29	2.54	.22	2.94	.14	2.71	.17
Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.95	.86	2.71	1.20	3.09	.92	2.91	1.00
InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.71	.85	2.29	.75	2.82	1.10	2.59	.91
Attending Meetings/Courses for my Professional Growth	2.38	.92	2.63	1.06	2.91	1.02	2.64	1.02

^a Activity Clusters appear in bold type.

^b Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 11
Mean Averages and Standard Deviations for Activity Clusters of Elementary, Middle, and High School Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Elementary AP (n = 22)		Middle School AP (n = 24)		High School AP (n = 23)		AP Total (n = 69)	
	Mean ^a	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Student Management	3.07	.57	3.27	.48	3.56	.24	3.30	.45
Personnel Management	2.86	.60	2.65	.48	3.04	.51	2.86	.51
Interactions with Education Hierarchy	2.33	.65	2.29	.47	2.87	.65	2.31	.48
Resource Management	1.99	.64	2.07	.74	2.52	.52	2.23	.61
Public Relations	2.70	.47	2.63	.51	3.04	.35	2.80	.45
Instructional Leadership	2.55	.41	2.20	.44	2.92	.44	2.55	.41
Professional Development	2.68	.29	2.54	.22	2.94	.14	2.71	.17

^a Range of scores on four-point Likert Scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often)

Table 12
Analysis of Variance for Activity Clusters of Elementary, Middle, and High School Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Significance*
Student Management	Between Groups	2	.74	.37	1.82	.20
	Within Groups	15	3.03	.20		
	Total	17	3.77			
Personnel Management	Between Groups	2	.69	.35	1.22	.31
	Within Groups	24	6.80	.28		
	Total	26	7.49			
Interactions with Education Hierarchy	Between Groups	2	1.05	.53	1.49	.27
	Within Groups	12	4.25	.35		
	Total	14	5.31			
Resource Management	Between Groups	2	.71	.35	.92	.42
	Within Groups	12	4.61	.38		
	Total	14	5.31			
Public Relations	Between Groups	2	.30	.15	.73	.52
	Within Groups	6	1.22	.20		
	Total	8	1.51			
Instructional Leadership	Between Groups	2	1.82	.91	4.92	.02
	Within Groups	18	3.33	.19		
	Total	20	5.15			
Professional Development	Between Groups	2	.24	.12	2.43	.17
	Within Groups	6	.30	.05		
	Total	8	.55			

* $p < .05$.

Table 13
Tukey (HSD) Post-Hoc Analysis for the Comparison of Elementary, Middle and High School Assistant Principals for Instructional Leadership Activity Cluster

(I) Level ^a	(J) Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1.00	2.00	.35	.23	.30	-.24	.94
	3.00	-.37	.23	.27	-.96	.22
2.00	1.00	-.35	.23	.30	-.94	.24
	3.00	.72*	.23	.02	-1.31	-.13
3.00	1.00	.37	.23	.27	-.22	.96
	2.00	.72*	.23	.02	.13	1.31

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

^a 1 = elementary AP, 2 = middle school AP, 3 = high school AP.

Assistant Principal Responsibilities and Gender

The comparison of assistant principal responsibilities by gender produced no significant differences in the reported mean averages for the Activity Clusters of these two groups, at the .05 confidence level. Female and male assistant principal respondents reported often engaging in student management responsibilities. They occasionally to often reported practicing responsibilities within the remaining six Activity Clusters.

Student management. For the Activity Cluster of student management, female and male assistant principals consistently reported that they often engaged in these activities. For activities involving contacting parents about their child, resolving student behavior problems, and directly supervising students, male and female assistant principal respondents reported that they often practiced these duties. Further, female assistant principals often reported resolving student learning issues (3.03), compared to male assistant principals who occasionally to often reported

engaging in this responsibility (2.89). Both male and female assistant principals reported occasionally to often organizing and supervising co-curricular activities. Female assistant principals reported a mean average of 3.56 for working with special needs student issues, which was slightly higher than the reported male assistant principal respondent mean average for this activity (3.11).

Personnel management. Responsibilities in this Activity Cluster were reported to be occasionally to often practiced by both male and female assistant principal respondents. Both sets of respondents reported that they often engaged in the duties of supervising and evaluating their teachers, and responding to their teachers' and support staff needs. Female and male assistant principal respondents occasionally attended social activities with their staff, and occasionally to often supervised and evaluated their support staff. Female assistant principals reported that they often coordinated staff efforts on a daily basis (3.10), compared to their male counterparts, who reported that they occasionally to often engaged in this activity (2.50). Female assistant principal respondents also occasionally to often recruited and hired instructional personnel (2.59) and scheduled classes and instructional events (2.87). Male assistant principal respondents reported occasionally engaging in these activities (2.18).

Interactions with education hierarchy. For the Activity Cluster of interactions with education hierarchy, both female and male assistant principals reported that they only rarely to occasionally attended school board meetings. They often reported consulting with their superiors, but only occasionally reported dealing with state and community agencies. Female assistant principals reported occasionally to often attending district administrative meetings (2.51) and often completed required reports (3.26). By comparison, male assistant principals

reported occasionally attending administrative meetings at the district level (2.04) and occasionally to often completing required reports (2.75).

Resource management. This Activity Cluster saw both male and female assistant principal respondents reporting their lowest mean averages in terms of time that they devote to these activities. They reported occasionally engaging in the duties within this activity cluster. For budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures, both female and male assistant principals rarely to occasionally devoted time to these responsibilities. They reported occasionally working with fundraising efforts for their school. Male assistant principals often reported monitoring the use and condition of equipment and materials (3.07) and monitoring the condition of the building and grounds (3.36). Female assistant principals reported occasionally to often monitoring the use and condition of equipment and materials (2.44) and monitoring the condition of the building and grounds (2.82).

Public Relations. Male and female assistant principal respondents remained consistent in their reported mean averages for the responsibilities within the public relations Activity Cluster, reporting that they occasionally to rarely engaged in these duties; however, responding to parent and community inquiries was the one duty in this Activity Cluster where both female (3.36) and male (3.21) assistant principals reported that they often engaged.

Instructional leadership. For the nine responsibilities that encompassed the instructional leadership Activity Cluster, female assistant principal respondents reported that they often collected and used student assessment data (3.31) and attended meetings and workshops on school improvement (3.03). Similarly, their male counterparts reported that they occasionally to often engaged in collecting and using student assessment data (2.86) and attended meetings and

workshops on school improvement (2.64). Male assistant principals also reported occasionally engaging in long-range program and curriculum planning (2.18) and rarely to occasionally having any direct involvement in teaching (1.64). Female assistant principals reported occasionally engaging in direct involvement in teaching (2.04), but more often performed long-range program and curriculum planning (2.74), evaluated the effectiveness of programs and curriculum (2.68), and worked with curriculum development and activities (2.87). Male assistant principals reported engaging in these responsibilities occasionally.

Professional Development. Female assistant principal respondents reported often engaging in the responsibilities (2.91) that encompassed the professional development Activity Cluster. Male assistant principals reported occasionally to often engaging (2.56) in these duties. Both sets of respondents reported often engaging in professional reading to remain current. Further, female assistant principals reported often attending meetings and courses for professional growth (3.03), whereas male assistant principals reported occasionally engaging in meetings and courses for professional growth (2.46) and conducting inservice programs for instructional personnel (2.39). Female assistant principals reported more often conducting these inservice programs (2.74).

Summary. A comparison of the mean averages of the Activity Clusters for male and female assistant principal respondents in this study showed that female assistant principals reported only slightly higher mean averages in five out of the seven Activity Clusters. Resource management was the Activity Cluster for which the lowest mean average was reported among female assistant principals. For males, the lowest mean average (2.34) was reported for resource management and instructional leadership. Both male and female assistant principals reported

occasionally to often engaging in the seven Activity Clusters that were identified in the survey instrument.

Table 14
Responsibilities of Male and Female Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Female AP (n=39)		Male AP (n=28)		AP Total (n= 67)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
STUDENT MANAGEMENT	3.33	.43	3.27	.40	3.30	.45
Resolving Student Behaviors	3.77	.54	3.75	.52	3.76	.52
Direct Supervision of Students	3.26	.82	3.39	.83	3.30	.81
Resolving Student Learning Issues	3.03	.78	2.89	.74	2.97	.76
Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.67	1.03	2.79	1.13	2.74	1.07
Contact with Parent Regarding Their Child	3.69	.52	3.68	.55	3.70	.58
Special Needs Student Issues	3.56	.82	3.11	.79	3.38	.82
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	2.96	.48	2.70	.60	2.86	.51
Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.46	.68	3.29	.53	3.39	.62
Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	2.97	1.06	2.89	.92	2.95	.99
Social Activities with Staff	2.15	.81	2.07	.81	2.12	.81
Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	2.87	.89	2.18	.94	2.58	.96
Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.56	.88	2.21	.96	2.44	.93
Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.69	.52	3.61	.63	3.67	.56
Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.23	.93	3.39	.88	3.30	.90
Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.59	.91	2.18	1.06	2.44	.99
Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	3.10	.91	2.50	1.11	2.86	1.04

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Female AP (n=39)		Male AP (n=28)		AP Total (n= 67)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION HIERARCHY	2.57	.63	2.43	.52	2.31	.48
School Board Meetings	1.79	.98	1.86	.85	1.83	.91
District Administrative Meetings	2.51	.94	2.04	.88	2.33	.93
Consulting with Superiors	3.13	.86	3.07	1.09	3.11	.95
Dealing with State/Community Agencies	2.15	.96	2.25	1.0	2.20	.97
Completing Required Reports	3.26	.88	2.75	1.00	3.08	.95
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	2.17	.46	2.34	.81	2.23	.61
Budget Preparation	1.72	.94	1.57	.84	1.67	.93
Monitoring Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	2.44	.97	3.07	.86	2.73	.97
Fundraisers for the School	2.10	1.10	1.93	1.02	2.03	1.04
Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.77	.90	1.79	.99	1.79	.96
Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	2.82	.97	3.36	.83	3.06	.94
PUBLIC RELATIONS	2.83	.46	2.73	.44	2.80	.45
Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	3.36	.84	3.21	.74	3.32	.79
Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	2.51	.94	2.61	1.03	2.58	.96
Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.62	.85	2.36	1.06	2.50	.95
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	2.69	.45	2.34	.40	2.55	.41

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Female AP (n=39)		Male AP (n=28)		AP Total (n= 67)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Curriculum Development and Activities	2.87	.86	2.57	.92	2.74	.88
Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.15	.90	2.29	.90	2.21	.88
Direct Involvement in Teaching	2.08	.98	1.64	.83	1.89	.93
Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.31	.77	2.86	1.15	3.12	.96
Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	3.03	.99	2.64	1.06	2.86	1.04
Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.68	.99	2.21	1.17	2.48	1.08
Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.74	.88	2.18	1.06	2.52	.99
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	2.91	.15	2.56	.23	2.71	.17
Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.97	.84	2.82	1.22	2.91	1.00
InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.74	.88	2.39	.96	2.59	.91
Attending Meetings/Courses for my Professional Growth	3.03	.99	2.46	1.20	2.64	1.02

^a Activity Clusters appear in bold type.

^b Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 15
Mean Averages and Standard Deviations for Activity Clusters of Male and Female Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Female AP (<i>n</i> = 39)		Male AP (<i>n</i> = 28)		AP Total (<i>n</i> = 67)	
	Mean ^a	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Student Management	3.33	.43	3.27	.40	3.30	.45
Personnel Management	2.96	.48	2.70	.60	2.86	.51
Interaction with Education	2.57	.63	2.43	.52	2.31	.48
Hierarchy	2.17	.46	2.34	.81	2.23	.61
Resource Management	2.83	.46	2.73	.44	2.80	.45
Public Relations	2.69	.45	2.34	.40	2.55	.41
Instructional Leadership	2.91	.15	2.56	.23	2.71	.17
Professional Development						

^a Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 16
Analysis of Variance for Activity Clusters of Male and Female Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Significance*
Student Management	Between Groups	1	.01	.01	.07	.80
	Within Groups	10	1.72	.17		
	Total	11	1.73			
Personnel Management	Between Groups	1	.29	.29	.99	.33
	Within Groups	16	4.74	.30		
	Total	17	5.04			
Interaction with Education Hierarchy	Between Groups	1	.08	.08	.23	.64
	Within Groups	8	2.6	.32		
	Total	9	2.67			
Resource Management	Between Groups	1	.08	.08	.17	.69
	Within Groups	8	3.5	.44		
	Total	9	3.58			
Public Relations	Between Groups	1	.02	.02	.08	.80
	Within Groups	4	.81	.20		
	Total	5	.83			
Instructional Leadership	Between Groups	1	.44	.44	2.44	.15
	Within Groups	12	2.15	.18		
	Total	13	2.58			
Professional Development	Between Groups	1	.19	.19	4.98	.09
	Within Groups	4	.15	.04		
	Total	5	.34			

* $p < .05$.

