

PREPARING EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT SCHOOL LEADERS

A Dissertation By

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Abstract:

There is a negative impact on school functioning and student learning resulting from paying insufficient attention to principals' emotional intelligence in their leadership preparation. Very few resources are currently in place to develop and support principals in the area of emotional intelligence. A principal's ability to manage, express, and regulate their emotions and attitudes may impact leadership success and, in turn, student outcomes. This qualitative case study explores the relationship between the principal's emotional intelligence and their leadership practices. The results of this study may inform principal leadership preparation, in-service training, professional growth opportunities, and hiring practices.

This qualitative case study examined the extent to which there is a relationship, if any, between the Leadership Education for Anaheim Union High School District (LEAD) curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the Anaheim Union High School District. Furthermore, this study explored how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices to understand better how to support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through preservice training and in-service professional development. Findings suggest that there is a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the development of self-knowledge in the program graduates in the areas of self-awareness and social awareness that influences the program graduates' leadership practices. This conclusion aligns with this study's conceptual framework, which captures my working theory for how emotional intelligence and leadership preparation affects effective educational leadership and, in turn, student outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Everything school administrators do throughout their day is an interplay of soft and hard skills. Successful school administrators master this interplay with a combination of highly refined technical skills and a robust interpersonal and intrapersonal skillset, referred to as emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist, has identified the five pillars of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (as cited in Serrat, 2017). Goleman explains that we essentially have two minds: a rational, logical mind and an emotional mind. These five critical pillars combined make up our emotional intelligence, which is often a more significant predictor of happiness and success than IQ, the capacity traditionally used to measure intelligence.

As a P-12 administrator, I have come to understand, through my own educational experiences, interview process, and on-the-job training, that there are patterns in the field and the research that reflect a misunderstanding of the importance and teachability of emotional intelligence. Shouldn't we develop emotional intelligence skills more? Shouldn't we examine the topic of emotional intelligence more closely? We ought to identify emotional intelligence skills and examine the relationship between a school administrator's emotional intelligence and their leadership practices. District-level school administrator meetings are often dominated by the voices of senior managers, where information is disseminated in a top-down manner with little room for discussion or shared decision-making. After attending these transactional meetings full of directives, school administrators may walk away feeling demoralized, confused, or overwhelmed, which is counterproductive to encouraging commitment and building a strong sense of community. School administrator preparation programs, supervision, evaluations, and performance reviews are based more on technical skills, including achievement data and test scores, than on relationship skills. This focus on technical skills indicates that there is not an explicit expectation that school administrators use or develop these emotional intelligence skills,

additionally there is nothing established to support or encourage the use or development of these emotional intelligence skills.

Background of the Problem

The following section addresses the background of the problem this study seeks to understand.

Emotional Intelligence and Educational Leadership

Historically, emotional intelligence, defined by Goleman as “the ability to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulses and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to emphasize and to hope” has been undervalued and misunderstood (Goleman, 1995, p. 34). “Without adequate skills to adapt to the changes and stress related to their jobs, school administrators and teachers often experience frustration and exhaustion, leading many to leave the field of education” (Herbert, 2010, p. 4). In recent years, a lack of understanding and development of school administrators' emotional intelligence skills, and a hyper focus on compliance and management, has negatively impacted the districtwide climate, leaving school administrators feeling less energized, less productive, and less committed.

Preparation programs for school administrators focus on management, technical skills, teacher and staff evaluations, educational law, and compliance issues. These preparation programs are very transactional, offer little in terms of leadership development, and lack opportunities for school administrators to learn, collaborate, and refine their craft. There are currently very few preparatory opportunities for school administrators in developing emotional intelligence, let alone leadership skills and management strategies.

All too often, I have witnessed school administrators’ underutilizing emotional intelligence skills when faced with an issue or conflict. Rather than being able to problem solve and diffuse a situation, the school administrator’s lack of emotional intelligence skills escalates the problem to an otherwise avoidable conflict. As stated by Goleman, “If your emotional abilities aren’t in hand, if you don’t have

self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far" (as cited in Serrat, 2017, p. 330).

In the research, there is an abundance of information concerning effective school leadership. Leadership not only matters, but "it is difficult to envision an investment in K-12 education with a higher ceiling on its potential return than improving school leadership" (Grissom et al., 2021, p. 14). However, there is not much published research examining emotional intelligence in terms of identifying the attributes of effectiveness. Emotional intelligence is critical for administrators for at least three reasons: School administrators who demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence positively contribute to their school's overall climate (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001), the administrator's role has shifted from a manager to a facilitator of teacher-learning and instructional improvement, and there is a positive correlation between effective school leadership and student achievement.

School administrators with a strong level of emotional intelligence, who can manage, express, and regulate their own emotions, demonstrate high levels of patience and empathy, encourage healthy communication, and create safe learning environments (Palomera et al., 2008). Successful school administrators demonstrate mastery in their daily duties, from physically opening and closing school each day to everything in between, by managing and leading a diverse group of people with a wide variety of challenges, motivation, and satisfaction. Schools rely on site administrators who can manage the dynamic education landscape and lead their school to continuous improvement as measured in student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Witziers et al., 2003). Lacking emotional intelligence will ultimately inhibit an administrator's career options and stunt their professional growth.

School administrators must be well-informed students of the practice of teaching and learning. The expectation is that school administrators are instructional leaders who possess the ability to increase teacher performance and effectiveness, which in turn improves student achievement. The school administrator is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction,

and assessment practices. Nevertheless, considering the current trend to empower teachers in curriculum design and implementation, the school administrator's role has shifted from that of a manager to a facilitator of teacher-learning and instructional improvement.

Despite their IQs, leadership preparation, and educational backgrounds, many school administrators have failed in their role as instructional leaders. A school administrator's ability to manage, express, and regulate their emotions and attitudes will have an impact on leadership success. An effective school administrator understands the principles of engaging instruction and learning progressions and uses their knowledge to manage the instructional program (Lezotte, 2001). As an effective instructional leader, the school administrator must articulate a vision, use data, structure a collaborative process, set high expectations for success, and monitor progress. The school administrator's role as facilitator is to guide the teachers to support the vision that *all* students will learn at high levels through collaborative structures.

A relationship exists between school administrators, teachers, and students in the realm of emotional intelligence through the increasingly important domain of social emotional learning. Researchers in the field of K-12 education have identified that graduates need to leave the school system proficient in the social-emotional competencies to be successful in the workplace. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has identified five social-emotional learning competencies: self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness (CASEL, n.d.). The aforementioned five core competencies are the "knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL, n.d., Fundamentals of SEL section, para. 1). Social-emotional learning enhances one's capacity to manage demanding daily challenges effectively.

The expectation is that classroom teachers teach these critical social-emotional skills. The school administrators, in turn, are the leaders of this vital work, yet very little is in place to support,

nurture, and cultivate our educational leaders' emotional intelligence. "School districts contribute to school administrators' level of stress in a culture that perpetuates anxiety and tension: more demands, high-performance expectations, and less resources" (Wells, 2015, p. 3). The urgency is apparent. If nothing addresses the school administrators' emotional intelligence, poor instructional leadership will negatively affect and ultimately impact student achievement. Our students cannot afford for our school administrators to be less than effective.

The K-12 school system is a workplace in and of itself and the training ground for America's future workforce. Therefore, it is critical to examine the efforts of the K-12 emotional intelligence systems of support (Opengart, 2007). Much of the success of a school administrator relies heavily on interpersonal skills.

Educational Leadership Preparation

Despite the central role played by emotional intelligence in school leadership, educational leadership preparation programs rarely address emotional intelligence. State leadership standards communicate the expectations for school administrators' practices and inform administrative preparation, licensure, professional development, and evaluation. In the State of California there is a two-tiered credentialing system informed by the California Professional Standards for the Teaching Profession, which were revised in 2017 by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Within the six standards that outline the expectations of all school administrators are the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs), as seen in Table 1, that drive the administrative preparation programs, including the coursework and fieldwork for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. The CAPEs identify actionable and measurable outcomes rather than provide a framework of effective leadership qualities and dispositions. A more in-depth look at the administrative standards reveals an emphasis on hard skills, leaving little to no room for emotional intelligence development.

Table 1. California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs)

<p>Development & Implementation of a Shared Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Student-Centered Vision of Teaching and Learning • Developing a Shared Vision and Community Commitment • Implementing the Vision 	<p>Instructional Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Professional Learning • Promoting Effective Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment • Supporting Teachers to Improve Practice • Feedback on Instruction
<p>Management and Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations and Resource Management • Managing Operational Systems and Human Resources • School Climate • Managing the School Budget and Personnel 	<p>Family and Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and Family Engagement • Community Involvement
<p>Ethics and Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective Practice • Ethical Decision Making • Ethical Action 	<p>External Context and Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and Communicating Policy • Representing and Promoting the School

Leadership Education for Anaheim Districts

The Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) leadership team identified that there was a core problem of practice of significant disproportionality between the English language learners (ELs) and the overall student population. To address this inequity and problem of practice, in 2018 they began their partnership with the Educational Leadership Department at California State University Fullerton (CSUF) to create LEAD: Leadership Education for Anaheim Union High School District. Their belief was that through participation in the LEAD program, selected teacher leaders throughout the district would come together to engage in the continuous improvement process while earning their administrative credential.

Ultimately, by redefining administrator preparation and professional development for these up-and-coming educational leaders, they hoped to improve the outcomes for ELs in AUHSD. The LEAD program was designed with equity in mind. The LEAD program is co-facilitated by AUHSD District

administrators and CSUF professors and focused on the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards. The LEAD program curriculum is driven by leadership dimensions in the areas of self-knowledge or emotional intelligence, equity, and systems. See Table 2.

Table 2. Emotional Intelligence Competencies and LEAD Self-Knowledge Leadership Dimensions

<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Awareness</p> <p>Knowing what we feel in the moment and using that to guide our decision making; having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.</p> <p>Leadership Dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Emotional self-awareness 1.4 Emotional self-control 1.7 Sense of agency 1.9 Mindfulness 	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Awareness</p> <p>Sensing what people are feeling, being able to take their perspective and cultivate rapport with a broad diversity of people.</p> <p>Leadership Dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.11 Empathy 1.14 Dissent and divergent points of view 1.15 Compassion
<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Management</p> <p>Handling our emotions so that they facilitate rather than interfere; delaying gratification to pursue goals; recovering well from emotional distress; deploying our deepest preferences to take initiative, improve, and preserve.</p> <p>Leadership Dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3 Adaptability 1.6 Growth mindset 1.12 Personal integrity 1.13 Resilience 1.17 Self-reflection and reflective practice 1.21 Edge 	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Skills</p> <p>Handling emotions in relationships well and accurately reading social situations; interacting smoothly; using these skills to persuade, lead and negotiate.</p> <p>Leadership Dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 Positive outlook 1.8 Leadership vulnerability/Learning individual 1.10 Leadership presence 1.16 Personal responsibility 1.18 Listening 1.19 Self-Expression 1.20 Logic

This qualitative case study aims to explore the relationship between the school administrator's emotional intelligence and instructional leadership practices by identifying the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates. Furthermore, for those program graduates who identify a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and instructional leadership practices, this study seeks to gather their insights

into how their emotional intelligence is reflected in their instructional leadership practices. I believe if we improve the emotional intelligence of our school leaders, then outcomes for underserved students will improve. Establishing an empirical warrant for this theory goes beyond the scope of a single dissertation; however, I rely on established literature to support this theory. My dissertation focuses on one side of the equation, emotional intelligence, and how we can better prepare our school leaders in the social emotional domain. I only focus on the self-knowledge domain in my dissertation, but I am aware of the interconnectedness of equity and systems, the other two leadership domains that drive the LEAD program. I focus on emotional intelligence because I believe the results of this study will positively change and inform school administrator preparation programs, in-service training, professional growth opportunities, and hiring practices, and, ultimately, the outcomes for underserved students.

Problem Statement

The problem this study addresses is the negative impact on school functioning and, in turn, student learning that results from insufficient attention given to the emotional intelligence of school administrators in administrator preparation programs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is twofold: to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between leadership preparation and emotional intelligence in school administrators and to the relationship between that emotional intelligence and the school administrators' leadership practices. My hope is that the findings of this study will help build an empirical warrant for infusing a focus on emotional intelligence into school administrators' preparation.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide this qualitative methods research study:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates?
2. How, if at all, does this self-knowledge influence the program graduates' leadership practices?

Significance

This research is essential and will make a significant contribution to educational leadership. School administrators, and those who support their preparation, will have a better sense of how emotional intelligence is developed and impacts their effectiveness as school site leaders. The development of administrators' emotional intelligence will result in school administrators' displaying better coping strategies and resiliency, supporting school administrators' overall wellness. Moreover, school site leaders' vital emotional intelligence will positively impact the school climate and culture and student achievement. Additionally, this study's findings will inform school administrator preparation, in-service training, professional growth opportunities, and hiring practices.

Scope of the Study

The following paragraphs will address this study's assumptions, delimitations, and limitations.

Assumptions of the Study

The theoretical frameworks of emotional intelligence, instructional leadership, and leadership preparation are grounded in an extensive literature review. Key assumptions are that emotional intelligence exists, can be measured, and can be taught, and that instructional leadership and leadership preparation can be measured and can impact student achievement. It is also assumed that all participants answered the interview questions truthfully.

Study Delimitations

This study focuses on a small sampling of secondary administrators and their relevant supervisors who were willing to participate in interviews and share their understanding and experience of soft skills, emotional intelligence, self-knowledge and instructional leadership practices. This study is limited to one secondary school district in Orange County, California, and, therefore, does not include all middle and high schools, nor are elementary-level school administrators included. Additionally, the methodology decision was determined because the qualitative approach will provide "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) grounded in the lived experiences of the participants.

Study Limitations

This study's limitations include the study's duration, as the data collection was confined to a brief time line. This study is limited to one secondary school district in Orange County, California; therefore, the sample size limits the study's generalizability beyond the study sample. The financial resources to conduct the research and analyze the data were also limited.

Definitions of Key Terms

Culture. The manifestation of human intellect regarded collectively.