Assistant Principal Responsibilities and Ethnicity

The mean averages for Hispanic assistant principal respondents ($n = 2$) were higher in most cases because there were fewer respondents in this ethnic category than in the Black and Caucasian categories. The discussion that follows presents the data on ethnicity among Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents only, since the number of Hispanic assistant principal respondents within the sample population was low. For the same reason, the data for the Hispanic assistant principal respondents were considered in the ANOVA for ethnic groups. The ANOVA produced no significant differences among the mean averages of Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents at the .05 significance level, illustrating the strong comparability between these two ethnic groups.

Student management. Student management was an Activity Cluster to which both Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents reported often devoting time. Black assistant principals reported very often (3.91) resolving student behavior problems and student learning issues (3.86). Similarly, Caucasian assistant principals often resolved student behavior problems (3.75) and often to very often engaged in contacting parents about their child (3.76). Both ethnic groups reported often working with special needs student issues and directly supervising their students. They also occasionally to often reported resolving student learning issues and organizing and supervising co-curricular activities.

Personnel management. Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents occasionally to often reported working in duties related to personnel management. They often reported supervising and evaluating teachers and support staff and responding to their needs. Black assistant principals reported often coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis (3.09),

whereas Caucasian assistant principals reported occasionally to often engaging in this activity (2.76). Both ethnic groups reported occasionally working with the recruitment and hiring of instructional personnel and conducting faculty meetings. They also reported occasionally scheduling classes and instructional events and attending social activities with their staff.

Interactions with education hierarchy. For the Activity Cluster of interactions with education hierarchy, Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents reported occasionally to often engaging in the duties that encompassed this area. Specifically, both ethnic groups reported rarely to occasionally attending school board meetings, occasionally dealing with community and state agencies, and often consulting with their superiors and completing required reports. Finally, they reported occasionally attending district administrative meetings.

Resource management. This area produced the lowest reported mean averages for both Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents. For example, budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures were reported by both ethnic groups as responsibilities in which they rarely to occasionally participate. They reported often monitoring the condition of the building and grounds and occasionally engaging in fundraising activities for their schools. They also reported occasionally to often monitoring the use and condition of equipment and materials.

Public relations. The mean averages for Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents for their reported activity in responsibilities within the public relations Activity Clusters remained strongly consistent, with both ethnic groups reporting that they occasionally to often engaged in public relations duties. Caucasian assistant principals often responded to parent and community inquiries (3.39) as compared to Black assistant principals, who reported occasionally to often engaging in this responsibility (2.73). Black assistant principals reported

occasionally to often engaging in initiating contacts with parent and citizen groups (2.82), and both ethnic groups reported occasionally to often preparing written information about their school and its events.

Instructional leadership. Both Caucasian and Black assistant principal respondents reported occasionally to often engaging in the nine individual responsibilities that made up this Activity Cluster. Specifically, both groups reported often collecting and using student assessment data (3.09) and Black assistant principals reported often attending meetings and workshops on school improvement. Caucasian assistant principals reported occasionally to often attending this latter responsibility (2.81). Both ethnic groups reported occasionally getting involved in teaching and the selection of texts and instructional materials. Finally, both Black and Caucasian assistant principals reported occasionally to often working with curriculum development and activities.

Professional development. Both Black and Caucasian assistant principals reported occasionally to often engaging in this Activity Cluster. Both groups often engage in professional reading to remain current and attend meetings for their own professional growth. They also reported occasionally to often conducting inservice programs for their instructional personnel.

Summary. Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents reported often engaging in responsibilities in student management. They reported devoting occasional time in their days to activities in resource management. They often engaged in duties within the remaining five activity clusters.

Table 17
Responsibilities of Black, Hispanic, and Caucasian Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Black AP (n=11)		Hispanic AP (n=2)		Caucasian AP (n=56)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
STUDENT MANAGEMENT	3.34	.39	3.42	.38	3.29	.44	3.30	.45
Resolving Student Behaviors	3.91	.30	3.0	1.41	3.75	.51	3.76	.52
Direct Supervision of Students	3.45	.82	3.0	1.41	3.30	.82	3.30	.81
Resolving Student Learning Issues	2.82	.75	3.5	.71	2.98	.76	2.97	.76
Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	3.0	1.0	3.5	.71	2.63	1.09	2.74	1.07
Contact with Parent Regarding Their Child	3.36	1.03	3.5	.71	3.76	.43	3.70	.58
Special Needs Student Issues	3.55	.82	4.0	0	3.31	.84	3.38	.82
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	2.87	.52	3.17	.94	2.84	.52	2.86	.51
Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.64	.50	4.0	0	3.31	.64	3.39	.62
Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	3.0	1.18	3.0	1.41	2.93	.97	2.95	.99
Social Activities with Staff	2.27	.90	1.5	.71	2.11	.79	2.12	.81
Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	2.55	.69	3.0	1.41	2.57	1.02	2.58	.96
Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.46	.69	2.0	1.41	2.43	.96	2.44	.93
Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.55	.82	4.0	0	3.67	.51	3.67	.56
Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.0	1.34	3.0	1.41	3.37	.78	3.30	.90

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Black AP (n=11)		Hispanic AP (n=2)		Caucasian AP (n=56)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.27	1.35	4.0	0	2.39	.88	2.44	.99
Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	3.09	1.04	4.0	0	2.76	1.03	2.86	1.04
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION HIERARCHY	2.47	.55	2.20	.84	2.51	.57	2.31	.48
School Board Meetings	1.73	1.01	1.5	.71	1.85	.92	1.83	.91
District Administrative Meetings	2.64	1.03	2.0	0	2.26	.94	2.33	.93
Consulting with Superiors	2.91	1.14	2.5	.71	3.17	.93	3.11	.95
Dealing with State/Community Agencies	2.09	1.04	1.5	2.12	2.24	.93	2.20	.97
Completing Required Reports	3.0	1.18	3.5	.71	3.04	.93	3.08	.95
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	2.24	.57	2.3	.27	2.19	.69	2.23	.61
Budget Preparation	1.63	.50	2.0	1.41	1.65	.95	1.67	.93
Monitoring Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	2.64	.81	2.5	.71	2.72	1.02	2.73	.97
Fundraisers for the School	2.09	1.22	2.5	2.12	2.0	1.01	2.03	1.04
Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.82	.98	2.0	1.41	1.76	.93	1.79	.96
Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	3.0	.89	2.5	2.12	3.07	.93	3.06	.94
PUBLIC RELATIONS	2.70	.14	3.33	.76	2.78	.53	2.80	.45
Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	2.73	1.10	4.0	0	3.39	.68	3.32	.79

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Black AP (n=11)		Hispanic AP (n=2)		Caucasian AP (n=56)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	2.82	1.17	3.5	.71	2.46	.93	2.58	.96
Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.55	.93	2.5	.71	2.5	.97	2.50	.95
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	2.56	.47	3.14	.99	2.53	.39	2.55	.41
Curriculum Development and Activities	2.55	.82	3.5	.71	2.76	.91	2.74	.88
Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.0	1.01	3.5	.71	2.23	.86	2.21	.88
Direct Involvement in Teaching	2.0	1.34	1.0	0	1.91	.85	1.89	.93
Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.09	1.04	4.0	0	3.09	.96	3.12	.96
Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	3.18	1.17	3.5	2.12	2.81	.97	2.86	1.04
Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.45	1.13	3.5	.71	2.45	1.08	2.48	1.08
Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.64	1.03	3.0	1.41	2.46	.99	2.52	.99
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	2.73	.09	3.17	1.04	2.70	.17	2.71	.17
Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.82	.75	4.0	0	2.89	1.06	2.91	1.00

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Black AP (n=11)		Hispanic AP (n=2)		Caucasian AP (n=56)		AP Total (n=69)	
	Mean ^b	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
InService Programs for Instructional Personnel Attending	2.64	.81	3.5	.71	2.56	.95	2.59	.91
Meetings/Courses for my Professional Growth	2.73	1.35	2.0	1.41	2.64	.93	2.64	1.02

^a Activity Clusters appear in bold type.

^b Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 18
Mean Averages and Standard Deviations for Activity Clusters of Black, Hispanic, and Caucasian Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Black AP (n = 11)		Hispanic AP (n = 2)		Caucasian AP (n = 56)		AP Total (n = 69)	
	Mean ^a	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Student Management	3.34	.39	3.42	.38	3.29	.44	3.30	.45
Personnel Management	2.87	.52	3.17	.94	2.84	.52	2.86	.51
Interactions with Education	2.47	.55	2.20	.84	2.51	.57	2.31	.48
Hierarchy	2.24	.57	2.30	.27	2.19	.69	2.23	.61
Resource Management	2.70	.14	3.33	.76	2.78	.53	2.80	.45
Public Relations	2.56	.47	3/14	.99	2.53	.39	2.55	.41
Instructional Leadership	2.73	.09	3.17	1.04	2.70	.17	2.71	.17
Professional Development								

^a Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 19
Analysis of Variance of Black and Caucasian Assistant Principals

Activity Cluster	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Significance*
Student Management	Between Groups	1	.01	.01	.06	.81
	Within Groups	10	1.73	.17		
	Total	11	1.74			
Personnel Management	Between Groups	1	.01	.01	.02	.90
	Within Groups	16	4.31	.27		
	Total	17	4.31			
Interaction with Education Hierarchy	Between Groups	1	.00	.00	.01	.92
	Within Groups	8	2.48	.31		
	Total	9	2.49			
Resource Management	Between Groups	1	.00	.00	.00	.99
	Within Groups	8	2.86	.36		
	Total	9	2.86			
Public Relations	Between Groups	1	.01	.01	.07	.80
	Within Groups	4	.59	.15		
	Total	5	.60			
Instructional Leadership	Between Groups	1	.00	.00	.02	.90
	Within Groups	12	2.24	.19		
	Total	13	2.25			
Professional Development	Between Groups	1	.00	.00	.09	.78
	Within Groups	4	.08	.02		
	Total	5	.08			

* $p < .05$.

Research Question # 3: How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and to principal responsibilities identified in the Code of Virginia?

The ranking of assistant principal duties that appears in Table 9 and the list of duties and expectations of Virginia principals, as mandated in the Code of Virginia and outlined in Table 4, were synthesized to provide a basis of comparison to the data for current assistant principals in Virginia presented in Table 7. Each comparison presented in this question will be discussed separately.

Current Assistant Principal Duties Compared to the Literature

A review of the duties discussed in the extant literature revealed that student discipline was the most widely discussed duty performed by assistant principals. Other duties presented as being performed frequently by assistant principals included observation and evaluation of teachers and staff, attending athletic, activity, and co-curricular programs, monitoring student attendance, curriculum and instruction, building supervision and maintenance, and parent conferences and communication.

The responsibilities reported by current Virginia assistant principals as being performed often included resolving student behaviors, contacting parents about their child, supervising and evaluating teachers, responding to the needs of teachers and support staff, completing required reports, monitoring the condition of buildings and grounds, responding to parent and community inquiries, and completing professional reading to remain current. Table 20 provides a direct comparison of the rank order of responsibilities for assistant principals and the duties and responsibilities outlined in the extant literature on the assistant principalship. It must be noted here that the list of 38 responsibilities that were identified and incorporated in the survey

instrument and that were originally included in the Maine Principals' Study were identified in the 28 articles within the body of literature that identifies and discusses assistant principal roles and responsibilities. While the duties and responsibilities do not necessarily carry the same titles or names, the isolated and individual responsibilities compare directly to one another in most cases.

However, it is important to note that not every current assistant principal responsibility included on the survey instrument had an equivalent duty for comparison within the extant literature. Thus, for 13 current assistant principal duties, no identical or similar duty was mentioned within the extant literature: (a) social activities with staff, (b) school board meetings, (c) district administrative meetings, (d) consulting with superiors, (e) fundraisers for the school, (f) purchasing and accounting procedures, (g) responding to parent and community inquiries, (h) direct involvement in teaching, (i) collecting and using student assessment data, (j) attending meetings and workshops on school improvement, (k) evaluating the effectiveness of programs and curriculum, (l) professional reading to remain current, and (m) attending meetings and courses for professional growth. Likewise, responsibilities mentioned in the literature that did not have a comparative responsibility from the survey instrument included bus duty, alternative education programs, graduation announcements, parking, and report cards. Table 20 compares the responsibilities of current assistant principals in Virginia to the duties that were identified and discussed in the literature.

Current Virginia assistant principals reported that they often spent time within their workdays resolving student behaviors. This correlated directly with the extant literature, in which 93% discussed student discipline as the most often mentioned responsibility that assistant principals perform. Current Virginia assistant principals also reported often devoting time to the

direct supervision of their students. The duty of monitoring students, as described and discussed within the body of the extant literature, ranked fourth among the duties from the body of research. Three of the top five ranked responsibilities, based on the reported mean averages by the assistant principals, were located within the student management cluster (resolving student behaviors/contact with parent regarding child/special needs student issues). The remaining two duties in this ranking came from the Activity Cluster of personnel management (responding to teachers' needs/supervision and evaluation of teachers). Four of the top five assistant principal responsibilities identified and discussed within the body of extant literature were student management duties (student discipline/activity, athletic, and co-curricular programs/monitoring students/student attendance). The remaining duty within the top five responsibilities mentioned within the literature (observation and evaluation of teachers and staff) was located within the personnel management Activity Cluster. Special education services, which ranked fifth among the reported duties of current assistant principals, and was located within the student management activity cluster, ranked 26th among the responsibilities identified and discussed within the body of extant literature that focuses on assistant principal duties. Special education services were mentioned in only three of the 28 articles reviewed in the literature. These were articles that had been published within the last 10 years. Nevertheless Virginia's assistant principals reported devoting much more of their time working with the issues and requirements that surround special needs children than the extant literature outlines and discusses.

The second most identified and discussed assistant principal duty in the literature was observation and evaluation of teachers and support staff. Current assistant principals reported the responsibility of supervising and evaluating their teachers as their fourth most frequently

performed duty and the supervision and evaluation of support staff as their 14th. Five out of the seven identified responsibilities from the literature that were categorized within the personnel management cluster were ranked in the bottom one half of assistant principal duties identified and discussed within the extant literature.

Current assistant principal responsibilities that ranked sixth through tenth according to their reported mean averages were as follows: (6) responding to parent and community inquiries, (7) direct supervision of students, (8) responding to the needs of support staff, (9) collecting and using student assessment data, and (10) consulting with superiors. These duties were drawn from four Activity Clusters: student management, personnel management, instructional leadership, and public relations. This differs from the extant literature, which identified and described assistant principal duties as being heavily concentrated within the student management Activity Cluster.

Both current assistant principals and the literature were consistent on several duties that were not performed as frequently within the daily routines of assistant principals. For example, budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures were ranked last by current assistant principals among the 38 responsibilities from the survey instrument. Likewise, the duty of budget was discussed as an assistant principal duty in only 11% of the articles that comprised the body of extant literature. Current assistant principals also ranked the duty of conducting faculty meetings as 28th, compared to the literature, in which arranging faculty meetings was found in only 4% of the articles and was ranked 31st. Finally, the recruitment and hiring of instructional personnel was assigned a rank of 29th by current assistant principals. The extant

literature ranked this activity 19th, as it was mentioned and discussed in 14% of the articles of the extant literature.

The literature on the duties and responsibilities of assistant principals discusses student discipline and management as the premier duty performed by assistant principals, that is, the categories of student management and personnel management. The assistant principal respondents in this study, however, reported that they devoted their time to a variety of duties within the student and personnel management, public relations, and instructional leadership Activity Clusters. Some duties discussed within the literature, such as graduation announcements, bus duty, parking, and report cards, did not have an equivalent or corresponding duty among those in the survey instrument. Conversely, 13 out of 38 individual responsibilities did not have an equivalent duty identified and discussed in the body of extant literature; most notably, the responsibility of collecting and using student assessment data.

Table 20
Comparison of the Responsibilities of Current Assistant Principals in Virginia to the Duties Discussed in the Extant Literature

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Ranking of AP Responsibility ^b	AP Mean ^c	AP SD	Extant Literature Responsibility ^d	Rank of Responsibility in the Extant Literature	Percentage ^e
STUDENT MANAGEMENT		3.30	.45			
Resolving Student Behaviors	1	3.76	.52	Student Discipline	1	93%
Direct Supervision of Students	7	3.30	.81	Monitoring Students	4	57%
Resolving Student Learning Issues	13	2.97	.76	Student Attendance	5	50%
Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	19	2.74	1.07	Remediation/Student Support	10	25%
Contact with Parent Regarding Their Child	2	3.70	.58	Activity/Athletic/Co-Curricular Programs	3	57%
Special Needs Student Issues	5	3.38	.82	Parent Conferences and Communication	8	36%
				Special Education Services	26	11%
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT		2.86	.51			
Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	4	3.39	.62	Observation/Evaluation of Teachers and Staff	2	61%
Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	14	2.95	.99	Observation/Evaluation of Teachers and Staff	2	61%
Social Activities with Staff	33	2.12	.81			
Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	24	2.58	.96	Scheduling	11	21%
Conducting Faculty Meetings	28	2.44	.93	Arranging Faculty Meetings	31	4%
Responding to Teachers' Needs	3	3.67	.56	New Teacher Orientations	27	7%
Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	8	3.30	.90	Consulting/Supervising Guidance	18	14%
Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	29	2.44	.99	Selection/Hiring of Faculty/Staff	19	14%
Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	17	2.86	1.04	Serve as Principal in Principal's Absence	16	18%
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION HIERARCHY		2.31	.48			
School Board Meetings	36	1.83	.91			
District Administrative Meetings	30	2.33	.93			
Consulting with Superiors	10	3.11	.95			
Dealing with State/Community Agencies	32	2.20	.97	School/District Policy	15	18%
Completing Required Reports	11	3.08	.95	Preparation of Monthly/Yearly Reports	14	18%

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Ranking of AP Responsibility ^b	AP Mean ^c	AP SD	Extant Literature Responsibility ^d	Rank of Responsibility in the Extant Literature	Percentage ^e
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT		2.23	.61			
Budget Preparation Monitoring	38	1.67	.93	Budget	23	11%
Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	20	2.73	.97	Locks and Locker Assignments	25	11%
Fundraisers for the School	34	2.03	1.04			
Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	37	1.79	.96			
Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	12	3.06	.94	School Safety, Building Supervision and Maintenance	12	21%
					7	39%
PUBLIC RELATIONS		2.80	.45			
Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	6	3.32	.79			
Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	23	2.58	.96	Media and Community Relations	13	18%
Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	26	2.50	.95	Preparation of Teacher Handbooks, School Calendar	14	7%
						14%
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP		2.55	.41			
Curriculum Development and Activities	18	2.74	.88	Curriculum/Instruction/School Improvement	6	43%
Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	31	2.21	.88	Textbooks	21	14%
Direct Involvement in Teaching	35	1.89	.93			
Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	9	3.12	.96			
Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	16	2.86	1.04			
Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	27	2.48	1.08			
Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	25	2.52	.99	Exam Scheduling and Supervision	32	4%

Activity Cluster and Responsibility ^a	Ranking of AP Responsibility ^b	AP Mean ^c	AP SD	Extant Literature Responsibility ^d	Rank of Responsibility in the Extant Literature	Percentage ^e
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		2.71	.17			
Professional Reading to Remain Current	15	2.91	1.00			
In-Service Programs for Instructional Personnel Attending Meetings/Courses for my Professional Growth	22	2.59	.91	Staff Development	30	7%
	21	2.64	1.02			

^a Activity Clusters appear in bold type.

^b Ranking of AP responsibility is the order of AP responsibilities based on the overall mean averages assigned by the AP respondents based on the 4-point Likert scale from the survey instrument.

^c Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

^d Responsibilities from the Literature lacking comparative responsibility from the survey instrument include Bus Duty (14%), Alternative Education Programs (11%), Graduation Announcements (11%), Parking (7%), and Report Cards (4%).

^e Percentage of articles from the extant literature in which the identified assistant principal responsibility is discussed.

Current Assistant Principals and the Code of Virginia

The Code of Virginia outlines the expectations and roles of principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia (8VAC20-131-210). By law, every principal in Virginia must adhere to and perform the duties specified in this section of the Code. The data for current Virginia assistant principals in this study revealed that 66%, or roughly two-thirds, wish to obtain a principalship in their career future. A comparison of the duties outlined within the Code of Virginia to the reported responsibilities of current Virginia assistant principal respondents showed whether or not current assistant principals are receiving the proper exposure to and experience with the responsibilities that they would be required, by law, to practice when they assume a principalship.

The duties outlined in the Code of Virginia are presented in Table 21 with the corresponding activity clusters and responsibilities for current assistant principal respondents and their reported mean averages and standard deviations.

One strong predictor of whether current assistant principals in Virginia are successfully prepared for a principalship would be if they have been given the opportunity to gain experience in and practice duties and responsibilities that fulfill the expectations set forth within the Code of Virginia. Current assistant principal respondents reported performing responsibilities that fulfilled each of the 15 requirements specified in the Code of Virginia for practicing principals. However, they indicated that they do not devote consistent amounts of time to these reported responsibilities.

Promotion of Student Achievement. The first expectation from the Code of Virginia was the promotion of student achievement. Current assistant principals reported that they often devote their time resolving student learning issues (2.97) and special needs student issues (3.38), which are duties that encompass this expectation. Additionally, in their efforts to provide a safe and secure learning environment in which to teach and learn, current assistant principals indicated that resolving student behavior problems (3.76) was the responsibility that they often to very often practiced. They also reported that they often monitored the buildings and grounds (3.06) and occasionally monitored the use and condition of the equipment and materials within their buildings (2.73), all of which contributes to school safety.

Efficient use of resources. This requirement under the Code of Virginia encompassed four of the responsibilities that current assistant principals reported actively practicing. Of these four, respondents indicated that they often address the needs of their teachers (3.67), as well as

the needs of their support personnel (3.30). However, these responsibilities stood in contrast to the fact that current assistant principals indicated rarely to occasionally performing the responsibilities of budget preparation (1.67) and purchasing and accounting procedures (1.79). While current assistant principals take time often to ensure that their teachers and support personnel receive what they need in terms of resources to effectively instruct and improve student achievement, the opportunity to practice their skills in the budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures is limited. These latter two responsibilities from the Activity Cluster of resource management were reported as only rarely to occasionally practiced and had the lowest reported mean averages among assistant principal respondents.

Protection of academic time. Current assistant principals occasionally to often worked with responsibilities designed to protect academic time from interruptions and distractions. Within this expectation category from the Code of Virginia, the responsibility that assistant principals occasionally to often utilized to protect academic time was organizing and supervising co-curricular activities (2.74). They also occasionally scheduled classes and instructional events (2.58) and provided long-range program and curriculum planning assistance (2.52). Additionally, they reported that they occasionally evaluated the effectiveness of programs and curriculum (2.48). Thus, assistant principal respondents showed that they occasionally practiced responsibilities that expose them to organizing, supervising, and scheduling activities and events in an effort to protect instructional time in their buildings.

Enforcement of the code of conduct. The Code of Virginia requires that principals enforce the school district's code of conduct. This expectation was the one area in which current assistant principals reported often practicing responsibilities. Resolving student behavior problems (3.76)

was reported as being performed often. Respondents also reported often spending time contacting parents about their children (3.70) and supervising their students directly (3.30). Thus, the responses from assistant principals in this study indicated that they often to very often spend time enforcing the code of conduct for their school districts and are prepared to meet this expectation as aspiring principals.

Analysis of test scores. Current assistant principals reported often spending time analyzing the school's test scores by grade and discipline through collection and use of student assessment data in their planning (3.12). They also occasionally to often attended meetings and workshops that focused on school improvement (2.86). Additionally, they reported occasionally evaluating the effectiveness of programs (2.48).

Current assistant principals reported occasionally devoting time on sharing information from workshops and training sessions that focus on school improvement with their instructional personnel through inservice training (2.59). Assistant principal respondents actually reported slightly higher mean averages for the responsibility of attending workshops and meetings on school improvement than the principal respondents in this study and indicated that they often devote time to improving their skills in data assessment and student achievement. Respondents actually reported slightly higher mean averages for the responsibility of attending workshops and meetings on school improvement than the principal respondents in this study and indicated that they often devote time to improving their skills in data assessment and student achievement. Assistant principals also reported occasionally to often organizing and supervising co-curricular activities (2.74). These programs include student remediation efforts that are designed to provide

remediation and recovery efforts for low-achieving students at the school site either during the school day or after school hours.

Staff development. According to the Code of Virginia, teachers are required to receive staff development to assist in the school improvement process. Current assistant principal respondents indicated that they occasionally provided this assistance to their teachers by conducting inservice programs for their instructional personnel (2.59). They also reported often providing curriculum development activities (2.74) to their instructional staff. Additionally, respondents reported often responding to the needs of their teachers (3.67) and their support personnel (3.30).

In contrast, however, there were two responsibilities that current assistant principals indicated that they rarely to occasionally practice that also are part of this portion of the Code's expectations. They occasionally conduct faculty meetings (2.44) and they rarely have any direct involvement in teaching (1.89), which can both be powerful tools that aid assistant principals in providing mentoring opportunities to their staff and establish an agenda for a faculty meeting that potentially communicates the vision and mission of the school's improvement process.

Improvement of instruction. The responsibilities that current assistant principal reported practicing to improve instruction, classroom practices, and instructional technology indicated that they often have opportunities to fulfill this requirement of the Code of Virginia. Assistant principals reported that they often supervise and evaluate the teachers (3.39) and the support staff (2.95) and maintain their professional reading to remain current in best practice (2.91). They also reported occasionally evaluating programs and their effectiveness (2.48) and engage in long-range program and curriculum planning (2.52).