Effective school leadership. A leadership style that promotes positive student outcomes in academics, social-emotional well-being, and behavior.

Emotional intelligence. Capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions and handle interpersonal relationships empathetically.

Ideals and beliefs. High standards in regards to excellence in terms of what is good and right.

Social-emotional learning. The process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel empathy for others, and establish and maintain positive relationships.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 provided the context regarding emotional intelligence, educational leadership, and leadership preparation, and then defined the problem and purpose of this study. Further discussed was the significance and scope of the study and definitions for critical terms were provided. Chapter 2 presents a critical review of the literature about the research questions. Chapter 3 describes the research design, including data collection and analysis methods. Chapter 4 presents the study's findings, and Chapter 5 discusses conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations for policy and practice.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The problem this study addresses is the negative impact on school functioning and student learning that results from paying insufficient attention to the emotional intelligence of school administrators in their leadership preparation. This research is essential and will make a significant contribution to educational leadership because school administrators and those who support school administrators' preparation will have a better sense of how emotional intelligence is developed and supports their effectiveness as a school site leader. At the beginning of this chapter is the review of the theoretical foundations of this study. Next is an extensive review of the empirical research related to the dissertation topic. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Historical and Theoretical Foundation

The following section addresses historical and theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence.

Historical Foundation

American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859–1952) developed the theory of *social intelligence* as the "willingness to hold beliefs in suspense, ability to doubt until evidence is obtained; willingness to go where evidence points instead of putting first a personally preferred conclusion; ability to hold ideas in solution and use them as hypotheses to be tested instead of dogmas to be asserted; and (possibly the most distinctive of all) enjoyment of new fields for inquiry and of new problems" (Dewey et al., 1986, p.166). Thorndike described the concept of social intelligence as defining the ability to understand and manage people and to "act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, 1920, p. 228). According to Thorndike, one can break down intelligence into three areas: the ability to understand and manage ideas (abstract intelligence), concrete objects (mechanical intelligence), and people (social intelligence). Although he was able to define social intelligence, Thorndike stated that measuring social intelligence was challenging, as "convenient tests of social intelligence are hard to devise. Social intelligence shows itself abundantly in the nursery, on the

playground, in barracks and factories and salesroom, but it eludes the formal standard conditions of the testing laboratory. It requires human beings to respond to, time to adapt its responses, and face voice, gesture, and mien as tools" (Thorndike, 1920, p. 228).

Gardner and Hatch (1989) proposed that there are seven intelligences, each independent of the other and associated with different parts of the human brain. The cognitive abilities Gardner defined included body–kinesthetic, logical–mathematical, linguistic, musical, and spatial. Two additional intelligences are very social in nature: *interpersonal intelligence*, defined as the capacity to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations, and desires of other people, and *intrapersonal intelligence*, which allows for access to one's feelings and the ability to discriminate among them and draw upon them to guide behavior (Gardner and Hatch, 1989).

The term *emotional intelligence* originated at the University of New Hampshire and Yale in 1990. Jack Mayer, professor of psychology at the University of New Hampshire, and Peter Salovey, the 23rd president of Yale University, defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional meanings, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote both better emotion and thought." (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 11). Originally, they had defined three types of mental processes: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and the utilization of emotion.

According to Mayer and Salovey, there are four branches of emotional intelligence: identifying emotions, using emotions (to facilitate thought), understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Mayer & Caruso, 2002). According to Robin Stern, associate director for the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, "emotional intelligence is being smart about your feelings. It's how to use your emotions to inform your thinking and use your thinking to inform you emotions" (as cited in Gabriel, 2018, What is emotional intelligence? section, para. 3).

Goleman's theory is grounded specifically in work performance, based on social and emotional competencies. He defines emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our

relationships” (Goleman, 1998, p. 315). He defines emotional competence as a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work.

Theoretical Foundation

For this study, the researcher used the theoretical framework of the competency model proposed by Goleman and colleagues. Goleman's framework classifies emotional intelligence into four domains: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness, and (d) relationship management. Like Gardner and Hatch's (1989) theory of intrapersonal intelligence, Goleman's concept of self-awareness and self-management refers to one's competence in various domains. Social awareness and relationship management address one's social competence, much like Gardner's concept of interpersonal intelligence. The four domains in competencies clearly define attributes associated with the overarching theory.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness includes three personal competencies; emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence.

Self-Management

Self-management comprises six personal competencies: emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. Self-management is the component of emotional intelligence that frees us from being a prisoner of our feelings. It's what allows us the mental clarity and concentrated energy that leadership demands, and what keeps disruptive emotions from throwing us off track (Goleman et al., 2002).

Social Awareness

Social awareness encompasses three social competencies: empathy, organizational awareness, and service. “By being attuned to how others feel in the moment, a leader can say and do what's appropriate—whether it be to calm fears, assuage anger, or join in good spirits. This attunement also lets a leader sense the shared values and priorities that can guide the group” (Goleman et al., 2017, p. 49).

Relationship Management

Relationship management includes seven social competencies: inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, and teamwork and collaboration. Relationship skills allow leaders to put their emotional intelligence to work (Goleman et al., 2002).

In this remainder of this section, I will explore the various ways that emotional intelligence can impact educational leadership, including instructional leadership, school climate and culture, and the shifting demands on school principals.

Educational Leadership

Instructional Leadership

Historically, emotional intelligence skills, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making have been undervalued and misunderstood. We do not realize how much social interaction is involved in a school administrator's day-to-day operations. Frequently we miss it, but there is a social element to a school administrator's work by nature. School administrators who demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence positively contribute to the school's overall climate (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001) and have higher levels of relational trust with their colleagues at work (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Frequently, school administrators are hired for their hard skills and technical knowledge, yet they struggle in their position due to their underdeveloped emotional intelligence skills. Emotional intelligence is "the set of abilities (verbal and non-verbal) that enable a person to generate, recognize, express, understand, and evaluate their own and others' emotions in order to guide thinking and action that successfully cope with environmental demands and pressures" (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004, p. 72). More and more, emotional intelligence skills are a growing factor in the evaluation and success of a school administrator. Much like businesses, schools need to be both efficient and innovative, "and what unites both is learning," says Edward D. Hess, professor of business administration at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. "We want people who can continuously learn with others in

teams. That gets into all the soft skills. If your advantage is going to be outthinking competitors and dealing with customers, you've got to have soft skills" (as cited in Feffer, 2016, *Soft Skills Hard Impact* section, para. 3).

Leaders who have strong emotional intelligence are less likely to report burnout (Brackett et al., 2010) and more likely to utilize restorative practices to build community and address conflict. These emotional intelligence skills are the relationship building blocks that connect administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the community. Supporting teachers to improve curriculum and instruction is about best practice, collaboration, and trust between the school administrator and the teacher (Glatthorn et al., 2016). The school administrator must establish credibility and knowledge in effective best practices, curriculum, and instructional strategies so they can challenge teachers to examine their practices in a way that is constructive, not destructive. The school administrator must also possess the emotional intelligence skills to collaborate and work with teachers to improve their practice. Under the guidance of an emotionally intelligent leader, who displays Goleman's leadership competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, people are more likely to learn from each other, collaboratively make decisions, and accomplish task and projects (Goleman, 2013).

A school administrator must have a positive attitude when engaging in teacher and curriculum evaluation. Influential school leaders are masterful in obtaining teacher buy-in and conveying expectations of teaching and learning (Glatthorn et al., 2016). Observing a teacher implementing best practices and giving positive feedback is a relationship-building moment. Building trust and positive relationships will go a long way when providing the teacher with constructive feedback, which will guide them in improving their instructional practice, building collective teacher efficacy, and positively impacting student achievement. Collective teacher efficacy is defined by Goddard et al. (2000) as the teachers' perception that the entire faculty's efforts will positively affect students.

Elements of supervision need to shift focus from influencing single teachers to supervising teacher teams. "Instead of micromanaging teachers, school administrators should lead efforts to

collectively monitor student achievement through professional learning communities” (DuFour & Mattos, 2013, p. 34). To align the supported curriculum, taught curriculum, and the learned curriculum, instructional leaders need to focus on improving the taught curriculum by broadening their view of supervision. They need to provide differentiated collaborative professional development to groups of teachers, informal observations for coaching and supporting professional learning communities (PLCs), rating teachers with formative and summative assessments, and individual development (Glatthorn et al., 2016). The focus of teacher supervision and evaluation shifts from teacher competence to teacher and student learning.

Multiple studies have identified a positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational performance (Gardner & Stough, 2002; Rosete & Ciarochi, 2005). They found that executives who have a high level of emotional intelligence are more likely to achieve positive business outcomes, express high levels of happiness, demonstrate organizational commitment, and be considered effective leaders. Additional studies have examined the correlation between managerial emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness (Brown et al., 2006; Kerr et al., 2006). Researchers Fambrough and Hart (2008) used their findings to reflect on the use of emotional intelligence instruments and interventions in leadership development. Conversely, one can ascertain that there is a positive relationship between low emotional intelligence and ineffective leadership styles. Therefore, the importance of this study is to identify which characteristics of emotional intelligence have the strongest relationship with effective instructional leadership styles.

According to the meta-analysis of 69 studies examining school leadership involving 2,802 schools conducted by Marzano et al. (2005), there is a positive correlation between effective school leadership and student achievement. They concluded that 21 leadership practices influence overall student achievement, one of which they identified as relationships. Relationships are foundational and central to the achievement of many responsibilities. Establishing strong interpersonal skills and relationships builds connections and credibility with others. Student achievement is impacted negatively without robust and resilient leadership at our school sites.

School Climate and Culture

Culture and climate are significant in school effectiveness. To support a positive school climate and culture, contribute to the school's organizational health, and ultimately positively impact student achievement, the school administrator must intentionally facilitate a purposeful community of educators. A purposeful community is one with collective efficacy and capability to develop and use assets to accomplish goals that matter to all the community members through agreed-upon processes (Cameron & Waters, 2007).

The first attribute of a purposeful community is accomplishing a goal and producing outcomes that matter to all. The school administrator needs to lead groups of teachers intentionally and purposefully to achieve their meaningful vision. The school administrator and teacher leaders need to determine which outcomes can be accomplished only by working together, rather than individually. According to Solution Tree's Mike Mattos, a former school administrator in Tustin Unified and nationally recognized educational consultant, the single most crucial thing school administrators need to accomplish is ensuring that teachers work in a high-functioning team. He defines a high-functioning team as a team of educators who are interdependent upon each other to accomplish their goals. Whereas, a group of teachers includes those who meet to coordinate resources and work parallel to one another.

The development and use of all available assets is the second attribute of a purposeful community. It is vital that school site leadership teams, administration, and teachers capitalize on assets available. When schools use these assets effectively and strategically, they can enhance school practices (Marzano, 2005). There are both tangible and intangible assets available to educational teams. Tangible assets are those that have a physical appearance, easily identified, and utilized most often. Such tangible assets include teachers, administrators, support staff, food services, transportation, technology, curriculum, facilities, and monetary resources.

On the other hand, intangible assets "represent the ways that people and resources are brought together to accomplish work. They form the identity and personality of the organization by

defining what it is good at doing, and in the end, what it is” (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2004, para. 2). Examples of intangible assets are perceptions, values, assumptions, ideals, beliefs, and shared visions. School administrators need to pay particular attention to intangible assets because they are often overlooked and not easy to measure.

Agreed-upon processes are the third attribute of a purposeful community. Agreed-upon processes are those that define how we do business, communicate, and form relationships amongst community members. Often, we refer to these processes as norms or expectations. All staff members provide input on the agreed-upon processes, which supports discussions, disagreements, and collaboration amongst community members and sets the tone for the school site's culture and climate.

Finally, collective efficacy is a critical attribute of a purposeful community, as this is what sets it apart from other PLCs. Collective efficacy refers to the shared belief that we can make a positive difference in the schools and the students' lives when working together. School administrators need to develop and foster collective efficacy as there is evidence that it has a more substantial impact on student success than socioeconomic status (Goddard et al., 2000). School administrators can instill collective efficacy by celebrating successes, setting reasonable goals, identifying model teachers, and encouraging teachers to observe and collaborate in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

School administrators who are transformative leaders seek to “bring about deep change that could very well undermine or call for an overhaul of the organizational rules and regulations” (Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 159). According to several transformative leadership scholars, there are four necessary elements of transformative leadership: (a) charisma or idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration/attention (p. 158). Teachers and staff follow these school administrators, who inspire them to believe in a greater vision than themselves. There is a sense of a collective social responsibility that facilitates organizational progress. Transformative leadership is an entity-based theory in that it focuses on the individual

leader rather than collective based leadership, “where interactions and relational considerations are key to understanding how organizations work (or not)” (Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 157).

Shifting Demands on School Principals

Charismatic and inspiring school administrators believe in inspiring others to believe in something greater than themselves. However, authentic change and buy-in require more than an inspirational leader and instead are dependent on collectivist theory. Collective theorists believe leadership is a "social, distributed process that occurs when individuals or groups contribute to the learning of others or seek challenges; creativity is a function of interactive dynamics, and follower behavior is a product of collective sensemaking" (p. 183). We do not live in a clear, concise, black, and white logical world. Moreover, the schoolhouse is no exception. We function in an irrational system, where competing outside influences, including community perceptions, political demands, and parent expectations, are constantly bombarding our school leaders. The expectation is that school administrators make decisions stemming from student discipline, implement district initiatives and systems such as PLCs and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) while remaining focused on improving student achievement and increasing access to resources.