Maintaining student records. The Code of Virginia requires that principals properly maintain student records, including the records of students who drop out of school. Current assistant principals indicated that they often spent time completing required reports (3.08). However, this duty assumes that assistant principals work with the reports and information that the state requires be maintained in student cumulative folders, such as health, discipline, academic, and special education records. Considering that assistant principal respondents indicated that they often devoted time to student discipline, student data collection and use activities, and the monitoring of special education students and their issues, these duties bring them into contact with records, reports, and student cumulative files that must be meticulously maintained and filed throughout the academic year.

Fostering respect and communication. Virginia principals are required by the Code of Virginia to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and facilitate constructive communication with a current handbook. Current assistant principals indicated that they often coordinated staff efforts on a daily basis (2.86) and prepared written information about the school and events (2.50), which would include handbooks and school information that they disseminated to their instructional personnel. However, they reported occasionally attending social activities with their staffs (2.12) and conducting faculty meetings (2.44).

The assistant principals in this study reported that they occasionally to often initiated contact with parent and citizen groups (2.58) and prepared written information about the school and its events (2.50). Most notably, current assistant principals indicated that they often responded to inquiries from parents and the community (3.32). These assistant principal duties

support the Code of Virginia and its expectation that principals work with the community and involve parents and citizens in the educational process.

Maintaining licensure records. Virginia principals are required by the Code of Virginia to maintain the current records of licensure, endorsement, and training by their staff. Current assistant principals reported often spending time supervising and evaluating their teachers (3.39) and their support staff (2.95). These responsibilities require, in part, that respondents maintain and update the records of all current licensure, endorsements, and training which their instructional staff possesses. However, assistant principals indicated that they occasionally participate in the recruitment and hiring of instructional personnel (2.44). Thus, while current assistant principals reported often evaluating and supervising instructional staff, they reported having less opportunity to practice the responsibility of recruiting and hiring instructional personnel.

Maintaining records and receipts. Finally, principals are required under the Code of Virginia to maintain records and receipts of all funds. Additionally, these records are audited annually. Assistant principal respondents reported that they rarely had opportunities to practice purchasing and accounting procedures (1.79) and budget preparation (1.67) within the Activity Cluster of resource management. They also indicated that they were occasionally involved in fundraising work for the school (2.03). Thus, the responsibilities of preparing a budget, managing resources, and maintaining the fiscal viability of a school building are duties upon which current assistant principals did not have great opportunities to hone their skills before entering the principalship.

Table 21
Current Assistant Principal Responsibilities Compared to the Code of Virginia

Code of Virginia Expectation	Activity Cluster	Corresponding Assistant Principal Responsibility	Mean Average ^a	SD
Promotes Positive Student Achievement	<i>Student Management</i>	Resolving Student Learning Issues	2.97	.76
		Special Needs Student Issues	3.38	.82
Provides Safe and Secure Environment to Teach and Learn	<i>Student Management</i>	Resolving Student Behaviors	3.76	.52
		Monitoring Use/Condition of Equipment and Materials	2.73	.97
		Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	3.06	.94
Efficient Use of Resources	<i>Resource Management</i>	Budget Preparation	1.67	.93
		Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.79	.96
	<i>Instructional Leadership Personnel Management</i>	Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.21	.88
		Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.67	.56
Protects Academic Instructional Time from Interruptions and Disruptions	<i>Instructional Leadership</i>	Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.30	.90
		Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.52	.99
		Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.48	1.08

Code of Virginia Expectation	Activity Cluster	Corresponding Assistant Principal Responsibility	Mean Average ^a	SD
Ensures that Code of Conduct is Enforced	<i>Student Management</i>	Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.74	1.07
	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Scheduling Classes/Instructional Events	2.58	.96
	<i>Student Management</i>	Resolving Student Behaviors	3.76	.52
	<i>Interactions with Education Hierarchy</i>	Direct Supervision of Students	3.30	.81
Contact with Parents Regarding their Child		3.70	.58	
Dealing with State/Community Agencies		2.20	.97	
Analyzes School's Test Scores by Grade and Discipline	<i>Instructional Leadership</i>	Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.12	.96
		Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.48	1.08
		Attending Meetings/Workshops on School Improvement	2.86	1.04
Provides Intervention and Remediation to Students Below Grade Level/SOL Performance	<i>Student Management</i>	Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.74	1.07

Code of Virginia Expectation	Activity Cluster	Corresponding Assistant Principal Responsibility	Mean Average ^a	SD
Intervention and Remediation (cont.) Involves the Staff in Providing Staff Development to Help Improvement Process	<i>Instructional Management</i>	Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.12	.96
	<i>Professional Development</i>	InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.59	.91
	<i>Instructional Leadership</i>	Direct Involvement in Teaching Curriculum Development and Activities	1.89	.93
Staff Development to Help Improvement Process (cont)		Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.44	.93
		Responding to Teacher's Needs	3.67	.56
		Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.30	.90
	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	2.86	1.04
Improves Instruction, Classroom Practices, and Instructional Technology	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.39	.62
		Supervision/Evaluation of Support Personnel	2.95	.99
	<i>Professional Development</i>	InService Programs for Instructional Personnel Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.59 2.91	.91 1.00

Code of Virginia Expectation	Activity Cluster	Corresponding Assistant Principal Responsibility	Mean Average ^a	SD
	<i>Instructional Leadership</i>	Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.48	1.08
		Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.52	.99
Ensures Student Records are Properly Maintained	<i>Interactions with Educational Hierarchy</i>	Completing Required Reports	3.08	.95
Maintains Records of Students who Drop Out of School				
Create an Atmosphere of Mutual Respect and Facilitate Constructive Communication with a Current Handbook	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Social Activities with Staff	2.12	.81
		Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.44	.93
		Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.50	.95
	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	2.86	1.04
Work with the Community and Involve Parents and Citizens in the Educational Process	<i>Public Relations</i>	Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizen Groups	2.58	.96

Code of Virginia Expectation	Activity Cluster	Corresponding Assistant Principal Responsibility	Mean Average ^a	SD
Work with Community (cont.)		Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.50	.95
		Responding to Parent/Community Inquiries	3.32	.79
Maintain a Current Record of Licensure, Endorsement, and Training by Staff	<i>Personnel Management</i>	Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.39	.62
		Supervision/Evaluation of Support Personnel	2.95	.99
		Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.44	.93
Maintain Records and Receipts of all funds that Shall be Audited Annually	<i>Resource Management</i>	Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.79	.96
		Budget Preparation	1.67	.93

^a Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Research Question #4: How do duties of practicing assistant principals compare to those of practicing principals in the state of Virginia?

This study surveyed assistant principals and their respective principals in an effort to collect comparative data in an effort to answer this fourth and final research question. The survey instrument was administered to 150 principals from across Virginia who were selected through an equal-size random stratified sampling process. These selected principals worked with the

randomly selected assistant principal respondents in the same school building as an administrative team. A total of 101 principals returned completed surveys.

The mean averages and standard deviations for each principal responsibility appear in Table 22. For the purposes of comparing the data from assistant principal and principal respondents, the individual responsibilities for current assistant principal respondents are listed in rank order. The corresponding responsibilities for current principal respondents appear in with their rank order indicated in the last column on the right of the table. A separate table, Table 23, compares the mean averages and standard deviations for the Activity Clusters for both current assistant principal and principal respondents. Finally, Table 24 contains the data and results for the ANOVAs that compare the mean averages of assistant principal and principal respondents within the seven Activity Clusters.

Comparing Current Assistant Principals to Current Principals

The ANOVAs that compared the mean averages of the seven Activity Clusters for assistant principal and principal respondents revealed no significant differences, at the .05 confidence level. One noticeable overall trend in the comparison data for the range of the mean averages was that assistant principals reported a higher frequency of devoting time to their responsibilities than the principal respondents. The mean averages from the survey instrument indicated the frequency of time to which the respondents reported or perceived devoting themselves to the individual responsibility that was identified and presented on the survey instrument. The reported mean averages for assistant principal respondents ranged from a low of 1.67, indicating that they rarely to occasionally engage in the activity of budget preparation, to a high of 3.76, indicating that they often to very often devote time to resolving student behaviors.

The reported mean averages for principal respondents ranged from the lowest reported mean average of 1.93, indicating that principal respondents occasionally perform fundraising for their school, to the highest mean average of 3.60, indicating that principals often to very often responded to the needs of their teachers.

The top five ranked responsibilities among assistant principal and principal respondents focused on the Activity Clusters of student management and personnel management. Both groups of respondents reported often contacting parents about their child, supervising and evaluating teachers, and responding to the needs of their teachers. Principals also reported often engaging in coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis (3.26) and responding to parent and community inquiries (3.26). Assistant principal respondents also reported that they resolved student behavior problems (3.76) and worked with special needs student issues (3.38) within their top-five ranked responsibilities. Principal respondents also reported often resolving student behaviors (2.97) and working with special needs student issues (3.02); however, these duties ranked 19th and 16th, respectively, in the overall ranking of the reported mean averages for principal responsibilities. While coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis was reported as often being performed by principal respondents (3.26), assistant principal respondents reported that they occasionally to often engaged in this responsibility (2.86), which placed it 17th among assistant principal responsibilities.

The data presented in Table 22 show 15 out of 38 responsibilities where assistant principals and principals reported devoting similar amounts of time. For example, providing inservice programs for instructional personnel was reported by both groups of respondents as a duty in which they occasionally engage themselves, and which ranked 22nd in both of the

rankings of assistant principal and principal responsibilities. Additionally, assistant principals and principals reported often responding to the needs of teachers, supervising and evaluating teachers, responding to parent and community inquiries, completing required reports, monitoring the condition of the building and grounds, and supervising and evaluating their support staff. They also reported occasionally to often engaging in professional reading to remain current. Finally, both groups reported occasionally attending meetings and courses for professional growth, initiating contact with parent and citizen groups, selecting texts and instructional materials, attending social activities with their staffs, and directly engaging in teaching.

Despite these commonalities, for other responsibilities performed by assistant principals and principals there was disparity. For example, principal respondents reported occasionally to often working with budget preparation (2.71) and purchasing and accounting procedures (2.71), ranking these two responsibilities as 27th and 26th, respectively. By comparison, assistant principal respondents reported rarely to occasionally engaging in these activities, with mean averages placing these duties as 38th and 37th, respectively, in the rank order of assistant principal responsibilities. Principals also reported often conducting faculty meetings (3.19), which ranked this responsibility 10th. Assistant principals reported occasionally practicing this duty (2.44), which ranked it 28th. Assistant principals reported often devoting time toward consulting with their superiors (3.11), which produced a ranking of 10th among assistant principal duties. Principals reported occasionally to often consulting with their superiors (2.84), ranking this responsibility 24th out of the 38 identified categories. Principals also reported often engaging in the hiring and recruitment of instructional personnel (2.99), which ranked this duty 18th among principal duties. By comparison, assistant principals reported that they only occasionally

engaged in this activity (2.44), which placed this 29th in the ranking of assistant principal duties based on their reported mean averages.

The comparison of the mean averages for the Activity Clusters presented in Table 23 showed that principals and assistant principals reported occasionally to often engaging in responsibilities in the Activity Clusters of professional development, public relations, and instructional leadership. They reported often working with student management responsibilities. Principal respondents reported that they occasionally to often interacted with education hierarchy, whereas assistant principals reported that they occasionally interact with education hierarchy. Finally, both sets of respondents indicated that they often devoted time to duties in the personnel management activity cluster.

Assistant principal and principal respondents reported devoting time to a variety of duties and responsibilities that overlapped on many occasions. Assistant principals reported a wider range of mean averages for their responsibilities than their principal counterparts. In some cases noted above, assistant principals did not have regular exposure to responsibilities to which principals devote more time, such as budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures and conducting faculty meetings. In other instances, principals and assistant principals reported spending comparable time engaging in activities, such as working with special needs student issues, responding to the needs of teachers, supervising and evaluating teachers, responding to parent and community inquiries, contacting the parent with regard to their child, engaging in professional reading to remain current, attending meetings and courses for professional growth, and responding to the needs of their support personnel.