The motivations and driving force behind why we do what we do in public education seem to swing back and forth on a pendulum. In the era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the bureaucracy was strong, and school districts were attempting to be tightly coupled. The intention behind NCLB was good; however, it failed to meet the needs of individual learners. Instead, school administrators and teachers became more concerned with their status than they were with individual student achievement. School administrators, in the analysis of data, were operating from a closed systems perspective, in that, they "assumed that all variables influencing a given problem are found within the organization, and the manager can control these variables" (p. 17). They lead teachers for countless hours in grade-level teams, analyzing data and searching for students "on the bubble," those students on the cusp of proficiency. The thought was that if these few students were taught and retaught specific skills, they would improve their score just enough to fall within the proficient range, therefore

maintaining or improving the school's status. Forced to lead in such a way that aligned with scientific management theory, school administrators believed that "decisions (and procedures) can be optimized, that there is one best solution to a given problem, and that the informed managers can root out that solution" (p. 17). Embedded in this line of thought is a "presumption that the management process is rational; that is, it proceeds logically and scientifically from problem to solution" (p. 17). Teachers faced the pressures of covering an excessive number of standards with great breadth, lacking depth, and preparing students for the high-stakes standardized assessments. A school that "concentrates its energy on repairing the fallout caused by poor teaching is fighting a losing battle and one that will consume all of the school's human and fiscal resources in the process. For this reason, a school that places learning at its heart must view teaching, not remediation, as its primary focus" (Fisher et al., 2012, p. 102).

As the field of education shifted from NCLB to Common Core Standards and MTSS, our lens widened. Educators began to accept, as an organization, that our realities as a school are not rational and tightly coupled, but instead are irrational and loosely coupled in a world of competing agendas and a multitude of outside factors and stimuli. This was when our management shifted to leadership, and our focus shifted from decision-making to sensemaking. School administrators, as influential educational leaders, make thoughtful decisions, influence lasting change, and implement new protocols and procedures utilizing leadership teams, stakeholder groups, and sensemaking strategies. Karl Weick defined "sensemaking as placement of items into a framework, comprehension, redressing surprise, constructing meaning, interacting in pursuit of mutual understanding, and patterning" (as cited in Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 216). Weick's sensemaking "infuses all that we do and is particularly evident when things don't go as we expect...when something totally unexpected happens" (p. 217). Influential sense makers are generalists who maintain connections with others, providing "action plans as opposed to accurate plans" and have "accumulated, through experience and learning, many different strategies for dealing with problems" (p. 225). The reality school administrators work with is a "constructed reality," and therefore, effective

leaders "don't influence people or events; rather, they lead by influencing constructed realities and enabling effective group dynamics" (p. 228).

Implementing significant change in education requires "competent leaders to create consensus regarding a need to develop a reform agenda, to make the development of the reform efforts an inclusive effort amongst stakeholders, and to construct a plan based on best and emerging practices with stakeholder buy-in" (Fisher et al., 2012, p. 158). When educational leaders engage in management practices that seek to separate planning from doing, they "disenfranchise two major organizational resources: human capital (the capabilities of your people) and social capital (the dynamics that emerge when people interact over ideas)" (Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 27).

Transformative and collective leadership and sensemaking, rather than decision-making, is more a realistic approach, as "we don't have perfect plans (and couldn't anyhow because without fixed outcomes there can be no fixed solutions); we only need a plan that gets us oriented and moving" (p. 228).

It is morally imperative that educational leaders engage in continuous improvement and that "teachers and administrators must truly *believe* that *all* children can learn, or learning cannot and will not happen" (Bernhardt, 2016, p. 1). Honestly analyzing all data through that lens will help teachers provide individual students what they need to be successful and advance a just, equitable, and inclusive education. Schools "clarify whom they have as students, understand where the learning organization is right now on all measures, consider processes as well as results, create visions that make a difference for whom they have as students, help everyone get on the same page with understanding how to achieve the vision, and know if what the learning organization is doing is making a difference" (p. 7).

Review of the Scholarly Empirical Literature

The research addressing emotional intelligence and effective school leadership are quite limited yet relevant to this study. This section focuses on the review of research addressing emotional intelligence and leadership, management, and effective school leadership.

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Broadly

Brown et al. (2006) surveyed engineers, manufacturing workers, and professional staff to understand how leaders' emotional intelligence helps their followers achieve desired organizational outcomes. In this study, over 2,400 employees rated the leadership behaviors and the impact of the emotional intelligence of 161 leaders in a comprehensive U.S. technology manufacturing plant utilizing the Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQI). Additionally, Brown et al. (2006) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence. There has been much research about the impact a leader's leadership style has on the effectiveness of that leader to empower their followers to achieve success in obtaining or carrying out the desired outcomes of an organization, but less research has been published about the dispositions that impact one's leadership style. The researchers believed that if they framed their understanding of leadership by "concentrating on not just what leaders do, but rather by a consideration as to what capabilities an individual must have in order to perform effectively in a leadership role, perhaps understanding, selection and development could be enhanced" (Brown et al., 2006, p. 331). The study results confirmed the effectiveness of transformational leadership predicting desired organizational outcomes. However, Brown's study's specific focus was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational outcomes. This study found no relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational outcomes; therefore, the findings do not support the use of EQI in the hiring or professional development of managers. Compared with previous research findings, these results were not aligned; therefore, they should be considered cautiously. Brown et al. (2006) noted that the sample size of over 2,400 might have impacted the results compared to previous such studies with sample sizes ranging from 32 to 70. The researchers suggested future research should focus on correlations between self-reported and peer or follower assessments of emotional intelligence.

In another study, Gardner and Stough (2002) examined whether emotional intelligence predicts transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership styles in senior managers. The

researchers noted that transformational leadership is more valuable and useful than transactional leadership. They hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. In contrast, they anticipated that there would be no relationship between emotional intelligence and transactional and laissez-faire leadership. Gardner and Stough (2002) utilized the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT), which provided an overall emotional intelligence score based on the following five factors: (a) emotional recognition, (b) emotional direct cognition, (c) understanding of emotions external, (d) emotional management, and (e) emotional control.

Participants also completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ Form 5X), which assesses transformational leadership behaviors, transactional leadership attributes, and laissez-faire characteristics. A total of 250 senior managers were administered questionnaires, and 110 participated in the self-report SUEIT and MLQ. Of the participants, 76 (69%) were male, and 30 (27%) were female (four participants did not specify), and the average age was 43 years (Gardner & Stough, 2002).

As expected, Gardner and Stough (2002) found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, and no relationship was established between transactional leadership and emotional intelligence. Surprisingly however, they found a significant negative correlation between laissez-faire leadership and emotional intelligence. Since laissez-faire leadership is passive and ultimately not leadership, it can be ascertained that individuals with low emotional intelligence are likely to be ineffective leaders. One can conclude that this study demonstrates and justifies using the SUEIT in identifying strong emotional intelligence, which can be linked to effective leadership. The results of the SUEIT can be utilized to identify leaders in the hiring process and as a professional development tool for current leaders in understanding emotional intelligence and leadership styles.

Barling et al. (2000) conducted a study examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. Transformational leadership comprises "idealized

influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration," whereas transactional leadership includes "contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire management" (2000, p.157). In this study, 60 managers of a large pulp and paper company received three questionnaires: (a) Bar-On's Self-Reporting Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, (b) the self-reporting Seligman Attributional Style Questionnaire, and (c) the MLQ 5X-Short for eight subordinates. Of the original 60, only 57 participants completed all three surveys, and ultimately only 47 participants included in the study had at least three subordinates complete the MLQ 5X-Short.

The results of the study indicate a strong correlation between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. It was shown in every case that the subordinates viewed those leaders with higher levels of social-emotional intelligence as having stronger leadership skills. Although a strong positive relationship was identified, there was not enough information to support correlation. It is difficult to determine whether high emotional intelligence leads to transformational leadership or whether being a transformational leader enhances one's emotional intelligence. Barling et al. (2000) noted that "current research supports the idea that managers can be trained to use transformational leadership" (p. 160); therefore, future research should explore emotional intelligence development as a training tool for current and future leaders.

Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005), seeking to examine further the link between emotional intelligence and actual leadership performance, conducted a study investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence, personality, cognitive intelligence, and leadership effectiveness. The sample size for this study was 41 executives from a large Australian public service organization; 57% of the participants were male and 42% were female. The participants' average age was 42 years old, and 75% had been with the company for 10 or more years.

They utilized the self-reporting Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT V2.0) to measure emotional intelligence. It consists of 141 items focused on the following four areas: (a) perceiving emotion, (b) using emotion to facilitate thought, (c) understanding emotion, and (d) managing emotion. The 16PF, a well-validated, 16 personality factor questionnaire, was used

to measure personality, and the WASI was used to measure cognitive ability, including vocabulary, block design, similarities, and matrix reasoning. The PELC's Leadership Effectiveness instrument was a multi-rater tool, including a self-reporting questionnaire and at least three subordinates' rating scales.

Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005) found that emotionally intelligent leaders and executives are more likely to achieve desired business outcomes and to be viewed as effective managers by subordinates and peers. This study supports the thought that emotional intelligence can predict who will be influential leaders.

Dabke (2016) conducted a study to understand the relationship between performance-based emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, based on leadership effectiveness as perceived by subordinates and the behavior of the leader. When examining leadership effectiveness, the researcher decided to not solely rely upon the managers' self-perception, as "leaders are not just what they think they are. They are also what their followers perceive them as" (Dabke, 2016, p. 4). Therefore, obtaining collective perceptions allowed them to analyze leadership effectiveness more comprehensively.

The sample size of Dabke's study was 200 managers from various industries including IT, banking, and manufacturing. Of the 200 managers, 38 were female and 162 were males, with the average age of the participants being 46.74 years. The average years of experience amongst the managers was 23 years. The emotional intelligence of the managers was measured by the MSCEIT v2.0. Their transformational leadership style was measured by the MLQ Form 5X scale in terms of idealized influence attributes, idealized influence behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Finally, the manager's leadership effectiveness was measured by the MLQ5X scale in conjunction with the effectiveness rating scales distributed to both the managers and subordinates.

Another study by Baker (2018) examined the relationship between a leader's level of emotional intelligence and their use of the three self-leadership strategies: behavior-focused, natural reward,

and constructive thought pattern. Utilizing SurveyMonkey, the researcher was able to elicit responses from 292 full-time and 84 part-time employees from various employment fields throughout the United States. To measure emotional intelligence, the researcher utilized the short form of the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and used the Revised self-leadership questionnaire to measure self-leadership.

The results of the Baker (2018) study indicated a medium effect regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and the behavior-focused strategies, specifically self-goal setting and self-observation, as they relate to self-leadership. The researcher found that those who demonstrate higher levels of emotional intelligence utilized the behavior-focused self-leadership strategies at a greater rate than those with lower emotional intelligence. The researcher found a large effect size between emotional intelligence and natural rewards and medium effect size in terms of emotional intelligence and constructive thought related to self-leadership. Unfortunately, the Baker (2018) study was limited by the fact that the only tool used was a self-reporting assessment tool, which means the study relied solely on self-evaluation, which can skew the results based on biased perceptions about one's own attitudes and abilities.

Emotional Intelligence and Effective School Leadership

The empirical research literature that supports my study has established connections between emotional intelligence and effective school leadership. Stone et al. (2005) studied 464 school administrators and vice-school administrators in Ontario, Canada. These administrators—187 men and 277 women—hailed from nine different public school districts across the province. Stone et al. (2005) found that administrators within the above-average leadership cohort scored higher in the overall emotional intelligence construct than the below-average leadership cohort. Based on their quantitative analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective school leadership, Stone et al. (2005) recommended that professional development opportunities address and promote emotional self-awareness, empathy, and flexibility. They also suggested incorporating an emotional intelligence rating scale or survey into new school administrators' recruitment and hiring.

Moore (2009) conducted a mixed-methods case study investigating the perception and effects of emotional intelligence coaching for school administrators. The research results revealed that school administrators benefit from emotional intelligence coaching, per the ratings completed by their peers.

Williams (2008) researched leadership qualities of outstanding urban school administrators. Eight typical school administrators and 12 school administrators identified as outstanding by peers and the teacher union participated in this mixed-methods study. Various assessments, interviews, and open-ended questions revealed a significant difference between the outstanding school administrators' emotional and social intelligence and that of the typical school administrators. Williams found self-confidence, self-control, consciousness, achievement orientation, initiative, organizational awareness, developing others, influence, analytical thinker, leadership, teamwork/collaboration influence, change catalyst, and conflict management were the specific emotional and social intelligence competencies that have the most significant impact on the outstanding school administrators.

Wendorf-Heldt (2009) conducted a mixed-methods study examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and school administrator leadership practices, which have been found to increase student achievement. The study was conducted in Wisconsin with a random sample of 285 public school K-12 school administrators using surveys to measure emotional intelligence and self-identified leadership practices, as outlined by Marzano and colleagues (2005). To further expand the research's breadth, Wendorf-Heldt (2009) interviewed 11 school administrators from the initial survey sample who demonstrated high levels of emotional intelligence and high engagement levels in leadership practices identified to increase student achievement. The study results indicate a strong, positive correlation between emotional intelligence and school administrator leadership practices that have been identified as increasing student achievement. Additionally, Wendorf-Heldt (2009) found that emotional intelligence can be influenced and taught by specific identifiable factors.

Emotional Intelligence and School Leadership Preparation

This section focuses on research addressing emotional intelligence and school leadership preparation. Because such research is limited, for the purposes of this study, terms such as *school climate* and *school culture* are proxies for emotional intelligence, as emotional intelligence is necessary when building school climate and culture.

Hess and Kelly (2007) conducted a quantitative study in which they examined 56 principal-preparation programs to determine if these programs were equipping principals to lead in their new roles with unprecedented responsibilities and challenges. They surveyed 56 programs and collected core course syllabi from 31 institutions, totaling 210 syllabi equal to 2,424 total course weeks. Hess and Kelly coded the instruction within these syllabi into seven categories: managing for results, managing personnel, technical knowledge, external leadership, norms and values, managing classroom instruction, and leadership and school culture. Of all of these categories, “leadership and school culture” most closely aligns with emotional intelligence as they defined the category, including topics such as “leadership versus management,” “creating a school culture,” and “school climate.”

Of these total 2,424 total course weeks, Hess and Kelly discovered only 6.0% (146 weeks) focused on “leadership and school culture.” Whereas, 29.6% of the total 2,424 course weeks focused on “technical knowledge,” which included topics such as school funding, budgeting, due process, church and state, tort law, and database management. Their findings left the researchers with more questions than conclusions. They were left asking whether or not the preparation programs were preparing the graduates for the realities and challenges of their roles as instructional leaders in an era of increased accountability.

In 2015 the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education conducted a study of 842 member institutions based on 255 surveys from faculty members, deans, and department chairs. Eighty-three percent of the responding institutions had principal preparation programs. Overall, the study found that that the preparation programs were lacking a curriculum that aligned to what principals need to know. Many surveys noted a need for “course content that supports the

development of principals who can demonstrate both management skills and leadership skills needed to lead change and improvement” and rated “basing curriculum on contemporary practice” 4.5 on a 5-point scale (Davis, 2016, p.10).

Another study by the School Superintendents Association (AASA) was conducted in 2015 to examine superintendents’ viewpoints on principal preparation, licensing, and employment. Surveys were sent to 10,340 superintendents, and 408 responded. Additionally, two focus groups were held with 135 superintendents. The AASA found that “superintendents support a state role in strengthening curricula; ranking ‘increasing course requirements in leadership’ as second out of eleven interventions to improve principal preparation” (Davis, 2016, p.10).

Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework captures my working theory for how emotional intelligence and leadership preparation affects instructional leadership and, in turn, student outcomes. In Figure 1, this is presented as a flow chart that illustrates the relationship between emotional intelligence, leadership preparation, effective school leadership, and student outcomes.



Figure 1. Emotional Intelligence & Effective School Leadership conceptual framework diagram.

Chapter Summary

In conclusion, the current research supports the need for continued study regarding the impact of emotional intelligence on a school administrator's leadership style and its relationship to collective teacher efficacy, which ultimately influences student achievement. Emotional intelligence has been tied to transformational leadership, which has been described as one of the foundational practices utilized in school reform (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). The role that emotional intelligence and soft skills play in successful leadership, collective teacher efficacy, and ultimately student achievement has often been underestimated. Schools need administrators who can manage the everchanging and challenging charge of being a school site school administrator, as they are given the responsibility of leading the teachers to ensure all students learn at high levels.

The research significantly points to the stark contrast between current school administrator preparedness programs and ongoing in-service professional development opportunities focused on technical and managerial skills compared to the profession's everyday demands and expectations. However, resiliency and self-efficacy are related to emotional intelligence and successful leadership. "School districts contribute to school administrators' level of stress in a culture that perpetuates anxiety and tension: more demands, high-performance expectations, and less resources" (Wells, 2015, p. 3). The urgency is apparent; if the school administrators' emotional intelligence is not addressed, poor instructional leadership will ultimately impact student achievement. Our students cannot afford for our school administrators to be less than effective.

Further study in the area of emotional intelligence as related to leadership styles is needed. This study will examine the extent to which there is a relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of "self-knowledge" in program graduates in the AUHSD. Furthermore, this study will explore how this self-knowledge influences the program graduates' leadership practices to understand better how to support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through preservice training and in-service professional development. This study will seek to illuminate this relationship and its implications on

school administrators' development and the hiring and ongoing in-service training of influential school leaders.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD OF INQUIRY

The problem this study addresses is the negative impact on school functioning, and, in turn, student learning, that results from insufficient attention given to the emotional intelligence of school administrators in administrator preparation programs. Historically, soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, the ability to manage emotions, lead others, solve problems, and adapt to changing conditions, have been undervalued and misunderstood. This qualitative case study examines what relationship, if any, exists between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the AUHSD. Furthermore, this study explores how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices.

The K-12 school system is a workplace in itself and the training ground for America's future workforce. Therefore, it is critical to examine the efforts of the K-12 emotional intelligence systems of support (Opengart, 2007).

The following questions will guide qualitative research study:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates?
2. How, if at all, does this self-knowledge" influence the program graduates' leadership practices?

This chapter begins with a discussion of the methodology for this study, including its philosophical foundations. This is followed by a description of the research design within this study's selected methodological approach and a detailed description of the specific research methods used in this study. This description includes information about the setting, sample, data collection, instrumentation and procedure, and data analysis, including validity/trustworthiness and the researcher's role. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Qualitative Research

The researcher utilized a qualitative case study approach to examine the relationship, if any, that exists between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in

program graduates in the AUHSD, as well as explore how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices. Qualitative case study research focuses on an issue rather than the individual stories of the participants. However, it is through the analysis of these stories, coupled with data collection from multiple sources (Yin, 2003), that the researcher gains insight into the issue. According to Creswell et al. (2007), "case study research studies an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting or a context)" (p. 249).

This study examined relationships between the school administrator's emotional intelligence, or self-knowledge, their leadership preparation, and their current leadership practices. To identify insights the school administrators have about their development as leaders and their leadership practice, the researcher conducted interviews and employed qualitative research methods. The qualitative data's strength lies in the rich, detailed stories of the educational leaders who demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence and engagement in transformative and effective school leadership practices.

Research Design

The researcher employed a qualitative case study method. The qualitative case study design is "fundamentally well suited for locating the meaning people place on events, processes, and structures in their lived and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 11).

Research Methods

This section will describe the specific research methods used to apply qualitative case study methods in this study, including the setting, sample, data collection, data analysis, and steps taken to ensure validity or trustworthiness.

Setting

The setting for this study was the AUHSD, which services seventh through twelfth-grade students in North Orange County, California. Over the years the enrollment has steadily decreased. The enrollment during the 2019-2020 school year was 29,832 students, whereas the enrollment

during the 2015-2016 school year was 31,276. The AUHSD encompasses twenty middle and high schools, including eight middle schools, nine comprehensive high schools, one continuation high school, one special education school, and one alternative school. The majority of AUHSD's students are Hispanic or Latino, at 66.2-68.9% from 2015 to 2020. In 2019-2020, 13.2% of the student body were Asian, 8.9% identified as White, 4.2% were Filipino, and 2.1% were Black or African American. In 2019-2020 the unduplicated count of students who were ELs, foster youth, or eligible for free/reduced lunch was 21,801 pupils or 73.08% of the total enrollment (Ed-Data, n.d.).

Sample

The sample for this qualitative case study included ten recent graduates of the LEAD Program and their seven current supervisors in the AUHSD. I gained access to the LEAD graduates and their current supervisors through permission to conduct research within the district granted by the assistant superintendent of education of the AUHSD. The strategy utilized to select the participants was "reputational case selection" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984), as such, the ten recent graduates were selected from the total of twenty recent graduates based on the recommendation of the local expert, Dr. Jaron Fried, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services. Dr. Fried sent introductory emails to make initial contact. I then sent follow-up emails to introduce myself, describe the purpose of the study, and inquire about their availability and interest in participation.

Additionally, a follow-up email was sent to each LEAD graduate and supervisor to confirm participation and gain signed consent for recording the interviews. Additionally, I sent descriptors of the twenty-one LEAD "self-knowledge" leadership dimensions to the interviewees; while these dimensions were used during the period of instruction, over a year had passed at the time of the study and re-sharing them allowed the interviewees time to review the dimensions prior to the interview. The emails sent to the participants prior to the interviews were intended to encourage and facilitate participation. Following the interviews, additional emails were sent to thank those who participated.

Data Collection and Management

The researcher believed conducting qualitative research is a rich and holistic approach in that the data is complex and embedded in the real lives and experiences of the participants.

Instrumentation

Interviews were conducted with ten recent graduates of the LEAD Program and their seven relevant supervisors in the AUHSD. The interview protocol questions were based on the 21 LEAD self-knowledge leadership dimensions and competencies in emotional intelligence as described by Goleman's four domains (2002). The interview protocol for the semi structured interviews were written prior to the interview process. The semi structured interview allowed me to ask probing questions during the interviews to gain a deeper understanding or seek clarity.

Procedures

Initially, I reviewed the LEAD graduates' self-assessments on the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards, including the 21 leadership dimensions of self-knowledge. The self-assessment instrument utilized three Likert-scale rating levels: *not meeting standard*, *progressing toward standard*, and *meeting/exceeding standard*. In reviewing these self-assessments, I looked for a shift or change in the LEAD graduates' thinking from August 2018 to December 2019. The shifts identified drove the focus of the interviews with both the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. See Appendix for the interview protocol used.

Data management

All interviews were digitally recorded via Zoom and stored in a password-protected cloud system. The files were sent to Ubiquis on Demand, a transcribing company. Once the complete transcriptions were received, I thoroughly reviewed the transcriptions, deleting any personal identifying information to maintain the participants' confidentiality.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following section discusses the data analysis and interpretation conducted by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The interview transcriptions were coded for commonalities and patterns of responses. Nvivo was utilized to track common themes and record supporting quotes from the interviews.

Procedures to Ensure Validity and Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative data is imperative to ensure that the data reported is true and accurate. Issues of validity are considered in qualitative research and are often referred to as trustworthiness, to "determine whether the researcher and the participants' account is accurate, can be trusted, and is credible" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.211). The researcher employed triangulation to ensure the qualitative instruments' trustworthiness and the data collected.

Triangulation refers to the utilization of multiple data sources or individuals (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I needed to consider how the Zoom interface, the setting of the interview, and the wording of questions might influence the results. Additionally, I used strategies to ensure that my interpretations of statistically significant findings are reasonably free of bias and open to alternative interpretations.

As the research instrument, I became the lens through which information was filtered. In my position as a public school administrator and educator with a passion for emotional intelligence and social-emotional learning, I understand that I may bring biases to the study that impact the results. To address any potential negative influences that might result from my research role, I have intentionally researched outside of the school district where I am employed. I believe not having a personal working relationship with the study participants helped mitigate any potential influences that could have resulted from my researcher role.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative study was designed to examine the relationship, if any, that exists between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the

AUHSD. Furthermore, this study explored how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices in order to better understand how to support educational administrators in the development of emotional intelligence and leadership practices through preservice training and in-service professional development.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the relationship, if any, that exists between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the AUHSD. Furthermore, this study explores how this self-knowledge influences the program graduates to understand better how to support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through pre-service training and in-service professional development.

In this qualitative study data was collected through individual interviews with LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. The data was analyzed, and the findings were organized into themes. This chapter includes a description of the participants, data collection, and data analysis based on qualitative research design. In this chapter, the results of the data collection and analysis are presented according to the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates?
2. How, if at all, does this self-knowledge influence the program graduates' leadership practices?

In this chapter, the major themes derived from the data analysis are discussed along with quotes from the research participants, observation notes, and interview data to support the findings further. Evidence to answer each research question is also discussed. This chapter concludes with a summary of the significant research findings and a discussion of their connection to the qualitative study problem and research questions.

Data Analysis

Data was collected from individual interviews with the LEAD graduates and their supervisors. The participants, ten LEAD graduates and seven supervisors, each agreed to virtual interviews via Zoom. The process of analyzing data utilized first cycle and second cycle coding. During the first-cycle coding, descriptive coding was used to assign labels to data chunks. Patterns or themes that

surfaced from the first cycle descriptive coding were grouped during the second cycle coding. The final themes had a preponderance of data from a majority of the participants.

LEAD Graduates

Claudia, a former school counselor and now assistant school administrator, stated that she is so thankful for the LEAD program and forever grateful for the support she has received from both her District's senior managers and the faculty of CSUF. The 2020-2021 school year is Claudia's 30th year in education. She has a long history with the AUHSD, as she was a classified employee for 13 years prior to becoming a school counselor. When she served as a school site secretary and a school administrator's secretary, she was always surrounded by outstanding teachers who were hesitant to become administrators for one reason or another. Claudia never envisioned herself becoming an administrator, but after becoming an administrator she has realized the impact she can have on leaders who, in turn, serve so many students.

Lynn was a speech language pathologist at Savanna High School prior to becoming an assistant school administrator at the same school site. Lynn reported that, before becoming an administrator, she was introverted and stayed to herself, not being very social with her colleagues. She was cordial and polite, but did not share her personal life with others, so much so that she has had to make a concerted effort to connect on a personal level with her staff. Although this does not come naturally to her, and because COVID-19 safety protocols and procedures have made it even more challenging, she continues to build relationships with her staff and understands the positive impact that has on teaching and learning.

Sergio has worked in special education for the past 20 years and through several education programs, earning multiple master's degrees. He commented that participating in LEAD was the first time in over 20 years that he had been uncomfortable. He attributed that to the fact that this was the first time he learned about himself. Sergio valued this about the LEAD program and found the self-reflection to positively impact his new administrative position as an administrator on special

assignment (AOSA). When the interview was conducted, Sergio was filling in for a school administrator at Anaheim High School, where he is an assistant school administrator.

Diana is a teacher on special assignment (“TOSA”) as the district curriculum specialist of EL services and AVID. The TOSA position is a quasi-administrative position given all that Diana coordinates and manages. For the 2020-2021 school year, during COVID-19, she oversaw AUHSD’s teacher induction program and the other TOSAs at every single one of the school sites. Diana coordinates and facilitates district-wide professional learning. Additionally, as the district transitioned to a new learning management system this year, she spearheaded the training for all of their 1,200 plus teachers and staff.

After 17 years as a school counselor, Mary Jo transitioned to a district-level position as Counselor on Special Assignment (COSA). Mary Jo was in the COSA position while she was in the LEAD program and she credits LEAD, as well as the new leadership position, as having the most impact on her. At the time of the interview Mary Jo was an assistant school administrator.

Christina, a former RSP teacher, is a current TOSA and temporary assistant school administrator at a middle school and high school for the 2020-2021 school year. For the previous 15 years, Christina had desired to get into administration, but life always got in the way, and she reports she did not have the time to return to school to pursue an administrative credential. When she found out about the LEAD program, she vacillated but ultimately applied and was accepted to LEAD. During her interview, she shared her frustration that she has been overlooked for assistant school administrator positions and remains in a TOSA position.

Kyle, like Claudia and Mary Jo, was also a former school counselor before becoming an assistant school administrator at Anaheim High School. Brian was a school site band director and now oversees the visual and performing arts program. Ryan, previously a teacher, is an assistant school administrator for the district’s virtual academy and John, also formerly a teacher for 17 years, is the district’s public information officer and serves on cabinet.

Table 3 illustrates the LEAD graduates' positions in the district prior to their participation in the program and at the time of the interviews ("current position").