Table 22
Comparison of Current Assistant Principal Responsibilities to Current Principal Responsibilities

Current AP Responsibility by Rank Order ^a	Mean ^b	SD	Current Principal Responsibility	Mean	SD	Rank Order of Principal Responsibility
1. Resolving Student Behaviors	3.76	.52	Resolving Student Behaviors	2.97	.77	19
2. Contact with Parents Regarding Their Child	3.70	.58	Contact with Parents Regarding Their Child	3.26	.69	3
3. Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.67	.56	Responding to Teachers' Needs	3.6	.67	1
4. Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.39	.62	Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers	3.48	.61	2
5. Special Needs Student Issues	3.38	.82	Special Needs Student Issues	3.02	.84	16
6. Responding to Parent/community Inquiries	3.32	.79	Responding to Parent/community Inquiries	3.26	.88	5
7. Direct Supervision of Students	3.30	.90	Direct Supervision of Students	2.97	.86	20
8. Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.30	.90	Responding to Needs of Support Personnel	3.20	.78	8
9. Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.12	.96	Collecting and Using Student Assessment Data	3.25	.67	6
10. Consulting with Superiors	3.11	.95	Consulting with Superiors	2.84	.91	24
11. Completing Required Reports	3.08	.95	Completing Required Reports	3.22	.77	7
12. Monitoring Condition of Building and Grounds	3.06	.94	Monitoring Condition of Buildings and Grounds	3.08	.91	12
13. Resolving Student Learning Issues	2.97	.76	Resolving Student Learning Issues	3.19	.71	9
14. Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	2.95	.99	Supervision/Evaluation of Support Staff	3.1	.82	11
15. Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.91	1.00	Professional Reading to Remain Current	2.81	.85	25
16. Attending Meetings/workshops on School Improvement	2.86	1.04	Attending Meetings/workshops on School Improvement	2.68	.87	29

Current AP Responsibility by Rank Order ^a	Mean ^b	SD	Current Principal Responsibility	Mean	SD	Rank Order of Principal Responsibility
17. Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	2.86	1.04	Coordinating Staff Efforts on a Daily Basis	3.26	.79	4
18. Curriculum Development and Activities	2.74	.88	Curriculum Development and Activities	3.04	.74	14
19. Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.74	1.07	Organizing/Supervising Co-Curricular Activities	2.69	.97	28
20. Monitoring Use/condition of Equipment/Materials	2.73	.97	Monitoring Use/condition of Equipment/Materials	2.27	.90	33
21. Attending Meetings/Courses for Professional Growth	2.64	1.02	Attending Meetings/Courses for Professional Growth	2.54	.80	31
22. InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.59	.91	InService Programs for Instructional Personnel	2.86	.74	22
23. Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizens Groups	2.58	.96	Initiating Contacts with Parent/Citizens Groups	2.56	.89	30
24. Scheduling Classes and Instructional Events	2.58	.96	Scheduling Classes and Instructional Events	3.01	.82	17
25. Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	2.52	.99	Long-Range Program and Curriculum Planning	3.07	.69	13
26. Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.50	.95	Preparing Written Information About the School and Events	2.86	.77	23
27. Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.48	1.08	Evaluating Effectiveness of Programs and Curriculum	2.95	.76	21
28. Conducting Faculty Meetings	2.44	.93	Conducting Faculty Meetings	3.19	.91	10
29. Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.44	.99	Recruitment/Hiring of Instructional Personnel	2.99	.80	18
30. District Administrative Meetings	2.33	.93	District Administrative Meetings	3.02	.82	15
31. Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.21	.88	Selection of Texts and Instructional Materials	2.22	.69	34

Current AP Responsibility by Rank Order ^a	Mean ^b	SD	Current Principal Responsibility	Mean	SD	Rank Order of Principal Responsibility
32. Dealing with State/community Agencies	2.20	.97	Dealing with State/community Agencies	2.14	.93	35
33. Social Activities with Staff	2.12	.81	Social Activities with Staff	2.09	.85	37
34. Fundraisers for the School	2.03	1.04	Fundraisers for the School	1.93	.86	38
35. Direct Involvement in Teaching	1.89	.93	Direct Involvement in Teaching	2.11	.91	36
36. School Board Meetings	1.83	.91	School Board Meetings	2.29	1.04	32
37. Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	1.79	.96	Purchasing/Accounting Procedures	2.71	.91	26
38. Budget Preparation	1.67	.93	Budget Preparation	2.71	.82	27

^a Responsibility rank order for assistant principals and principals was created based on the reported mean averages from respondents for each responsibility identified on the survey instrument.

^b Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 23
Comparison of Activity Clusters for Current Assistant Principals and Current Principals

AP Activity Cluster by Rank Order	AP Mean ^a	Asst. Principal SD	Activity Cluster	Principal Mean	Principal SD
Student Management	3.29	.45	Student Management	3.02	.22
Personnel Management	2.86	.51	Personnel Management	3.10	.43
Public Relations	2.8	.45	Public Relations	2.89	.35
Professional Development	2.71	.17	Professional Development	2.74	.17
Instructional Leadership	2.55	.41	Instructional Leadership	2.76	.44
Interactions with Education	2.31	.47	Interactions with Education	2.70	.47
Hierarchy			Hierarchy		
Resource Management	2.23	.61	Resource Management	2.54	.45

^a Range of scores on 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often), 4 (Very Often).

Table 24
Analysis of Variance for Comparison of Activity Clusters for Current Assistant Principals and Current Principals

Activity Cluster	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Significance*
Student Management	Between Groups	1	.26	.26	2.55	.14
	Within Groups	10	1.00	.10		
	Total	11	1.26			
Personnel Management	Between Groups	1	.26	.26	1.16	.28
	Within Groups	16	3.60	.23		
	Total	17	3.86			
Interaction with Education Hierarchy	Between Groups	1	.09	.09	.34	.57
	Within Groups	8	2.15	.27		
	Total	9	2.24			
Resource Management	Between Groups	1	.20	.20	.71	.42
	Within Groups	8	2.27	.29		
	Total	9	2.48			
Public Relations	Between Groups	1	.01	.01	.08	.79
	Within Groups	4	.66	.16		
	Total	5	.67			
Instructional Leadership	Between Groups	1	.16	.16	.88	.37
	Within Groups	12	2.19	.18		
	Total	13	2.35			
Professional Development	Between Groups	1	.00	.00	.03	.88
	Within Groups	4	.12	.03		
	Total	5	.12			

* $p < .05$.

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations

The major purpose of this study was to identify the responsibilities of current assistant principals in Virginia and to compare the identified duties to those found in the extant literature that focuses on the assistant principalship, the expectations for current principals outlined in the Code of Virginia, and the current responsibilities of Virginia principals. The identified responsibilities of current assistant principals were compared using ANOVA to determine if there were any significant differences, at the .05 confidence level, between the responsibilities of assistant principals based on school level, gender, and ethnicity. A summary of the research findings is presented in this chapter. Additionally, implications and applications of this research for administrative practice are discussed. Further recommendations for future research are also offered.

Summary of Findings

In order to identify the responsibilities of current assistant principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia, an equal-size stratified random sample of 31 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high school assistant principals and 50 elementary, 50 middle, and 50 high school principals was employed. The principal respondents served as the building principals of the selected assistant principal respondents, allowing for a comparison between current assistant principal and principal duties. The administrative teams were randomly identified and drawn from among the 134 school districts in Virginia.

Each respondent was asked to complete a survey instrument that was based upon the Maine Principals' Study. The survey contained questions that asked the respondents about their

personal demographic information, such as gender and ethnicity, and professional demographic information, such as the number of years in which they had been in administration, the number of years that they had served in their position, the number of years that they had taught prior to entering administration, and the number of years they had been in their assigned buildings.

Respondents were then asked to complete the survey of 38 assistant principal responsibilities that were adapted from the Maine Principals' Study, and based on a review of the extant literature on the duties of assistant principals. Each respondent was asked to determine approximately how much time they devoted to each of the identified activities in their roles as assistant principals, based on a 4-point Likert scale (1=rarely, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often). In addition, one question asked assistant principal and principal respondents to identify who assigns assistant principal duties (principal, human resources/central office, other). A final question asked assistant principal respondents to identify their career aspirations (pursue a principalship, remain a career assistant principal, other).

The total response rate among was 60.5%. The response rate among assistant principal respondents was 52.67%; for principal respondents it was 67.33%. Data for the four research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean average and standard deviation), a one-way analysis of variance ($p < .05$) and content analysis. The findings for this study are summarized as follows.

Research Question #1: What assistant principal responsibilities are described in the extant literature?

Student discipline was the most frequent responsibility in the extant literature on assistant principal duties, receiving mention in 26 out of 28 articles, or 93%, of the articles in the literature

reviewed. Sixty-one percent of the extant literature on assistant principal responsibilities also reported that assistant principals spend large amounts of time observing and evaluating their teachers and staff. Fifty-seven percent of the extant literature identified monitoring activity, co-curricular, and athletic programs and monitoring students as duties that are frequently practiced by assistant principals. Fifty percent (50%) of the extant literature that focused on assistant principal duties identified student attendance as another frequent responsibility in which assistant principals engage themselves.

Four of the five (80%) top responsibilities discussed within the literature focused on student management. Observing and evaluating teachers and staff was the only responsibility in the top five duties identified and discussed within the extant literature that focused on assistant principal duties that was in an activity cluster other than student management (personnel management). Curriculum, instruction and school improvement appeared in the body of extant literature on assistant principal duties as the second identified responsibility within the instructional leadership activity cluster, receiving identification and discussion in 43% of the articles within the body of extant literature. The next instructional leadership duty that was identified and discussed in the extant literature was scheduling, which received mention in six of 28, or 21%, of the articles.

Student discipline and student management responsibilities were identified and described in the extant literature as major responsibilities that were frequently practiced by assistant principals and that dominated their daily routine and regimens. The literature also identified supervising and evaluating instructional staff as a responsibility from the personnel management activity cluster that assistant principals practiced frequently. By comparison, current assistant

principals in Virginia reported often supervising and evaluating their teachers (3.39), but also reported often performing duties in the Activity Clusters of public relations (responding to parent and community inquiries), personnel management (responding to needs of teachers and support staff), instructional leadership (collecting and using student assessment data), and interaction with education hierarchy (consulting with superiors).

Furthermore, the literature did not identify or discuss all of the specific duties and responsibilities that were identified and incorporated in the 38 responsibilities included on the survey instrument used in this study. Specifically, 13 of the 38 identified responsibilities from the survey instrument did not have an equivalent responsibility identified in the extant literature. Many of these duties were found in the instructional leadership Activity Cluster and included attending meetings and workshops on school improvement, evaluating the effectiveness of programs and curriculum, and collecting and using student assessment data. Other duties in which current assistant principals reported often engaging, such as special needs student issues, were only mentioned in 3 of the 28 articles within the extant literature. The articles that contained references to special needs issues of students had been published within the last 10 years.

Overall, the extant literature on assistant principal responsibilities placed a large emphasis on student discipline and student management responsibilities for assistant principals, creating a portrayal of assistant principals as heavily to almost exclusively involved with student discipline. These disciplinary duties were interspersed with responsibilities in teacher supervision and evaluation and curriculum and development activities. Other curriculum development and instructional duties appeared sporadically in the extant literature. The majority

of the remaining duties were managerial and administrative tasks that received a minimum focus in the literature.

Conversely, the assistant principal respondents in this study reported occasionally to very often practicing responsibilities that were diverse and represented seven separate Activity Clusters. While assistant principal respondents reported fulfilling and practicing duties in the student management activity cluster, they did not report performing student management functions with the intensity and expected frequency that the extant literature would have us believe. Current assistant principals in this study also reported occasionally to often fulfilling separate duties in public relations, personnel management, instructional leadership, professional development, and interaction with their educational hierarchy, in addition to their duties in student management that were reported.

The Activity Cluster of resource management was an area within which assistant principals reported that they rarely had experience, especially with regard to budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures. This finding was consistent with the review of the extant literature, which only identified and discussed the responsibility of budget preparation in three of 28 articles (11%).

Research Question #2: What are the responsibilities that practicing assistant principals fulfill in their buildings as determined by school level, gender, and ethnicity?

An analysis of the overall reported mean averages for the 38 responsibilities and seven Activity Clusters for assistant principal respondents revealed that they performed a diverse combination of duties that did not exclusively focus on student management and personnel management, as described in the literature on assistant principal duties. No significant

differences were found in the mean averages of Black and Caucasian and male and female assistant principal subgroups at the .05 confidence level.

School level. The comparison of the mean averages of the seven Activity Clusters for assistant principal responsibilities by school level documented one significant difference. A Tukey (HSD) post-hoc analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean averages for the activity cluster of instructional leadership for middle school and high school assistant principal respondents at the .05 confidence level.

Three noticeable trends appeared in the data for school level when the mean averages for the individual responsibilities and the Activity Clusters were compared. First, high school assistant principals reported more frequently engaging in and devoting time 36 of the 38 responsibilities identified in the survey instrument than their middle school and elementary school counterparts. High school assistant principal respondents also reported higher mean averages in every one of the seven Activity Clusters than middle and elementary school assistant principals.

A second trend showed subtle differences in the amount of time that elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals reported devoting to the identified responsibilities. Thus, the responsibilities or duties that assistant principals perform may vary according to the needs and subtle differences between the school levels.

A third trend revealed that assistant principals in all three school levels reported their lowest mean averages for the Activity Cluster of resource management. They also consistently reported that they only rarely to occasionally worked with budget preparation, purchasing and accounting procedures, and coordinating fundraisers in their schools. This finding was

compatible with the comparison of the mean averages for the Activity Cluster of resource management for all of the subgroup comparisons performed in this study.

Gender. Female and male assistant principal respondents reported occasionally to often engaging in the 38 responsibilities and seven activity clusters included in the survey instrument. No significant differences were found between sexes at the .05 confidence level.