Table 3. LEAD Graduates Positions Prior to LEAD and 18 Months Later

LEAD Graduate	Prior Position	Current Position
Mary Jo	School counselor	Assistant school administrator
Kyle	School counselor	Assistant school administrator
Lynn	SLP	Assistant school administrator
Claudia	School counselor	Assistant school administrator
John	Teacher	Public information officer
Brian	Band director	Program administrator, visual and performing arts ("VAPA")
Sergio	RSP teacher	Administrator on special assignment ("AOSA")
Ryan	Teacher	Assistant school administrator
Diana	TOSA, EL	Teacher on special assignment ("TOSA"), English learners ("EL")
Christina	RSP Teacher	Teacher leader/temporary assistant school administrator

The following section describes the major findings for each research question.

First Research Question

The first research question was intended to develop an understanding of whether or not there was a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the graduates' awareness and development of self-knowledge skills, as this was an intentional focus of the LEAD curriculum. The analysis of LEAD graduates' consideration of the relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the program graduates' awareness and development of self-knowledge relied on the interviews with the graduates as the primary data source. Each transcript was read word by word, line by line. Notes were written during and after the reading. Next, code labels were assigned to words, phrases, sentences, and sections relevant to the participants' comments about the self-knowledge domains.

Throughout the analysis of the interviews with the LEAD graduates, "self-awareness" and "social awareness" were identified as recurring themes. See Table 4.

Table 4. Main Areas of Awareness and Development in Self-Knowledge

Emotional Intelligence Domains	LEAD Leadership Dimensions: Self-Knowledge	Graduates Referenced Leadership Dimension in Interview
Self-awareness	Leadership vulnerability/ Learning individual (LV)	8/10
	Sense of agency (SA)	6/10
	Self-reflection/Reflective practice (SR)	6/10
	Emotional Self-Awareness (ESA)	8/10
Social-Awareness	Divergent Points of View (DPV)	

Prior to the interviews, I had the opportunity to review LEAD graduates' self-assessments on the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards, including the leadership dimensions of self-knowledge. The self-assessment utilized a Likert-scale system with three choices: *not meeting standard*, *progressing toward standard*, and *meeting/exceeding standard*. For the baseline ("B") pre-assessment, they entered the rating they gave themselves in August 2018. For the final ("F") post-assessment, they rated themselves as to where they believed themselves to be at program conclusion, in December 2019. Finally, for the retroactive assessment ("*"), they were to answer the question, "Knowing what I know now, what rating do I give myself for August 2018, when I first started this program?" In reviewing these self-assessments, I looked for a shift or change in their thinking from August 2018 to December 2019 as evidenced by Table 5.

Table 5. Self- Assessments on the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards

LEAD Graduate	LEAD Leadership Dimensions: Self-Knowledge										
	LV		SA		SR		ESA		DPV		
	B	F	B	F	B	F	B	F	B	F	
Mary Jo	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E *PT	M/E	M/E *NM	M/E
Kyle	M/E *PT	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	PT	PT	M/E *PT	M/E	PT	PT
Lynn	M/E	M/E	PT	PT	PT	M/E	M/E *PT	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E
Claudia	PT	M/E	NM *PT	PT	PT	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E
John	PT	PT	M/E	M/E	PT	PT	PT	PT	PT	PT *NM	M/E
Brian	PT	M/E	PT	PT	PT	ME	M/E	M/E	M/E	PT *NM	PT
Sergio	M/E	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	PT	PT	PT	M/E
Ryan	M/E	M/E	M/E	M/E	PT	M/E	M/E *PT	M/E	PT	PT	M/E
Diana	PT	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	M/E	PT	PT *NM	M/E
Christina	M/E *PT	PT	M/E	PT	M/E *PT	PT	M/E	PT	PT	PT	PT

Note. NM = Not Meeting, PT = Progressing Toward, M/E = Meeting/Exceeded, LV = Leadership Vulnerability/Learning Individual, SA = Sense of Agency, SR = Self-Reflection/ Reflective Practice, ESA = Emotional Self-Awareness, DVP = Divergent Points of View.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness, an emotional intelligence domain, is knowing how one feels in the moment and using that to guide their decision-making. It is also having a realistic assessment of one's own abilities and a well-grounded sense of confidence. The LEAD leadership dimensions that relate closely to self-awareness are 1.1 Emotional self-awareness, 1.7 Sense of agency, 1.8 Leadership vulnerability/learning individual, and 1.17 Self-reflection and reflective practice (Table 2).

During the interviews with the graduates, these leadership dimensions were identified as areas of growth throughout their participation in LEAD. There was a strong sense of agency, leadership vulnerability, emotional self-awareness, and self-reflection and reflective practice. Throughout the

interviews, the graduates recognized their work in collaboration with their colleagues during LEAD and how that experience is reflected in their practice.

The following are excerpts from the interviews with the graduates that focus on self-awareness as it relates to the first research question: What is the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates?

Leadership Vulnerability/Learning Individuals

Leadership vulnerability/learning individuals, as defined by the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards, is when one demonstrates genuine curiosity and is willing to move out of one's comfort zone to a place of not knowing in order to learn.

When one demonstrates leadership vulnerability, there is an understanding that mistakes are a necessary part of learning, and one seeks challenges as learning opportunities and leads by example. The leader is open to sharing and acknowledging one's areas of growth. Throughout the interviews with the LEAD graduates, leadership vulnerability/learning individuals was discussed frequently. Of the ten LEAD graduates interviewed, eight of the participants discussed leadership vulnerability/learning individuals. According to the participants, it was LEAD, including the reflective activities and experiential learning that the candidates participated in, that allowed them to grow and value this vulnerability. They were all very transparent throughout the interview process and reflective about their leadership practice and their experiences. They understood that to be an effective leader who will be a change agent, they need to be vulnerable and work side by side with the people they are leading.

In reviewing the self-assessments and the interview transcripts, it became apparent that there was a reoccurring theme in terms of leadership vulnerability. Many LEAD graduates identified that participation in LEAD moved them outside of their comfort zone, both within the activities and structure of LEAD and also within the scope of their work at their site.

When asked about this shift in the leadership vulnerability/learning individuals LEAD leadership dimension, identified by her self-assessments as evidenced by Table 5, Claudia shared

her reflection about moving outside her comfort zone during LEAD and now in her new position as an administrator:

That's exactly what I did. I had to move out of my comfort. So I was, if anything, intimidated at times because...I had not connected. It took me a while with the jargon of classroom and sentence frames when they started those strategic inquiries, starting small to get big....Being now in a leadership position and in a new school where nobody knows me, it's a challenge. I feel vulnerable again, but I'm not as hesitant as I was before. I think that walking out of my comfort zone is something I can do and I'm more comfortable with.

Although Lynn did not identify a shift between her pre- and post-self-assessment, as evidenced by Table 5, during the interview while Lynn was reviewing the copy of the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards she had in front of her, she commented on moving outside of her comfort zone in her practice:

I'm super curious, but there are times where I won't; I don't want to move out of my comfort zone, but I always do. I try to force myself to do that. LEAD has helped me to become more vulnerable as far as sharing more about myself. You know, like what I said about knowing people's stories....So I've really tried hard this year to do that more, and I got that from LEAD also. Well, I think it's helping people to connect with me better, because I was such a private person.

During the interview, Sergio reflected on leadership vulnerability and how his comfort zone shifted in his current administrative position of power versus when he was in the trenches with the teachers:

So now, I'm much more vulnerable in ways that I believe are authentic vulnerability, not just being able to share your personal life and stuff, but authentically being vulnerable. The LEAD program really helped me grow in that area....I realize that it's easy to be super-vulnerable when you have no authority, you have no positional power...when you don't have anything, it's easy to share your life. Who cares? I'll share my vulnerability. I'm one of you guys. I'm in the dirt with all this. We're in it together. But once you get put in a different position, it doesn't matter how much I pretend to be like, "I'm just you guys." They don't see me that way....But they started addressing me differently, and in a good way different. Not bad. It wasn't bad, but it was different....I have to be very conscientious about where I am vulnerable. I can't be vulnerable in a way that undermines my role in that system. I have to be much more conscientious about that vulnerability, and in doing so, I became more aware of what vulnerability really is. I'm able to see the nuance in it and I can recognize, like, oh crap – I have to protect myself here.

Another theme that emerged while analyzing the interviews for leadership vulnerability/learning individual was the LEAD graduates' initially feeling insignificant as an administrator and in the

learning community. The role of school administrator includes being an instructional leader as well as conducting teacher evaluations. As mentioned before, several LEAD graduates were not teachers while they participated in LEAD. They were counselors, a speech and language pathologist, a band director, and an RSP teacher. Throughout the interviews several LEAD graduates reflected on feeling insignificant or less than because they lacked a teaching background.

Claudia reflected on how being a school counselor amongst experienced teachers in LEAD initially made her feel insignificant:

I felt that I was not a valuable member of my group at the beginning of LEAD because I had never been a teacher in the classroom. I was surrounded by excellent teachers in my group from Savanna. So, I was, if anything, intimidated at times because I felt that when they were speaking about classroom language, I had not connected. It took me a while with the jargon of classroom and sentence frames when they started those strategic inquiries, starting small to get big, and things like that. It's like, "What?"

I was very vulnerable when I said, "Guys, you do understand I'm a counselor, so bear with me." And every single one would say, "Claudia, you're not being fair to yourself. You are a teacher in your own way."

Claudia was reassured by her colleagues positive and supportive response. She sought this challenge as an opportunity to grow and openly shared and acknowledged this area of growth. Kyle, who was also previously a school counselor and is now an assistant school administrator, talked about his fear of feeling invaluable:

One of my fears, was that I'm signing up to be a teacher leader, having never taught. I'm sure in talking with Jennifer or reviewing my stuff, that had been an ongoing concern, fear, a little bit of a theme. And I was always combating that the whole time and growing and reflecting on it. So, working with our teachers in the evaluation process, like, I had a great teacher that really helped me through that.... I really appreciated, the work group that I was in, they really appreciated my perspective. I didn't value my own school counselor perspective as much as my teacher peers did.

Leadership vulnerability plays a huge role in the development of self-knowledge and lays the groundwork for building relationships and working collaboratively with others. Through their participation in LEAD the graduates identified having to move outside of their comfort zone and overcome their feeling of inadequacy due to having a background which is not instructional in nature. Their participation in LEAD promoted their awareness and development of self-knowledge.

Sense of Agency

According to the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards, sense of agency is when a leader defines oneself as an agent of change both independently and interdependently. Those with a strong sense of agency engage their colleagues by forming interdependent learning communities based on shared values and foster agency within others. Many of the LEAD graduates discussed sense of agency as an area in which they self-reported growth since participating in LEAD as evidenced in Table 5. Of the ten graduates interviewed, six of the participants spoke about sense of agency, as evidenced by Table 5.

In reviewing the self-assessments and the interview transcripts, it became apparent that there was a reoccurring theme in terms of sense of agency. Repeatedly, the LEAD graduates identified the importance of building capacity in their colleagues and through this process they had grown in the area of sense of agency. Before their participation in LEAD, many of the candidates operated within a smaller sphere of influence, therefore building capacity in others was a new skill set for many. This was true for Claudia.

Prior to her participation in LEAD, Claudia leaned back and listened. She was often the quietest member of a group and her participation in professional development was passive. Claudia “chose not to steer the boat and just go along with the status quo.” However, during and after her participation in LEAD, Claudia noticed that she developed more confidence and felt a sense of agency. She attributed this change to the learning she engaged in during LEAD and having a better understanding about the why driving the district leadership decisions and actions.

That’s when I started initiating change. That’s when I had the guts to start with my own team and the counseling team and say, “Hey, let’s start using this type of data so we can be a little more intentional with what we’re doing.” I started promoting more the participation of teachers in the EL shadow. I invited my whole counseling team to be part of it and every single counselor did it. Before LEAD, girl, I wouldn’t have asked for any of that to happen!

Once Claudia initiated change and the strategic use of data and observations to inform her work and the work of her counselor colleagues, she observed her colleagues visiting classrooms more often on their own. Claudia expressed great pride in building capacity in her colleagues.

As evidenced in Table 5, Diana also identified sense of agency as a perceived area of growth for her. When I asked Diana to tell me more about this shift throughout LEAD, she reflected on how her understanding of sense of agency has changed over time due to her experiences during LEAD and in her work. Initially, Diana felt that she alone had to implement all of the systems and changes to support the ELs in the district. It was through the one-on-one coaching with Dr. Jennifer Goldstein of CSUF that Diana better understood that having a sense of agency meant fostering that in others by building capacity in her staff:

I do see myself as an agent of change. In my role wanting to see the best practice and systems developed to support our students. What resonated for me was engaging colleagues and acting out of a sense of self and shared values, and fostering agency in others. And does not enable dependency. For the longest time, I was – and I am the only EL services curriculum specialist in the district [with] 6,000 English learners. Part of my big assumption, as the EL services curriculum specialist, was I have to be the expert. I have to be the one to move everybody. So of course, I felt the responsibility, almost like a burden. For me, it was about building the capacity of others, and helping them to be agents of change at the individual site where they worked. Then that's where the capacity building was. So, understanding the importance of building capacity so that you can develop systems across the district now. Because what happens if I leave, you know?

It was through the LEAD graduates' participation in the program that they developed a sense of agency through their work focused on building capacity in their colleagues.

Self-Reflection and Reflective Practices

Another LEAD leadership dimension that was a self-reported area of growth for many LEAD graduates and discussed frequently in the context of the interviews was self-reflection and reflective practices. A leader who has mastered the art of self-reflection and reflective practices engages in these practices to improve their performance and evokes reflection in others. The reflective leader supports systems to function within a culture of mindful and meaningful reflection. They lead data collection and analysis that incorporates the cycle of reflection and refinement as a frequent and intentional practice. As evidenced in Table 5, six of the ten graduates reflected on their growth in this area.

In reviewing the self-assessments and the interview transcripts, it became apparent that there was a reoccurring theme in terms of self-reflection and reflective practices. Several of the LEAD

graduates identified specific examples that contributed to their awareness and development of self-knowledge. When asked to talk about a specific or concrete example of something that happened during LEAD that contributed to their growth the LEAD graduates spoke about:

- strategic inquiry
- class observations
- journaling
- structured reflection
- reflective memos
- group work
- coaching sessions with Dr. Goldstein, CSUF professor

Claudia spoke about this shift when she was reflecting on her feelings of insecurity as she had previously been a school counselor but not a teacher. It was through the work with strategic inquiry in the LEAD program that Claudia was able to reflect and shift her thinking:

It wasn't until I really went in the trenches, in the classrooms and witnessed all the work that was being done with strategic inquiry that I was able to understand that it was a mistake on my part to always feel the way I was feeling, that I couldn't be a valuable member because I wasn't a classroom teacher.

In his interview, Kyle spoke about reflective practices impacting his growth as a school leader:

What I appreciate the LEAD program for is the forced reflection part. I came in as a school counselor, pretty emotionally self-aware, helping guide students through feelings, thoughts, [and] emotions.... But it was one of those, "do as I say, not as I do," things.... I think that the LEAD program really opened me up to real reflection and really assessing myself. LEAD really helped me to grow in that area. It was definitely the forced reflection that the LEAD program instilled...like, let's look back, let's understand why we're feeling things and why we're doing these things, the underlying reasons.

Lynn, the assistant school administrator from Savanna, shared how participation in LEAD helped her to become more reflective:

I love learning about things. Improving through reflective processes, that's just a whole different level.... Being aware of how things have happened – it just takes a lot of reflection and it's something that I really learned a lot from LEAD, that I was not a reflective person at all. So, I'm still learning about that, just really thinking, thinking every day about things that happened and try to look back on how could we do this better or just how things transpire.

It really came from the reflective memos and then the group work we did and just getting to know people better and working with them. We're all working to become leaders or more effective leaders.... Actually, working in a small group and doing all these tasks, I had to reflect on how I was working with these people and maybe some of the conflicts that I have never experienced before. So, I had to really think about, okay, how am I going to do this, without just quitting?

Another theme that emerged while analyzing the interviews for self-reflection and reflective practices was the LEAD graduates identifying reflective practices in their current position and role. Some of the LEAD graduates discussed reflective practices such as teacher evaluations, listening, and their use of data.

Mary Jo, an assistant school administrator spoke about utilizing reflective practices in her teacher evaluation process:

I was really nervous to do the teacher evaluations, because I've never been in the classroom teaching myself. I've done lessons as a school counselor, you know, but that's not the same....But I feel like my strength was the debriefing after, and the debriefing of the reflective questioning. After four evaluations, I asked them, "So, please, give me feedback. Help me to make this better for the next round of candidates that I have to evaluate." And it was amazing, because I wasn't looking for affirmation, I was looking for criticism, because that's the only way you're going get better. But they really just appreciated the reflective process, asking those questions, and they came up with everything that I wanted to address. It was just awesome....Then they really want to hear what you have to say, and then they value that feedback, and then they tell their friends, right?

When I interviewed Sergio, he reflected on his new role as an administrator in comparison to his role as a teacher:

When I was a teacher, I was always a team player, but I was also super-committed. When there's an idea that I believed in and I viewed as fundamentally right for my kids, I would – if I needed to break down barriers, if I need to do this, I always felt comfortable being one of the teachers that stepped up and butted heads with admin to get it done. I would be quick to talk. I would quick to support ideas. I'd be quick to pass judgment. At my core, I'm never going be any different. I'm still fiery as hell and I love that.

So, I still have that fire, but I can't use it or function in the same way anymore. I've noticed that in the last two months I've shifted and it's been, again, through the LEAD program. It started in that process.... I've been doing a lot less talking and a lot more listening....I need to adjust to support the staff the way they need to be supported. If there needs to be change, I'll support it and take a progressive approach. Before, that wasn't me. Before, I was the guy like, "Let's get this done. Let's get this today. This is systematically oppressive. This is problematic over here. We need to just ..." Now, I'm like, "No, no, no. Let's listen everybody out. Let's figure out exactly where the problem is. Let's support everybody." I cannot operate the same. I am learning how to adapt to the needs of the people in that environment.

Reflective practices were a major component of the LEAD program. It was through the LEAD graduates' participation in the program that they developed an awareness of the importance of reflective practices in leadership.

Emotional Self-Awareness

Emotional self-awareness was a leadership dimension which many LEAD graduates identified as a perceived area of growth in their development of self-knowledge. Eight of the ten graduates reflected on their growth in this area as evidenced in Table 5. Emotional self-awareness is when someone acknowledges their own strengths and weaknesses and is able to describe how his/her own feelings impact their actions.

One of the themes that emerged while considering emotional self-awareness was identifying one's own strengths and weaknesses and discussing how they impact one's practice. When I asked Kyle, about emotional self-awareness he talked about his fears, his perceived weaknesses:

One of my fears was that I'm signing up to be a teacher leader, having never taught. That had been an ongoing concern, fear, a little bit of a theme. I was always combating that the whole time and growing and reflecting on it. So, working with our teachers in the evaluation process; I had a great teacher that really helped me through that.... I really appreciated the work group that I was in. They really appreciated my perspective. I didn't value my own school counselor perspective as much as my teacher peers did. Like, for me, it's what I do, it's what I know, it's where I'm comfortable. But it really provided some insight, and it became a valuable thing that I didn't know about.

Kyle also reflected on his strengths, including his ability to remain calm and his strong interpersonal skills:

I think a lot of my strengths as a school counselor, part of why I naturally went into that area, was the emotional intelligence, the relationship building, and the communication. I don't feel different as an Assistant School administrator, but I have... I don't know what it is. I respond differently, and I understand the importance of, like, if I freak out, everyone's going to freak out. If I am even keeled, if I am calm, if I use my counselor voice and speak slowly so we're all relaxing and taking a breath, then we're all going to do much better. I freak out on the inside. I mean, we all have a level of stress or things going on. But the big thing is remaining calm. And this is where I've grown just as a person in my career. So, remaining calm in stressful situations and being sure to impart that calmness and then just also—hey, we're going to do our best, it's going to be okay. Faking it 'til I make it, but with that positiveness. The LEAD program began planting the seeds for that type of stuff. It really put the reflection into it, and then the more you talk about self-knowledge, these types of things, the more you're aware, the more you're able to reflect, and it just becomes part of the practice that you continue evolving and growing.

Another theme that emerged was being able to identifying your feelings, how they impact you, and most importantly how you channel or control your feelings. In the interview, Christina spoke about emotional awareness and how this is still an area in which she is progressing:

I think I am aware of what's going on inside and really trying to put it in a box so I can get through whatever I need to get through. It's hard for me because I'm generally a quiet person when it comes to my emotions so I won't necessarily share that. So, if something is really bothering me, it takes a lot of effort to pull my thoughts together and take emotion out of it. And I don't know how good I am at it, [especially] if it was really personal. But if it's more objective, then I can kind of do it. But when it really does affect me, it's hard. So, it's still a process.

When I asked Diana to tell me more about the shift she identified in terms of emotional self-awareness, as evidenced by Table 5, she reflected on emotional awareness:

I was sitting in a meeting with teachers, and they were talking about "those kids." I was one of "those kids." Even to this day when I hear people referring to "those kids," looking at them as deficits, I take it very personally. Being in [LEAD] made me cognizant of my body language, how I was feeling, internally, and the way that I was speaking to the group. So I became a lot more mindful of that....Again, for me, it was very personal. But I've learned to really listen to the meaning behind why they were saying "those kids." During the one-on-one coaching session with Jennifer, and understanding our big assumptions and things like that, this kind of came out. Just learning how to manage those feelings during the conversations that I would have with people, and then really just learning to listen to what was being said and trying to understand their perspective and not just make an assumption. It was about keeping in control, managing the conversation so that I could then press the conversation in a way that could help with future thinking around those kids. If I come in and attack their thinking about why you know they shouldn't be referring to them as "those kids." Then it just shuts everything down, and then you won't have any progress. Right? It's really about getting to the heart of the matter and kind of digging a little deeper.

Lynn thought emotional self-awareness was an area she had mastered prior to the start of LEAD, as evidenced by Table 5, but she quickly learned this was a perceived growth area for her:

I thought that I was pretty aware, but as I was doing my reflections and thinking more, it's like wow, there's a lot that I don't think about. I didn't really think about my past and how it impacts the person I am today....If something bothers me, I realize it bothers me but I just try to pretend that it doesn't and just go on. So, I just became aware that, well, it bothered me and it did impact me. It impacts how I deal with things. So that was something that I didn't realize before.

As I reviewed Mary Jo's self-assessments, I identified that emotional self-awareness was an area she self-reported as growing in. When asked about this shift, as evidenced by Table 5, Mary Jo

talked about how she grew in her emotional self-awareness as her role shifted from counselor to COSA and again from COSA to administrator:

Well, I was holding a district position as I was journeying the Lead program, and it wasn't necessarily in the Lead, it was the position—because I just started, I've been a school counselor for 17 years, and so, I felt that I had a strength in those areas. And then, when I was in this position at the district and I was pushing against the norm, the status quo for a whole system, and I changed something dramatically—like, a small tweak, but the pushback and the anger and the insecurities that everyone had, I really struggled with that. Because I never, in my professional career, have experienced that at such a magnitude. I've experienced it maybe with a colleague, or something, but I really started to have some self-doubt in my ability to process that pushback at such a grandiose level. And so, you know, finishing the program, I had more courage to really believe in those systematic changes that I was implementing and the accountability that was being created that it is the right thing to do.

It was through the LEAD graduates' participation in LEAD that they developed an awareness of the importance of emotional self-awareness in leadership.

Social Awareness-- Divergent Points of View

Another leadership dimension frequently highlighted throughout the LEAD graduate interviews was dissent and divergent viewpoints, which falls under the emotional intelligence category of social awareness and includes sensing what people are feeling, taking their perspective, and cultivating a rapport with a broad diversity of people. LEAD Leadership Dimension 1.4 Dissent and Divergent Points of View embodies someone who welcomes and appreciates divergent views and actively seeks and makes sense of multiple perspectives and interpretations and can negotiate, including being open-minded and flexible. This seemed to be a growth area for many of the graduates of LEAD.

Although many LEAD graduates had a teaching background before they participated in the program, several graduates were in roles other than teaching. They were counselors, a speech and language pathologist, a band director, an RSP teacher, all of which are specific and often isolated roles within the school system. Through their experiences in LEAD, they were challenged with understanding how to welcome and encourage divergent thoughts and points of view. Furthermore, they learned how to manage and capitalize on those differences. This was a natural growth moment for them, primarily because previously they were in very isolated positions, whereas now in their role

as administrators, they have to deal with a much broader perspective, or a much wider group of people, including all staff members, parents, the community, which demands they have a more extensive view beyond themselves.

The LEAD graduates' discussions around divergent focused points of view highlighted the importance of how you approach conflict and differing points of view. Claudia commented that, "different perspectives open your eyes. It gives you a different lens." Regarding conflict, Claudia believed, "crucial conversations will always be there, but it's how you approach them that matters." She tried to meet other halfway, use "I" statements, and give others an opportunity to express themselves and their ideas.

John also spoke about embracing conflict and attributed the readings and discussions during the LEAD program to promoting the idea that conflict is good and equates to change. If everything is comfortable and status quo then it is likely that no change occurring.

It's actually good to have conflict and not everybody is going to get on the bus and that's ok, too. If it's a worthwhile project eventually people will.....I'm in an interesting position where I'm in the middle of a lot of different groups. [I] have to be understanding of those groups that are opposing to certain things that are important to the district...Not everybody has all of the information and you realize where [they're] coming from, I may not agree with that still but I see why you did what you did...to praise LEAD it did help me understand that you're not going to please everyone, but at the same time you have to understand that they may not know everything...so you have to be understanding of that perspective, too.

During his interview, Ryan referred to conflict he had during LEAD with another cohort member who expressed a divergent point of view and shared that he was angry but then learned that "it's ok to have these emotions, but we should always try to assume positive intent." He reflected on his shift in thinking, explaining that before it was "mentally exhausting just being angry." His shift in thinking has been "very beneficial because [he's] less stressed and able to focus on things [he] can control and manage."

Frequently highlighted throughout the LEAD graduate interviews was their awareness and acceptance of dissent and divergent viewpoints, which was developed by their participation in the LEAD program.

Second Research Question

The second research question asked, how, if at all, does this self-knowledge influence the program graduates' leadership practices?

The first research question was intended to develop an understanding of whether or not there was a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the graduates' awareness and development of self-knowledge skills, as this was an intentional focus of the LEAD curriculum. The second research question was then developed to understand the extent that an administrator's sense of self-knowledge plays out in their leadership practice from the perspective of the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. The analysis of how the program graduates' sense of self-knowledge informs their leadership practice relied on the interviews with the graduates and their supervisors, as seen in Table 6, as the primary data source.

Table 6. LEAD Graduates and Relevant Supervisor

LEAD Graduate	Relevant Supervisor
Mary Jo	Kevin
Kyle	Jack
Lynn	Mike
Claudia	Chuck
John	Michael
Brian	Joe
Sergio	
Ryan	Jackie
Diana	Jackie
Christina	

When I interviewed the LEAD graduates, I asked them to talk about the extent to which their development and growth of in the area of self-knowledge was affecting their current leadership practices. Furthermore, I asked them to explain how self-knowledge is showing up in their current leadership practices. Additionally, I asked their relevant supervisors to speak about how the self-knowledge domains are influencing the LEAD graduate's leadership practice. Given that the

discussions around Research Question 2 were derived from the conversations around Research Question 1, it makes sense that the themes that further developed were around vulnerability, connecting with others, and reflective practices. The following are excerpts from the interviews with the graduates and their supervisors that focus on self-awareness and social awareness as it relates to the second research question.

Vulnerability

Throughout the interviews with both the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors, the theme of vulnerability within their current leadership practice emerged repeatedly. When one demonstrates leadership vulnerability, there is an understanding that mistakes are a necessary part of learning, and one seeks challenges as learning opportunities and leads by example. The leader is open to sharing and acknowledging one's areas of growth.