However, a review of specific and individual identified assistant principal responsibilities found that female assistant principal respondents reported often coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis (3.10), compared to male assistant principal respondents (2.50), who reported only performing this responsibility occasionally. Female assistant principals also reported occasionally to often attending district administrative meetings (2.51); male assistant principal respondents reported only occasionally attending such meetings (2.05). Male assistant principal respondents reported often monitoring the use and condition of equipment and materials (3.07) and monitoring the use of the buildings and grounds (3.36) over their female counterparts, who reported occasionally engaging in these activities.

Resource management received the lowest reported amount of time devoted by both female and male assistant principal respondents. In addition to resource management, instructional leadership was also reported as the lowest mean average for the seven activity clusters among male assistant principal respondents (2.34). Female and male assistant principal respondents reported often devoting their time to the duties within the personnel management activity cluster (2.96 and 2.70, respectively).

Ethnicity. Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents reported mean averages that were consistent among the seven Activity Clusters. There were no significant differences for

ethnicity reported between the mean averages of the activity clusters at the .05 level confidence level. Since the number of Hispanic assistant principal respondents was two ($n=2$), the discussion and comparisons for assistant principal responsibilities based on ethnicity on focused on Black and Caucasian respondents.

Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents reported occasionally to often engaging in the majority of the 38 individual responsibilities and seven Activity Clusters included in this study. Resource management responsibilities, again, were reported rarely to occasionally practiced by Black and Caucasian assistant principal respondents. Caucasian assistant principal respondents often reported responding to parent and community inquiries (3.39), compared to Black assistant principal respondents, who reported occasionally to often engaging in this responsibility (2.73).

Research Question #3: How do practicing assistant principal responsibilities compare to the extant literature and to principal responsibilities identified in the Code of Virginia?

The emphasis of the literature differed from the responsibilities reported among by assistant principal respondents in this study. Student discipline and management, which was mentioned and discussed in 93% of the extant literature, was reported by practicing assistant principals as being often performed. However, it did not dominate the reporting among practicing assistant principals in this study as would be expected from the review of the extant literature. Current assistant principals reported occasionally to often engaging in responsibilities in the Activity Clusters of personnel management, instructional leadership, interaction with education hierarchy, and public relations in addition to their duties in student management. Some duties that were reported as being practiced often by current assistant principals in Virginia, such

as collecting and using student assessment data, were not even identified or discussed in the literature on assistant principal responsibilities.

Supervising and evaluating teachers received mention in 61% of the literature reviewed and was the fourth-highest ranked responsibility, behind resolving student behavior problems, contacting parent about their child, and responding to teachers' needs. Direct supervision of students and monitoring of programs was mentioned in 57% of the extant literature; respondents in the current study reported that it was something they often fulfilled. Assistant principals reported often monitoring the condition of the building and grounds (3.06) and monitoring the use and condition of equipment (2.73) more frequently than the school safety duties that were reported in only 21% of the extant literature.

Several areas of consistency were noted between the responsibilities of practicing assistant principals and those identified and discussed in the literature. For example, the preparation of the budget was a responsibility that assistant principal respondents reported rarely to occasionally practicing and that was reported as a deficient area in assistant principal responsibilities within the extant literature. Similarly, resource management was consistently reported the lowest mean averages across the three comparison subgroups of school level, gender, and ethnicity among assistant principal respondents in this study. Budget as a responsibility was only discussed in 11% of the extant literature. Accounting and purchasing procedures (1.79) was the second lowest ranked activity or duty reported among current assistant principals. Further, assistant principals reported occasionally conducting faculty meetings (2.44), a duty that received discussion in only 4% of the extant literature.

Some responsibilities reported by current assistant principals reported were not mentioned in the literature. Special education services and responding to special needs student issues, for example, received identification and discussion as an assistant principal responsibility in 11% of the extant literature; however, it was an activity that assistant principal respondents reported performing very often (3.38). The articles that did report this duty were also more recent, dating from 1995 to the present.

Assistant principals reported performing duties that fulfilled each of the 15 responsibility demands of the Code of Virginia. However, it should be noted that while current assistant principals in Virginia reported practicing these duties, the frequency of their performance was not sufficient in some cases to allow assistant principals to fulfill the expectations of the Code. For example, budget and resource management was one area where assistant principals did not have as much experience in fulfilling and satisfying these expectations from the Code of Virginia.

Sixty-six percent of assistant principal respondents indicated that they wanted to secure a principalship as part of their career plan. By comparing the duties of current assistant principals to the 15 expectations outlined in the Code of Virginia, a determination could be made whether they are exposed to and have opportunities to practice and prepare for the responsibilities and demands that current principals are expected to fulfill. Current assistant principals in this study reported practicing a variety of identified duties that allow them to gain practice and exposure to all of the 15 responsibility expectations enumerated in the Code of Virginia. The only area in which assistant principal respondents reported rarely having any experience and preparation was

in resource management, with the exception of their ability to respond to the needs of their teachers (3.67) and of their support personnel (3.30).

Assistant principals reported spending a large portion of their time providing a safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn. The responsibilities of resolving student learning issues (2.97) and working with special need student issues (3.38) assisted in meeting the requirement in the Code that requires them to promote positive student achievement.

Assistant principals also reported often spending time ensuring that the code of conduct was enforced. They also reported often collecting and using student assessment data (3.12) to analyze the school's test scores by grade and discipline and evaluating the effectiveness of these programs and their curriculum (2.48). Assistant principals reported often maintaining their professional reading to remain current (2.91) and occasionally provided in-service programs for their instructional personnel (2.59) to help improve their instruction, classroom practice, and technology skills.

Research Question #4: How do duties of practicing assistant principals in the state of Virginia compare to those of practicing principals in the state of Virginia?

The analysis of variance that compared the mean averages for the seven Activity Clusters for assistant principal and principal respondents revealed no significant differences at the .05 confidence level between the two groups of respondents. A trend was noted with regard to the range of the mean averages for assistant principal and principal respondents, however, assistant principal and principal respondents reported that they occasionally to often engage in duties that focus on student management, personnel management, public relations, instructional leadership, interactions with education hierarchy, and professional development. Resource management was

the Activity Cluster that was ranked the lowest, by mean average, by both assistant principal and principal respondents. Assistant principal respondents reported that they occasionally performed responsibilities within the resource management cluster (2.23), whereas principals reported that they occasionally to often performed duties within this cluster (2.54). Resource management continued to be the Activity Cluster that assistant principals consistently reported devoting the least amount of their time.

Principal and assistant principal respondents reported often devoting time responding to the needs of teachers, supervising and evaluating teachers, contacting parents about their child, resolving student behavior issues, collecting and using student assessment data, and working with special needs student issues. There were specific responsibilities, most notably providing inservice programs for instructional personnel and initiating contacts with parent and citizen groups, where assistant principal and principal respondents reported identical or closely identical means, signifying a possible overlap in duties. Thus, 15 of the 38 identified responsibilities that assistant principal and principal respondents reported performing in this comparison showed identical or almost identical mean averages.

Principal respondents reported often performing budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures (2.71). In contrast, assistant principals consistently reported that they rarely devoted time to such duties. Additionally, both principal and assistant principal respondents reported that they occasionally attended social activities with their staff.

Summary of Demographic Information

Based on the demographic section of the survey, the average assistant principal in the Virginia was female (57%) and the predominant sex of current Virginia principals was male

(66%). Fifty-eight percent (58%) of elementary principals were male. However, as school level increased, the number of male principals showed a more uneven distribution, with 66% of middle school principals and 74% of high school principals identifying themselves as male.

Gender. Female assistant principals also were not evenly distributed across school levels. The majority of elementary assistant principals (76%) identified themselves as female. However, the gender of assistant principals for middle and high school was more evenly distributed between male and females, with females and males comprising half (50%) of the respective middle and high school assistant principal positions in Virginia.

Ethnicity. Current assistant principals in Virginia were found to be mostly Caucasian (81%), with Blacks comprising 16% and Hispanics occupying 2% of the remaining assistant principal positions. The distribution of ethnicity across grade levels, once again, was uneven. There were more Hispanic assistant principals at the elementary and high school levels, but none at the middle school level. Blacks were found to be more prevalent in assistant principalships as the instructional level increased, with 5% of respondents reporting themselves as Black at the elementary level, 27% at the middle school level, and 14% at the high school level. No Asian/Pacific Islanders or Native American assistant principal respondents were found in the sample.

Principal respondents also reported being predominantly Caucasian. Demographically, principals reported themselves as 3% Hispanic, 9% Black, and 88% Caucasian at the elementary level, 14% Black and 86% Caucasian at the middle school level, and 11% Black, 87% Caucasian, and 1% Native American at the high school level.

Professional demographics. The average assistant principal in this study had served in his or her current position for 4.57 years, with elementary school assistant principals reporting having the least amount of time in their current positions (3.15 years). Assistant principal respondents reported spending an average of 6.03 years at their current schools and had an average of 12.95 years of classroom experience as teachers before entering the assistant principalship. High school and elementary school assistant principals reported having worked slightly longer as classroom teachers before entering administration. On the average, assistant principals in Virginia reported working 52.23 hours per week, including commuting time.

Principal respondents in this survey reported serving an average of 6.54 years in their current positions. They reported having served as school administrators longer than their assistant principals, with an average of 13.07 years. Principal respondents reported serving at their current schools for 7.9 years and had approximately 10.36 years of classroom teaching experience before entering administration. Principals reported working an average of 55.21 hours per week, including commuting time.

Assignment of duties and career aspirations. The majority of both assistant principal and principal respondents (95%) reported that assistant principal duties were assigned to them by the principals. Roughly 3% of assistant principals reported having their responsibilities assigned to them through their human resources or central office personnel. Sixty-six percent of assistant principals reported wanting to assume a principalship as their career goal. A small percentage (15%) of respondents indicated that they wished to remain career assistant principals. The remaining respondents indicated that they aspired to a superintendency, assistant

superintendency, central office position, curriculum development leader position, or would consider retiring at the end of the academic year.

Assistant Principal Responsibilities

Current Responsibilities and the Literature

Burgess (1976), Marshall (1992), and Johnson (2000) commented on the sheer number and variety of assistant principal duties. The data in this study supported the idea that assistant principals in Virginia occasionally to very often perform a wide array of identified duties that are focused on 38 identified responsibilities located within seven Activity Clusters. The 28 articles that formed the body of literature on assistant principal responsibilities reviewed here overwhelmingly identified student discipline and management as the premier assistant principal responsibility, gaining identification and discussion in 93% of the articles within the body of extant literature. The supervision and evaluation of teachers and staff, monitoring of students, student attendance, and attending co- and extra-curricular activities were also frequently identified and discussed as major duties performed by assistant principals.

This research found that current assistant principals in Virginia do not predominantly and overwhelmingly perform student and personnel management duties, as the extant literature would strongly suggest and support. Instead, current assistant principals reported occasionally to often performing duties that expose them to public relations, instructional leadership, interactions with education hierarchy, and professional development. These responsibilities allow assistant principals to practice duties that are expected of Virginia principals, as outlined in the Code of Virginia. A comparison of current assistant principal and principal duties further substantiated this finding, revealing that in 15 out of 38 individual identified responsibilities, assistant

principal and principal respondents reported almost identical mean averages. This suggests that assistant principals are performing duties that their principals also perform and are gaining exposure to duties that will allow them to prepare for principalships, to which 66% of the assistant principal respondents aspired.

Nevertheless, assistant principals consistently reported that they lacked experience in and exposure to duties in resource management, most notably in budget preparation and purchasing and accounting procedures. This finding was found across all of the subgroup comparisons of the mean averages for the Activity Clusters.

Role Ambiguity and the Assistant Principalship

Marshall (1992), Johnson (2000), Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000), and Celikten (2001) discussed the need to better define what assistant principals do on a daily basis and how they feel about the duties they perform. The role ambiguity that they documented and discussed was of concern, particularly because assistant principals do not have a good idea of what their duties encompass, what their duties were, and how these duties and their positions fit into the overall school culture. They also questioned their significance within the school organization and viewed their position as having a continual dependence on the activities of other people (Hartzell et al., 1994).

In contrast to the literature, current assistant principals in Virginia have a clear picture of their responsibilities. They are able to consistently recognize across multiple levels of comparison the Activity Clusters and individual responsibilities that they perform. Additionally, they are consistently aware that they lack experience and exposure to certain duties, such as budget preparation, resource management, conducting faculty meetings, and attending social

activities with their staff, which might require them to pursue further training and experience in preparation for the principalship, toward which two-thirds of Virginia's current assistant principals aspire.

There were duties that assistant principal respondents reported often performing that were not generally discussed in the extant literature, such as collecting and using student assessment data. This supported findings by Marshall (1992) and Williams (1995), who documented an expansion of assistant principal duties into the Activity Cluster of instructional leadership during the 1980s and 1990s due to increased state and national accountability programs and demands. Yet, not one article within the body of extant literature on assistant principal responsibilities identified collection and use of student data as a duty that assistant principals perform with any degree of regularity in their regimen.