Claudia reflected on her new-found vulnerability in her new leadership role following her participation in LEAD. Prior to her participation in LEAD, Claudia was not comfortable using data nor was she vulnerable enough to ask for help. Now she is comfortable asking Manuel, her coach and district cabinet member, for assistance:

I have grown a lot in acknowledging an area that I'm not strong at, like data. I wasn't embarrassed to walk to Manuel and ask for his help. I could have been intimidated or afraid that if he knew I wasn't good at this he would question my work. I could have used that and not do it. But instead, I was very vulnerable. I walked in with my papers and said, "I need your help," and God bless him, and he is my coach now for my two years. The time he spent with me dissecting, literally dissecting, like if I was in kindergarten, for me to understand, gave me that confidence that I have now. I use data to move my counselors at the school where I'm assistant school administrator now. So, I am not afraid anymore of getting data. And if it's data that I don't understand, I'm not afraid of asking for the help. I'm not afraid of being vulnerable about it, where before I was. I was afraid of what people would say.

When I asked Claudia's supervisor, Chuck, about how Claudia's sense of self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practice, he confirmed Claudia's perspective. He acknowledged the vast demands and pressures placed on school administrators, including the unrealistic expectation to be the expert in all areas in which you supervise. Chuck stated,

She relies on others and she is vulnerable like, "Hey, I don't have a lot of experience here." For example, with the master schedule. She's gone to our lead counselor like,

“Hey, I need you to help coach me in this area because I don’t have the experience.” That’s huge for any leader to step up and know like, “Hey, I’m in charge of this, but I don’t have the necessarily skills that you have, so I need you to really work closely with me as I learn and adapt.” ...If you surround yourself with good people, and you’re vulnerable, and you take feedback from others, and you take a team approach, then you’re going to be able to work more cohesively together. And Claudia gets that.

Lynn also discussed her growth in vulnerability and how that is reflected in her current practice.

Prior to her participation in LEAD, Lynn had been a speech language pathologist for over twenty years at the same high school where she is now an assistant school administrator, but she hardly knew anyone.

LEAD has helped me to become more vulnerable as far as sharing more about myself. Like what I said about knowing people's stories. I was like super, super private. I didn't tell a lot of personal stories to coworkers at all, so and that's one thing that I had to do with LEAD. I learned how it helped people to get to know me better. So, I've really tried hard this year to do that more, and I got that from LEAD also. I think it's helping people to connect with me better and I think that's good.

Lynn’s supervisor and school administrator, Mike, mirrored her sentiments. When he hired her to be the assistant school administrator, he hired her mid-year because of her strong work ethic. He knew her lack of classroom experience and personal relationships were challenges for her, but he knew she was doing well in the LEAD program. When I asked Mike about how Lynn’s development of self-knowledge in the LEAD program is reflected in her practice, he stated,

One thing she hadn't done in her previous [position] is connect with others on a personal level....That goes back to the “EQ” part, moving together, as a family feel, buy-in, feeling valued, and that's something she hadn't done. She said, "That's where it's stretching me. I was always business, business, business. I needed to stop and pause and connect with people so we could have those conversations about kids, about policy, or whatever we were doing." That was a big stretch for her, and I know she shared that – now she's so thankful because she's met so many people on different levels, able to connect, and do really great work. So that’s really a growth spot for her.

It is evident through these accounts and others that the LEAD graduates’ sense of self-knowledge informs their leadership practice in terms of vulnerability, and it is the vulnerability that allows for them to build relationships, connect with their colleagues and remain in a role of a learner while leading.

Connecting with Others

Connecting with others emerged as a theme when analyzing the interview transcripts in terms of how the LEAD graduates' sense of self-knowledge plays out in their leadership practice from the perspective of the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. The theme of connecting with others included making one-on-one connections, working with teams or small groups of people, as well as working side by side in the trenches with the people they are leading.

Chuck spoke about Claudia's success as a leader, which he attributed to her strong people skills and how well she relates to others. He stated, "She takes an open approach to get to know people and real hands-on approach to leadership. She is not afraid to get her hands dirty and support the work that gets done by being there with them step-by-step." Claudia credits LEAD for developing this skillset, as she was always a quiet member of groups prior to her participation in LEAD.

Jackie reflected on Diana's ability to facilitate teamwork when she stated,

What I am most proud about her is she brings in groups of folks. She brings people together, whether it's to tackle an issue or to refine a program that's going well but we want to improve. She does things with teams or small groups and includes stakeholders from administrators to teachers to students. She is extremely inclusive.

Jackie has observed Diana grow in this area since her participation in LEAD. She shared that Diana always has a positive outlook and demonstrates a growth mindset, looking for other's assets not their deficits.

She is a reflective person and she'll say something like I think I did really well in preparing this presentation with our team but I'd like to do more with this person or that person and give them a larger role. So, what I see her doing is really building that leadership capacity within the teachers that she is working with. Which to me is extremely important in building leadership capacity. In the past, she might have been trying to [be] that A+ student, that type A student who wants to do all the work themselves because they want it perfect. Well, she is letting go of that a bit, realizing that she is the lead but she has a team and the team needs to grow also. So being able to not just delegate but support that person and build that stronger team spirit.

During the interview with Diana, she spoke about leading school site teams through learning around EL instruction and improving the current structures. There was contention and philosophical differences amongst the teachers she was working with at the time. Diana was called to move the

group forward in making some decisions, so she invited her colleagues in to speak to the rest of the group while at the same time hearing and validating their concerns.

We actually had a couple schools that are doing exactly what we're supposed to be doing according to the framework. And I'm going to invite them to share what are some of the systems that they have in place to ensure that our students would be successful. Inviting, their colleagues to share and just acknowledging that I understand the concern out there, but we're going to work together so that we can make sure that our emerging bilinguals are going to get the support that they need. These are the things that you can do. It is about making those difficult decisions, but it's in the best interest of the student. What I learned in LEAD is valuing their opinion and validating their concern. But this is the decision we have made and this is why we're going to move forward from here.

Bringing the staff together, validating their concerns, and explaining her rationale for the decisions she must make is one example of Diana connecting within her colleagues.

Brian also reflected on his experiences from LEAD and how self-knowledge shows up in his leadership practices now. Brian explained that prior to his new role at the district level, he was a band director and he led a team of 15 coaches to whom he gave directions, and they followed through. Initially he thought getting into administration simply meant "learning how to get people to do what they're supposed to do in the first place." Through his experiences in LEAD, he quickly realized it is not that at all. According to Brian, school leadership is "about providing the best input you can and being authentic as much as you possibly can in terms of how you fit into the system and how you support the folks around you so that they can do a better job with how they fit into the system." Connecting with colleagues in this way was a big shift for Brian that he attributes to his participation in LEAD.

According to Joe, Brian's supervisor, one of his strengths in comparison to other recent graduates of administrative credentialing programs he's worked with, is his ability to see the big picture. Joe stated in his interview that "Brian is ahead of some folks in his ability to grasp the big picture. He doesn't get bogged down in too much minutiae. Where sometimes a new administrator doesn't really see the bigger picture of what's going on or how [they] fit into the overall of how the organization works? You kind of stay in your own lane."

Additionally, Mike spoke about John's ability to connect well with people in the organization. Mike reported that John is very deliberate with his interactions with people. He uses humor effectively and strategically. He's authentic because he is very comfortable in his own shoes. [This] leads to open and transparent communication, which leads to trust. It is something we talked about extensively in the LEAD program.

Mike felt that the LEAD program onboarded John very quickly to grasp a lot of big issues, including cultivating emotional intelligence and soft skills.

Just like vulnerability, it is the LEAD graduates' ability to connect with people that has been cultivated through the LEAD program and now informs their leadership practice in the field.

Reflective Practices

Reflective practices emerged as a theme when analyzing the interview transcripts in terms of how the LEAD graduates' sense of self-knowledge plays out in their leadership practice from the perspective of the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. The theme of reflective practices included seeing others' perspectives, engaging in active listening, and seeing how they function within the big system.

Brian explained how his participation in the LEAD 360 evaluations developed his ability to consider other people's perspectives and identify his role within the system. When a decision or policy does not align with his thinking, he has learned to "not take those personal things personally." He credits his participation in LEAD to his awareness that everyone has different perspectives, stating "you'll never know the whole story and that you just see the tip of the iceberg. And that's ok; we still have to move forward. We have to move the system to create something that supports everyone." The other big shift for Brian, through the EL shadowing project, was his ability to "see how [he] function[s] with a system." He "would never have done that without the LEAD program."

When I asked Joe, Brian's supervisor, about how Brian's sense of self-knowledge plays out in his leadership practice, he shared that Brian has a strong leadership presence, but seeing other's

points of view is still an area of growth for him. He understands that since Brian has been in charge of the band program as the director, it may be

uncomfortable to step back and allow others to bring in their point of view. Anytime you're in a new role you want to prove yourself. It's hard to say 'Well let me hear your input,' when you have to ultimately get it done...because you will get questioned from different people. If you can hear them out and understand their perspective, you can reinforce your own decision, but then also help them see why those decisions were made in the first place.

Lynn shared that, due to her experiences in LEAD, she is "more reflective, but also a lot more patient because [she] understand[s] where different people come from, that they have different approaches because of their background." She believes "it's important to know our students, not only their needs but their stories and what their assets are...that goes with adults as well." Mike, Lynn's supervisor, echoed her growth in this area as he reflected on her leadership practices by stating, "she's met so many people on different levels, she's able to connect and do really good work."

These are just a few examples of how the LEAD graduates' sense of self-knowledge plays out in their leadership practice from the perspective of the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative study examined the extent to which there is a relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the AUHSD. Furthermore, this study explored how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices to understand better how to support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through preservice training and in-service professional development.

This qualitative study utilized data from the LEAD graduates' self-assessments on the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards, including the leadership dimensions of self-knowledge. In reviewing these self-assessments, I looked for a shift or change in their thinking from August 2018 to December 2019. These self-reported areas of growth were used to guide the semi structured interviews. From the data analysis, significant themes were identified and discussed as they related

to the research questions. Findings suggest that there is a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in the program graduates in the areas of self-awareness and social awareness. Throughout the interviews there was a strong sense of agency, leadership vulnerability, emotional self-awareness, self-reflection and reflective practices, and divergent points of view. Furthermore, the themes that further developed were around vulnerability, connecting with others, and reflective practices when analyzing the interviews with the graduates and their supervisors, which focused on how, if at all, this self-knowledge influences the program graduates' leadership practices.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Leadership not only matters, but “it is difficult to envision an investment in K-12 education with a higher ceiling on its potential return than improving school leadership” (Grissom et al., 2021, p.14). A more in-depth look at administrative standards reveals an emphasis on hard skills, leaving little to no room for emotional intelligence development. The role of the principal has shifted from a manager to a facilitator of teacher-learning and instructional improvement, considering the current trend to empower teachers in the curriculum design and implementation. Under the guidance of an emotionally intelligent leader who displays Goleman's leadership competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, teachers and staff are more likely to learn from each other, collaboratively make decisions, and accomplish tasks and projects (Goleman, 2013).

The problem this study addresses is the negative impact on school functioning and student learning resulting from insufficient attention to principals' emotional intelligence in their leadership preparation. "Without adequate skills to adapt to the changes and stress related to their jobs, principals and teachers often experience frustration and exhaustion, leading many to leave the field of education" (Herbert, 2010, p. 4). Very little is currently in place to support principals in emotional intelligence. "School districts contribute to principals' level of stress in a culture that perpetuates anxiety and tension: more demands, high-performance expectations, and less resources" (Wells, 2015, p. 3). The urgency is apparent. A principal's ability to manage, express, and regulate their emotions and attitudes may impact leadership success.

Much of the success of a principal relies heavily on interpersonal skills. This case study was designed to explore the relationship between the principal's emotional intelligence and leadership practices. I explored the various ways that emotional intelligence can impact educational leadership, including instructional leadership, school climate and culture, and the shifting demands on school

principals. The results of this study will positively change and inform principal leadership preparation.

The following questions guided this qualitative methods research study:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between the LEAD Curriculum and the awareness and development of "self-knowledge" in program graduates?
2. How, if at all, does this "self-knowledge" influence the program graduates' leadership practices?

Utilizing a qualitative approach, the researcher studied the AUHSD's LEAD program, an administrative credentialing program partnership with CSUF. AUHSD serves approximately 30,000 seventh through twelfth-grade students at twenty middle and high schools. The sample for this qualitative study included ten recent graduates of the LEAD program and their seven relevant supervisors.

Conclusions

This qualitative study utilized data through individual interviews with LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. From the data analysis, significant themes were identified and discussed as they related to the research questions. Findings suggest that there is a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the development of self-knowledge in the program graduates in the areas of self-awareness and social awareness, which in turn influences the program graduates' leadership practices.

Leadership Vulnerability, Sense of Agency, and Reflective Practices Matter

As evidenced in the data from Chapter 4 and the research cited in Chapter 2, leadership vulnerability, sense of agency, and reflective practices matter in the development of effective school leadership. This conclusion aligns with my study's conceptual framework, which captures my working theory for how emotional intelligence and leadership preparation affect effective educational leadership and, in turn, student outcomes.

Throughout the analysis of the interviews with the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors, the LEAD leadership dimensions of leadership vulnerability, sense of agency, and self-reflection and reflective practice were identified as recurring themes in terms of areas of growth and

development throughout the graduates' participation in LEAD. The graduates recognized their work in collaboration with their colleagues during LEAD and how those experiences are now reflected in their current leadership practice. In relating their participation in LEAD, the graduates reported moving outside of their comfort zone, overcoming their feelings of inadequacy as new school administrators and having backgrounds which were not instructional in nature. Leadership vulnerability plays a huge role in the development of self-knowledge and lays the groundwork for building relationships and working collaboratively with others. Leaders who have strong emotional intelligence are less likely to report burnout (Brackett et al., 2010) and more likely utilize restorative practices to build community and address conflict. The development of leadership vulnerability influences school culture and climate and those who demonstrate a strong sense of leadership vulnerability lead by example, understanding that mistakes are necessary in learning and growth, and openly share their areas of growth.