Instructional Duties for Assistant Principals

Koru (1993) noted that assistant principals were rarely responsible for instructional improvement activities, except for teacher evaluations. However, assistant principal respondents in Virginia reported that they often engage in collecting and using student assessment data, often attend meetings and workshops on school improvement and work with curriculum development and activities, and occasionally to often evaluate the effectiveness of programs and curriculum and engage in long-range program and curriculum planning, all of which appear in the activity cluster of instructional leadership. The accountability standards that grew both nationwide and within Virginia during the 1980s and 1990s placed a considerable emphasis on administrative responsibilities that focused on standards, data, assessment, student achievement, and data-driven school improvement planning. Among other things, these duties require assistant principals to

know how to use data for the purpose of improving instruction and student achievement.

Assistant principals in Virginia often reported working in these responsibility areas to improve the achievement levels of their students and provide planning and support for the overall improvement of their school's achievement levels per the Virginia SOLs. Virginia's assistant principals work with responsibilities in instructional improvement and meet the requirements set forth for principals in the Code of Virginia by often practicing these responsibilities.

The Sociological Perspective

The theoretical framework for this study was based upon a sociological perspective that assumes that assistant principals are socialized into their positions. Specifically, the functionalist paradigm assumes that all social groups relate to one another in an interdependent system. Thus, each individual or group must perform their particular function properly in order for the larger school culture to function smoothly. Marshall (1992) advocated for breaking down this role ambiguity among assistant principals to assist them in gaining a better understanding of their role within the larger context of the school organization. While the present research did not attempt to measure how assistant principals felt about the duties that they performed nor their attitudes toward their levels of interactions within the larger school organization, the assistant principal respondents reported that they occasionally to often perform a consistent set of duties across 38 individual responsibility categories and seven Activity Clusters that are defined and familiar, and that fulfill the expectations for school administrators specified by the Code of Virginia, with the exception of budgetary duties. The duties that assistant principal respondents reported performing in this study also presented an array of duties that closely resemble in 15 out of 38 (39%) individual responsibilities that their principals reported performing. Finally, Activity

Cluster comparisons also revealed that assistant principals and their principals reported devoting similar amounts of time toward duties in the public relations Activity Cluster.

Assistant principals in Virginia have a good notion of what their duties are and in which duties they are lacking experience, such as budget and purchasing procedures. Furthermore, the comparison of the data for current assistant principals and principals show a 39% overlap in these positions and that principals and assistant principals in Virginia share an interdependent relationship. Assistant principals work closely and collaboratively with their principals and perform many of the duties that their principals reported performing. Accordingly, the application of the theoretical framework to the results of this study revealed that assistant principals in Virginia have a solid idea of what their duties are, what they must perform, how these duties intertwine and complement the duties that are performed by their principals. Unfortunately, this research did not provide any data that spoke to how assistant principals in Virginia felt about their positions or their interactions with their principals.

This research was consistent with the literature with regard to the finding that principals predominantly assign responsibilities and duties to their assistant principals. However, the duties that are assigned to assistant principals in Virginia do not exclusively focus on student and personnel management activity clusters, as a review of the extant literature would suggest.

Conclusions, Applications, and Implications for the Research

Assistant Principal Duties and the Extant Literature

The data from this study paint a very different picture of the assistant principalship from that portrayed in the body of the literature. According to the extant literature, the assistant principal predominantly engages in student management and disciplinary roles (Austin & Brown,

1970; Brown & Rentschler, 1973; Glanz, 1994; Gorton, 1988; Hassenpflug, 1991; Marshall, 1992; Michel, 1996; Ricciardi & Petrosko, 2000; Roberson, 2003; Scoggins & Bishop, 1993; Smith 1987). The extant literature also found that assistant principals perform teacher evaluations and observations as a part of their regular regimen of duties (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). Other duties were sporadically reported by assistant principals. For example, role ambiguity, a lack of a feeling of self-worth, and uncertainty as to the assistant principal's role in the larger context of the school organization were all presented and discussed as difficulties that assistant principals encountered on a regular basis in their positions (Marshall, 1992). To varying degrees, these suggestions are not substantiated by the findings of this study.

While student management responsibilities were identified and reported as often performed by assistant principal respondents in this study, assistant principals also reported often engaging in duties in personnel management, which remained consistent with findings in the extant literature from Koru (1993) and Kaplan and Owings (1999). Mertz (2000) stated that assistant principals found themselves responsible for duties in school improvement planning and accreditation, which were reported as duties in instructional leadership that were often performed by current assistant principals. Assistant principals in Virginia reported often engaging in the collection and use of student assessment data and occasionally to often performing long-range programs and curriculum planning, curriculum and development activities, and providing inservice programs for instructional personnel. Likewise, assistant principals in Virginia collect and use student assessment data and often attend workshops and courses that address school improvement. This finding was consistent with the discussion from the extant literature that documented a shift in assistant principal duties during the 1980s and 1990s, when state

accountability movements began to take root across the nation (NASSP, 1987; Wells et al., 1999). Assistant principals in Virginia also reported a desire to have more duties that focus on instructional leadership and that allow them to gain exposure to duties that are designed to enhance student achievement. This finding supports research by Glanz (1994), which found that assistant principals wish to gain more duties that focus on instructional domains.

Rodrick (1986) and Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000) found that assistant principals complained of a lack of resource management and budgetary skills and responsibilities. The findings of the current study supported the literature by confirming that assistant principals in Virginia lack exposure and practice in budget and accounting, across all levels of comparison that were conducted in this study.

In summary, the extant literature portrays the assistant principal performing mostly disciplinary duties, whereas the data reported from current Virginia assistant principals show assistant principals performing a wide variety of duties. When compared across school level, gender, and ethnicity, with the exception of instructional leadership for middle and high school assistant principals, no significant differences were found to exist between the duties that assistant principals in Virginia reported performing. The duties that they performed also closely matched those duties performed by current principals in Virginia. Additionally, assistant principals consistently reported that they did not have experience in responsibilities that focus on resource management.

Assistant Principals and Principals

Assistant principals in this study reported performing many of the duties and responsibilities within the seven Activity Clusters that their principals reported performing and that the Code of

Virginia establishes as expectations for practicing principals. A comparison of the responsibilities of current assistant principals and current principals in Virginia revealed no significant differences within the seven Activity Clusters between these two sets of building administrators. Clearly, assistant principals in Virginia perform many of the duties that current principals in Virginia perform. This was consistent with the findings of Calabrese (1991) and Williams (1995), who advocated that assistant principals and principals divide disciplinary duties to allow the assistant principals to have a greater share of the duties in curriculum development, supervision, and staff development activities. The comparison of current assistant principal and principal duties in this study also suggested that there are overlapping jurisdictions, which allow assistant principals to gain exposure to a diverse blend of responsibilities and duties that parallel the duties that are being performed by their principals.

Assistant principals and principals in this study reported similar mean averages (2.8 and 2.89, respectively) for the Activity Cluster of public relations. This finding stands in direct contrast to the work of Michel (1996), who found that principals wished to assume roles or responsibilities that allowed them to maintain higher visibility within the school community. Additionally, assistant principals and principals in the sample population reported that they both were occasionally to often involved in contacting parents and community groups (3.32), preparing written information about their school and its events (2.50), and responding to inquiries from parents and citizens (3.32).

Assistant principal respondents in the sample population of this study reported a higher frequency rating for their individual responsibilities, based on their reported mean averages, indicating that they perceived devoting more time to the 38 responsibilities and the seven

Activity Clusters than their principal counterparts. One explanation for this compression in the range of reported mean averages among principal respondents may be found within the research from DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003), which revealed that Virginia principals felt that they had to delegate their responsibilities, particularly in the Activity Cluster of instructional leadership, in order to keep up with the increased demands in the total school program. Current Virginia principals might also rely upon their assistant principals more steadily to assist them in fulfilling the increased demand that they have experienced in instructional, personnel, and student management duties, which could account for the greater intensity and frequency reported in the mean averages among assistant principal respondents (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Since 95% of the assistant principal and principal respondents in this study confirmed that assistant principal duties are predominantly assigned to them by the principal, this would strengthen this latter explanation.

Virginia principals have seen an increase in duties in student management, instructional leadership, and personnel management (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The data from the Virginia principal and assistant principal respondents reveal that they are working closely together in order to fulfill the increase in demands and duties that principals are finding in their daily work and experience areas of overlapping jurisdiction in an effort to meet these responsibilities (Calabrese, 1991; Hartzell et al., 1994). Mertz (2000) stated that the duties assigned to assistant principals tended to be non-overlapping with those of their principals. Yet, the data reported by current Virginia assistant principals and principals suggest that many current assistant principals and principals in Virginia have overlapping lines of jurisdiction and work in

concert with one another to fulfill the sheer increase in the duties that principals have experienced.

The data from current Virginia assistant principals contradicted research by Glanz (1994), which viewed as problematic the notion that the assistant principalship is a stepping stone to the principalship. This conclusion assumed two beliefs: (a) that the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals remain markedly different from principals, and (b) that the assistant principalship does not provide adequate training for the principalship. The present study confirmed that assistant principals and principals in Virginia perform similar roles and responsibilities and that the assistant principal responsibilities fulfill expectations for principals, as outlined in the Code of Virginia, in 14 of the 15 expectation areas specified by the Code. Thus, the 66% of assistant principal respondents who indicated that they desired to assume a principalship have experience in many specific duties and Activity Clusters that can assist them in becoming familiarized and socialized to the Virginia principalship.

School Level and Assistant Principal Responsibilities

High school assistant principals reported higher mean averages in 36 of 38 identified responsibilities and for all of the seven Activity Clusters. This was another finding that that substantiated earlier work by Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000), who documented differences between the type of duties and the frequency of the reported duties between assistant principals at different instructional levels.

The fact that high school assistant principals in Virginia reported higher mean averages in a majority of the identified responsibilities confirms the work of Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000). The data showing that high school assistant principals reported higher mean averages in 36 out

of 38 responsibilities may be partially explained by turning to the professional demographic data from the assistant principal respondents in this study. Specifically, the number of hours per week, including commuting time, that assistant principals reported serving in their positions revealed that high school assistant principals spent an average of 57.24 hours per week in their positions, as compared to 51.06 hours per week among middle school assistant principals and 48.48 hours per week among elementary school assistant principals. High school principals could feasibly devote more time to these 38 responsibilities, considering that they reported spending an average of six to nine additional hours per week on the job, including commuting time, than their middle school and elementary school coworkers. Additionally, the increased enrollment at the high school level might account for or explain the perception among the high school assistant principal respondents that they more frequently engage in and devote their time toward these 38 responsibilities than their elementary and middle school coworkers.

For example, Koru (1993) and Kaplan and Owings (1999) found that assistant principals often found themselves heavily engaged in the supervision, evaluation, and assistance of teachers because of the sheer number of teachers in their school buildings who require an annual evaluation or review. This would support the higher mean averages reported by the high school assistant principal respondents in this study. Additionally, it might account for the higher mean average reported by high school assistant principals for the responsibility of hiring and recruiting instructional personnel (2.73). The increased number of individuals on staff who are hired to meet the enrollment demands not only increases the number of evaluations that must be completed, but also necessitates hiring more full-time and part-time instructional positions. This

assumption takes into account the fact that the hiring process would directly involve the assistant principal and their participation in the recruitment and hiring process.

Ricciardi and Petrosko (2000) also found subtle differences between the job responsibilities of assistant principals according to school level. Elementary assistant principals, for example, were more engaged in instructional leadership activities and duties that focused on the supervision and evaluation of teachers, due to the fact that they did not have to deal with as many interruptions in their day with student management issues (Ricciardi & Petrosko). Conversely, secondary assistant principals worked more heavily with student management and administrative duties that focused on student discipline, student attendance, and monitoring students due to the larger number of students enrolled at the secondary level (Ricciardi & Petrosko).

This research found that elementary school assistant principal respondents reported the lowest mean average (3.07) for the Activity Cluster of student management, as compared to high school (3.65) and middle school (3.27) assistant principal respondents. Middle school assistant principal respondents reported very often engaging in the responsibility of resolving student behaviors (3.92), which was the highest mean average reported for any responsibility category subgroup in this study.

Elementary school assistant principals reported higher mean averages for the Activity Clusters of instructional leadership and personnel management than their middle school colleagues, but did not surpass their high school colleagues in terms of their reported mean averages for these activity clusters. Elementary school assistant principals reported the highest mean average for the activity of supervising and evaluating their support staff (3.29), signifying

that they often engage in this activity. This could be explained by the difference in how support staffs, in particular instructional assistants, are integrated into and utilized within the instructional program at the elementary level. At the high school and middle school level, instructional assistants and support staff are not generally configured or utilized directly in classroom instruction and, therefore, are evaluated in a different manner than at the elementary level.

Middle school assistant principals reported the lowest mean averages for responsibilities within personnel management across the three school levels. Additionally, a significant difference was found in the mean averages for high school and middle school assistant principals within the activity cluster of instructional leadership. There are two possible explanations for this finding.

One explanation is drawn from the research by Hausman et al. (2000), which found that assistant principals with more years of teaching experience reported greater success with duties in instructional leadership than those who had fewer years of teaching experience. Middle school assistant principals in Virginia reported having the least amount of teaching experience (10.9 years), compared to their high school (14.67 years) colleagues and elementary assistant principal counterparts (14.30 years), although the difference between these mean averages was not found to be significant. The application of Hausman's finding to these data suggests that middle school assistant principals in Virginia may not feel as successful in their roles as instructional leaders, considering that they reported having the fewest number of years of classroom teaching experience prior to entering the assistant principalship.

Another explanation for the lower mean averages reported by middle school assistant principals in Virginia with regard to instructional leadership might be the way that assistant principals are configured or utilized at the middle school level. Often, middle school assistant principals are assigned or compartmentalized to one specific grade level. Such a configuration could limit the scope of instructional duties or responsibilities that an assistant principal would perform, since his or her responsibilities only account for roughly one third of the overall student population and faculty/staff. Thus, high school and, to some extent, elementary school assistant principals stand a better chance of being assigned a greater amount of personnel to evaluate than a middle school assistant principal, who might only have one grade level within the school to oversee and to perform instructional leadership responsibilities. They also have a wider range of grade levels to which they must devote more time toward instructional leadership responsibilities.

Gender and Assistant Principal Responsibilities

The literature presented one finding from Hausman et al. (2002), that documented that female assistant principals reported devoting more time to responsibilities within the instructional leadership and personnel management activity clusters than their male counterparts, who devoted more time to working with managerial and administrative responsibilities than their female assistant principal coworkers (Hausman et al.).

The findings from the current research did not support this finding. Female and male assistant principal respondents reported consistent mean averages for the Activity Clusters of personnel management (2.96 and 2.70, respectively) and instructional leadership (2.69 and 2.34, respectively), indicating that female and male assistant principals often work with duties in

personnel management and occasionally work with instructional leadership activities. Female assistant principal respondents did report that they often conduct long-range program and curriculum planning (2.74) and attend workshops and meetings on school improvement. Male respondents indicated that they occasionally participated in these responsibilities. Overall, however, both groups did not present any significant differences in the comparison of the mean averages in the activity clusters of instructional leadership and personnel management at the .05 confidence level, contradicting the findings of Hausman et al..

Implications for Virginia Principals

The findings from this research hold important implications for practice among principals in Virginia. First, while principals were found to work in close collaboration with their assistant principals, they should continue to work closely with their assistant principals to preserve and expand the broad exposure to the general responsibilities that encompass school-based administration. Since the majority of assistant principal duties are delineated by the principals, principals should work more closely with their assistant principals to ensure that they gain even exposure to the responsibilities that they perform. For example, duties could be delineated based on situations or scenarios within the building as they arise. This idea would be akin to the “teachable moments” that inevitably occur within the course of the administrator’s day. Another example might be to have principals delineate duties along broader guidelines that offer opportunities to principals and assistant principals to share duties and that will involve the assistant principal in identified and reported areas of minimal exposure, such as budgetary duties and resource management, hiring and recruiting instructional personnel, and conducting faculty meetings.

DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003) noted that principal duties in Virginia have shifted due to an increase in duties within certain Activity Clusters, most notably instructional leadership and student management. Such shifts will inevitably affect the duties and responsibilities that their assistant principal partners will perform. Principals must recognize these shifts in their duties as they develop and make the adjustments to allow assistant principals to gain experience in these new areas of responsibility or emphasis that arise. In many cases, an action as simple as inviting assistant principals to budget planning meetings, allowing them to sit in on a panel interview for the hiring of an instructional position, or giving them opportunities for input into the formulation of the interview questions that will be standardized on an interview protocol provide added exposure to a responsibility that they will eventually have to engage in when they assume a principalship. It might also assist them in better preparing for new duties or shifts in Activity Clusters that occur as their responsibility demands change in public education.

Ongoing communication and fostering a more complete sense of partnership between the assistant principal and the principal are encouraged. Talking and conferring with assistant principals strengthens the level of trust between the principal and the assistant principal and allows assistant principals to articulate what they are feeling and how they perceive their role in the school community and culture. This study confirms that assistant principals perform a diverse blend of duties that closely mirror the duties performed by principals in Virginia. Allowing assistant principals to discuss and react to these duties and to express their feelings toward these duties is an important opportunity for assistant principals to validate their self-worth and to allow them to gain a better understanding of how they perceive their work and its value within the larger school culture.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. A study of the perceptions and attitudes that current assistant principals hold toward their work and the responsibilities that they perform could provide a basis of comparison for what assistant principals do and provide insight into what they would prefer to be doing. The results could help principals in restructuring efforts of the concept of the administrative team and the relationship that exists between assistant principals and principals.
2. A study of principal preparation and certification programs at the university level would assist in determining if these programs are adequately exposing and preparing assistant principals for their responsibilities and demands as school administrators. Restructuring or integrating new and/or practical experiences for administration candidates would allow assistant principals to become better socialized to their new positions and gain a better understanding of their role as building administrators, as well as the school culture.
3. A longitudinal replication study based on this research that tracks assistant principal duties over time would be helpful to see what changes and shifts, if any, are taking place. The Maine Principals' Study was used to conduct similar research in the state of Maine and would be useful as a basis of comparison for geographic purposes, as well as possible national trends. Additional data from such research could focus what changes, if any, exist as assistant principals gain experience and become more oriented to their duties, the school culture, and their position demands.
4. A nationwide study of assistant principals would provide more comprehensive data for comparative purposes to confirm if there are geographic or regional differences among

responsibilities, interactions between principals and their assistant principals, and demographic differences within targeted groups (i.e. ethnicity, gender, school level, and years of experience).

5. A study that defines recruitment and hiring criteria for Virginia assistant principals would assist in identifying what qualities school districts desire to see within their assistant principal candidates, whether the university preparation programs are preparing candidates to meet these demands, and whether the principal expectations in the Code of Virginia are being held accountable by the school districts.

6. A study of Virginia principals to determine what their expectations are for their assistant principals and how they determine duties or responsibilities should be divided in their buildings would provide further insight into the relationship, concept of the administrative team, and effective utilization of assistant principals in their buildings by their principals.

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Appendix A

Permission to Use Letter from Survey Author

College of Education and
Human Development



Educational Leadership Program:
5749 Merrill Hall
Orono, Maine 04469-5749
Tel: 207-581-2455
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www.umaine.edu

Mr. David Gaston
13 Stratford Road
Newport News, VA 23601

October 21, 2004

Dear David:

I hereby grant you permission to use the Maine Principals Survey, in part or in whole, in your research activities. I assume that you will adhere to commonly accepted standards for attributing authorship and source when you use the instrument. I would be very interested in the results of your research as well.

Do keep in touch,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon A. Donaldson, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gordon A. Donaldson, Jr.
Professor of Education

Appendix B

Code # _____

Principal and Assistant Principal Survey

Thank you for agreeing to take the time to complete this survey. I appreciate your commitment and look forward to reviewing your responses on this instrument. Please read the statements and questions below and circle the appropriate letter or fill in the blank for your response. Please return the completed survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope no later than March 1, 2005.
Thank You!

A. Professional Experience

1. What is your current position? A. Principal B. Assistant Principal
2. How many years have you been in this position? _____
3. How many years have you been a school administrator? _____
4. How many years have you worked at your current school? _____
5. How many years of classroom teaching experience do you have? _____
6. What is the grade level of the school in which you currently work?
- A. Elementary B. Middle C. High

B. Personal

1. What is your gender? A. Female B. Male
2. What is your ethnicity?
- A. Black B. Hispanic C. Caucasian D. Asian/Pacific Islander E. Other _____
3. In an average week, approximately how many total hours do you spend in your role as a principal or assistant principal (including commuting)? _____

C. Roles and Responsibilities

Principals and assistant principals are expected to do many diverse things! This section describes these activities. It asks how much time you devote to each activity. Please indicate how often you are engaged in each activity by circling one of the following:

1 = Rarely 2 = Occasionally 3 = Often 4 = Very Often

<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Rarely</u>			<u>Very Often</u>
a. Resolving student behaviors	1	2	3	4
b. Budget preparation	1	2	3	4
c. Direct supervision of students	1	2	3	4
d. Resolving student learning issues	1	2	3	4
e. Supervision/Evaluation of teachers	1	2	3	4
f. Supervision/Evaluation of support staff	1	2	3	4
g. Monitoring use/condition of equipment and materials	1	2	3	4
h. Social activities with staff	1	2	3	4
i. Curriculum development and activities	1	2	3	4
j. Selection of texts and instructional materials	1	2	3	4
k. Direct involvement in teaching	1	2	3	4
l. School Board meetings	1	2	3	4
m. District administrative meetings	1	2	3	4
n. Fundraisers for the school	1	2	3	4
o. Scheduling classes/Instructional events	1	2	3	4
p. Organizing/Supervising co-curricular activities	1	2	3	4
q. Purchasing/accounting procedures	1	2	3	4
r. Contact with parent regarding their child	1	2	3	4
s. Conducting faculty meetings	1	2	3	4
t. Responding to parent/community inquiries	1	2	3	4
u. Professional reading to remain current	1	2	3	4
v. Responding to teacher's needs	1	2	3	4
w. Responding to needs of support personnel	1	2	3	4
x. Collecting and using student assessment data	1	2	3	4
y. In-service programs for instructional personnel	1	2	3	4
z. Consulting with superiors	1	2	3	4
aa. Attending meetings/workshops on school improvement	1	2	3	4
bb. Attending meetings/courses for my professional growth	1	2	3	4
cc. Special needs student issues	1	2	3	4
dd. Dealing with state/community agencies	1	2	3	4
ee. Evaluating effectiveness of programs and curriculum	1	2	3	4
ff. Monitoring condition of building and grounds	1	2	3	4
gg. Initiating contacts with parent/citizen groups	1	2	3	4

<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Rarely</u>			<u>Very Often</u>
hh. Recruitment/hiring of instructional personnel	1	2	3	4
ii. Coordinating staff efforts on a daily basis	1	2	3	4
jj. Long-range program and curriculum planning	1	2	3	4
kk. Preparing written information about the school and events	1	2	3	4
ll. Completing required reports	1	2	3	4

2. Who primarily assigns assistant principal responsibilities in your school district? (Check all that apply)

A. Principal of building, once assigned

B. Assistant principal job description delineated by Human Resources/Central Office

C. Other _____

3. If you are currently an assistant principal, which of the following represents your career goal?

A. I would like to advance to a principalship

B. I would like to remain as a career assistant principal

C. Other _____

This survey has been based on the Maine Principals' Survey of 2001 (Hausman, C., Nebeker, A., McCreary, J., & Donaldson, G., Jr. (2002). The worklife of the assistant principal. Journal of Educational Administration, 40(2/3), 136-158). Permission to use this survey instrument was secured from Dr. Gordon Donaldson at the University of Maine at Orono. The researcher wishes to thank Dr. Donaldson for his permission and assistance in creating this survey.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY! Please Return the Completed Survey Using the Envelope Provided.

I would like an Executive Summary of this study __ Yes __ No

Appendix C

Cover Letter

Date

Address

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for agreeing to complete the enclosed Principal and Assistant Principal Survey. I appreciate your consideration, time, and responses to these questions, as well as your verbal commitment to this important research.

Currently, the literature that focuses on the assistant principalship sees this position as neglected and one that deserves further study to define its roles and responsibilities. Additionally, assistant principals often struggle to find their place in the school organization. To date, there is no current research in the Commonwealth of Virginia that has explored the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals. This study attempts to define the responsibilities of current assistant principals, compare this data to the extant literature and to the principal responsibilities enumerated in the Code of Virginia, compare current assistant principal responsibilities to current principal responsibilities, and determine whether differences in assistant principal duties might be found when comparing the school level, gender, and ethnicity of the respondents.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the survey instrument. The questions are mostly close-format to assist in ease of response. It is estimated that it will take each respondent approximately 18 minutes to complete this survey. Please complete the questions on this survey as honestly and truthfully as possible and return the completed survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided no later than March 1, 2005.

All information gathered from the results of your survey will be kept strictly confidential. It is also encouraged that participants complete the enclosed survey on their own time and not during business hours. I would also ask that you not provide your name on any of this information.

A copy of the results will be available upon request. Please indicate if you would wish to have a copy of an executive summary forwarded to you upon completion of this research.

Again, I ask that you please complete and return your survey no later than March 1, 2005. I appreciate your initial commitment to this research and look forward to receiving the completed survey instrument very soon. Thank you!

Sincerely,
David W. Gaston
Principal
James River Elementary School
WJCC Public Schools
Doctoral Candidate—Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership (EPPL)
The College of William and Mary

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (PHONE: 757-221-3901) ON NOVEMBER 22, 2004 AND EXPIRES ON NOVEMBER 21, 2005.