It is evident throughout the data collected that the LEAD graduates' sense of self-knowledge informs their leadership practice in terms of vulnerability. It is vulnerability that allows for them to build relationships, connect with their colleagues, and remain in the role of learner while leading. Marzano et al (2005) identified a positive correlation between effective school leadership and student achievement due to 21 key leadership practices, one of which is nurturing positive relationships. Connecting with others emerged as a theme when analyzing the interviews. These included making one-on-one connections and working with teams or small groups of people, as well as working side by side in the trenches with the people they are leading. It is the LEAD graduates' awareness and development of leadership vulnerability, cultivated intentionally through the LEAD program, which informs their leadership practice in the field.

Connecting with and building capacity in colleagues, as well as developing interdependent learning communities with shared values, are examples of the sense of agency that was developed in the LEAD graduates through their participation in the program. This development of sense of agency is directly related to the shifting demands on principals, as they cannot do this work alone. Effective

leaders are called to build capacity in others and lead collaborative teams. Influential educational leaders make thoughtful decisions, effect lasting change, and implement new protocols and procedures utilizing leadership teams, stakeholder groups, and sensemaking strategies. The reality school administrators work with is a constructed reality, and therefore, effective leaders “don’t influence people or events; rather they lead by influencing constructed realities and enabling effective group dynamics” (Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 228). There has been much research about the impact a leader’s leadership style has on the ability of that leader to effectively empower their followers to achieve success in obtaining or carrying out the desired outcomes of an organization. But less research exists about the dispositions that impact one’s leadership style. Gardner and Stough (2002) found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, while Brown et al. (2006) confirmed the strong effectiveness power of transformational leadership predicting desired organizational outcomes.

Reflective practices were a major component of the LEAD program, and it was through the LEAD graduates’ participation in the program that they developed an awareness of the importance of reflective practices in leadership. Reflective practice emerged as a theme when analyzing the interview transcripts in terms of how the LEAD graduates’ sense of self-knowledge plays out in their leadership practice from the perspective of the LEAD graduates and their relevant supervisors. The theme of reflective practices included seeing others’ perspectives, engaging in active listening, and seeing how they function within the big system. Throughout their experiences in LEAD, the graduates were challenged with understanding how to welcome and encourage divergent thoughts and points of view. Furthermore, they learned how to manage and capitalize on those differences. Implementing significant change in education requires “competent leaders to create consensus” (Fisher et al., 2012, p. 158) rather than simply decision-making.

In their new roles as administrators, leaders have to deal with a much broader perspective, or a more inclusive group of people, including all staff members, parents, and the community, which demands they have a more extensive view beyond themselves. Employing reflective practices

supports their role as instructional leaders in that they encourage the teachers they are working with to engage in reflective practices, which leads to improvement of their instructional strategies and pedagogy. It is morally imperative that educational leaders engage in continuous improvement and reflective practices, believing that *all* children can learn. Honestly analyzing data through that lens, or the belief that *all* children can learn, will help teachers provide all students what they need to be successful and advance a just, equitable, and inclusive education.

Self-Knowledge Intertwined with Equity Leadership

As I had mentioned in Chapter 1, the AUHSD leadership team identified a core problem of practice of significant disproportionality between the ELs and the overall student population. To address this problem of the practice, in 2018 they began their partnership with the Educational Leadership Department at CSUF to create the AUHSD's LEAD program. Their belief was that, through participation in the LEAD program, selected teacher leaders throughout the district would come together to engage in the continuous improvement process while earning their administrative credential, and in turn, these leaders would become courageous instructional leaders focused on equity and access for all learners, especially the ELs who were identified as a significantly disproportionate population in their district. The Equity Leadership Dimension 2.2 "Focus on Outcomes for All Students" includes challenging expectations around student learning, specifically for subpopulations and employing consistent actions promoting democratic opportunities for franchised students.

The LEAD program curriculum is driven by leadership dimensions in the areas of self-knowledge or emotional intelligence, equity, and systems. Although I did not ask a research question specifically about equity, it is clear that equity was front and center as I noticed trends in the data from Chapter 4 that suggest a relationship between LEAD's equity dimensions and self-knowledge dimensions. It seems that increasing the awareness and development of self-knowledge skills was intertwined with equity leadership practices in the LEAD graduates.

According to the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards the equity leadership dimensions include but are not limited to the following:

- Valuing cultural differences and seeking others to design programs and policies to support multicultural community and organization
- High expectations for all students, specifically for disenfranchised students
- Critical questioning to take steps to dismantle taken-for-granted privilege-based sorting of students
- Drivers ensure that students have their content, skill, and social-emotional needs met (which may be outside of the traditional framework of schooling)
- Engage and build upon assets of local stakeholders to create equitable outcomes through strategic planning
- Use data to inform decision making
- Ensure alignment of standards, assessment, and curriculum
- Implements and monitors First Best Instruction with intentional checking for understanding and formative assessment to adjust instruction

Repeatedly, the LEAD graduates identified the importance of building capacity in their colleagues, and through this they had grown in the area of sense of agency. Before their participation in LEAD, many of the candidates operated within a smaller sphere of influence, therefore building capacity in others was a new skill set for many.

For example, Claudia was often the quietest member of a group and her participation in professional development was passive. Claudia “chose not to steer the boat and just go along with the status quo.” However, during and after her participation in LEAD, Claudia noticed that she developed more confidence and felt a sense of agency. She attributed this change to the learning she engaged in during LEAD and having a better understanding about ‘the why’ driving the district leadership decisions and actions. This confidence and sense of agency, which is a self-knowledge leadership dimension, allowed Claudia to take initiative to make change for EL students by engaging her colleagues with critical questions and the use of data to create learning environments that will ensure equitable outcomes for all students, which is Equity Leadership Dimension 2.5 “Local Stakeholders.”

Once Claudia initiated change and the strategic use of data and observations to inform her work and the work of her counselor colleagues, she observed her colleagues visiting classrooms more often on their own to engage in EL shadowing and data collection. They engaged in critical questioning to take steps to dismantle taken-for-granted privilege-based sorting of students and utilized data to inform decision-making: Equity Leadership Dimensions, 2.3 “Student Sorting” and 2.6 “Use of Data.” Claudia expressed great pride in building capacity in her colleagues in terms of equity leadership.

Diana also identified sense of agency as an area of growth for her. When I asked Diana to tell me more about this shift throughout LEAD, she reflected on how her understanding of sense of agency has changed over time due to her experiences during LEAD and in her work. Initially, Diana felt that she alone had to implement all of the systems and changes to support the EL learners in the district. It was through the one-on-one coaching with Dr. Goldstein of CSUF that Diana better understood that having a sense of agency meant fostering that in others and building capacity in her staff. As the only EL services curriculum specialist in AUHSD, Diana’s developed sense of agency, a self-knowledge leadership dimension, helped her to realize that her role was to build capacity in others to be change agents so they could build systems of equity and access for all students, specifically the disenfranchised EL students, which is Equity Leadership Dimension 2.2 “Focus on Outcomes for all Students.”

It was through the LEAD graduates’ participation in the program that they developed a sense of agency through their work focused on building capacity in their colleagues, specifically as it relates to equity leadership. These are just two examples of how the awareness and development of self-knowledge is intertwined with equity leadership in the LEAD candidates. School leaders must engage in continuous improvement to ensures schools “clarify whom they have as students, understand where the learning organization is right now on all measures, consider processes as well as results, create visions that make a difference for whom they have as students, help everyone get on the same page with understanding how to achieve the vision, and know if what the learning organization is

doing is making a difference” (Bernhardt, 2016, p. 7). Transformational leadership is composed of “idealized influence, inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulus, and individual consideration” (Barling et al., 2000, p. 157).

Reflective practices were a major component of the LEAD program. It was through the LEAD graduates’ participation in the program that they developed an awareness of the importance of reflective practices in leadership. Another example of how the development of self-knowledge is intertwined with equity leadership is Diana’s one-on-one coaching experience with Dr. Goldstein. In the coaching session, which is a reflective practice, Diana was sharing her feelings when she overheard teachers talking about “those kids,” in what she perceived as deficit thinking. Through the one-on-one coaching, Diana and Dr. Goldstein talked about big assumptions and how to authentically listen to others and their perspectives, while managing her own feelings and not making assumptions. Diana shared that by managing the conversation in this way she is now able to move the conversation in a way that includes critical questioning to take steps to dismantle taken-for-granted privilege-based sorting of students, which is equity leadership dimension 2.3 “Student Sorting.” It was through the LEAD graduates’ participation in the program that they developed reflective practices specifically as they relate to equity leadership. This is just one example of how the awareness and development of self-knowledge is intertwined with equity leadership in the LEAD candidates.

Wendorf-Heldt (2009) found a strong, positive correlation between emotional intelligence and school administrative leadership practices, which have been identified by Marzano et al. (2005) to increase student achievement. Williams (2008) found self-confidence, self-control, consciousness, achievement orientation, organizational awareness, developing others, influence, analytical thinker, leadership, teamwork/collaboration influence, change catalyst, and conflict management were the specific emotional and social intelligence competencies to have the most significant impact on the outstanding school administrators compared to the typical school administrators. These attributes of an outstanding school administrator, according to Williams (2008), have similarities to the self-knowledge and equity leadership dimensions of the LEAD program.

Implications

The following sections will discuss the implications of this study on policy, practice, and future research on the preparation of emotionally intelligent school leaders.

Implications for Policy

Given the importance of leadership vulnerability, sense of agency, and reflective practices in school leadership, it makes sense that leadership preparation programs should include standards, expectations for learning outcomes, and assessment measures to support the awareness and development of emotional intelligence. The CTC should consider revising the CAPEs to include a framework of effective leadership qualities and dispositions, including emotional intelligence and equity leadership. Consideration also needs to be given to the alignment between educational levels that are currently siloed. There should be clear and concise communication and collaboration between P-12, post-graduate educational programs, and leadership preparation programs in terms of standards and desired outcomes.

The review of literature and the findings of my study suggest that emotional intelligence can be taught and developed. Moore's (2009) research revealed that school administrators benefit from emotional intelligence coaching. Based on their quantitative analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective school leadership, Stone et al. (2005) recommend that professional development opportunities address and promote emotional self-awareness, empathy, and flexibility. They also suggest incorporating an emotional intelligence rating scale or survey into new administrators' recruitment and hiring.

Implications for Practice

A relationship exists between school administrators, teachers, and students in the realm of emotional intelligence, through the increasingly important domain of social emotional learning. The expectation is that classroom teachers teach these critical social-emotional skills. The school administrators, in turn, are the instructional leaders of this vital work. Emotional intelligence has been tied to transformational leadership, which has been advocated as one of the foundational practices

utilized in school reform (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). The role that emotional intelligence and soft skills play in successful leadership and, ultimately, student achievement has often been underestimated. Schools need administrators who can manage the everchanging and challenging charge of being a school site school administrator, as they are given the responsibility of leading the teachers to ensure *all* students learn at high levels.

In light of preparing transformational school leaders, including developing emotional intelligence and equity leadership skills, there also needs to be consideration for reexamining how we measure the success of our students and our schools. As a system, we assess what is valued, therefore teachers teach what will be tested. Administrators and educators claim critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and citizenship skills, commonly referred to as the 5 C's, are important, yet these skills are not assessed. So, we need to ask the critical question: as a system are these skills truly valued if they are not assessed? We need a more holistic approach to how we are measuring student and school progress. The implication is that we need to rethink instructional leaders as transformational school leaders, including developing emotional intelligence and equity leadership skills, so they are equipped to lead, support and advance a just, equitable, and inclusive education.

Implications for Future Research

Further research should be conducted in understanding how to better support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through leadership preparation programs and in-service professional development. Barling et al. (2000) noted that “current research supports the idea that managers can be trained to use transformational leadership” (p. 160); therefore, future research should explore emotional intelligence development as a training tool for current and future leaders. Additional research should be conducted on the impact of emotional intelligence on equity leadership.

Recommendations

In light of what I have learned from my review of literature and my study's findings, I recommend the following in terms of policy, practice, and future research on the preparation of emotionally intelligent school leaders.

Leadership Preparation Should Emphasize Emotional Intelligence

- I recommend that the California CTC revise the CAPEs to include emotional intelligence standards in a framework of leadership qualities and dispositions.
- I recommend that leadership preparation programs support the development of educational leaders who can demonstrate the leadership skills needed to lead change and improvement in terms of emotional intelligence and equity leadership.

Rethink Instructional Leadership

- I recommend rethinking instructional leaders as transformational school leaders, including developing emotional intelligence and equity leadership skills, so they are equipped to lead, support and advance a just, equitable, and inclusive education.
- I recommend that we reexamine how we measure the success of our students and our schools and consider a more holistic approach.

Future Research

- I recommend that further research be conducted in understanding how to better support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through leadership preparation programs and in-service professional development.
- I recommend that future research explore emotional intelligence development as a training tool for current and future leaders.
- I recommend that additional research be conducted on the impact of emotional intelligence on equity leadership and how this influences the cultivation of a just, equitable, and inclusive education.

Summary of the Dissertation

There is a negative impact on school functioning and student learning that results from insufficient attention to principals' emotional intelligence in their leadership preparation. Very little is currently in place to develop and support principals in the area of emotional intelligence. The urgency is apparent. A principal's ability to manage, express, and regulate their emotions and attitudes may impact leadership success and in turn student outcomes.

Much of the success of a principal relies heavily on interpersonal skills. This case study explores the relationship between a principals' emotional intelligence and their leadership practices. The results of this study will inform principal leadership preparation, in-service training, professional growth opportunities, and hiring practices. This qualitative case study examined the relationship, if any, between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in program graduates in the AUHSD. Furthermore, this study explored how this self-knowledge informs the program graduates' leadership practices to better support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through preservice training and in-service professional development.

These findings suggest that there is a relationship between the LEAD curriculum and the awareness and development of self-knowledge in the program graduates in the areas of self-awareness and social awareness, which, in turn, influences the program graduates' leadership practices. In light of what I have learned from my review of literature and my study's findings, leadership vulnerability, sense of agency, and reflective practices matter in the development of effective school leadership. This conclusion aligns with this study's conceptual framework, which captures my working theory for how emotional intelligence and leadership preparation affects effective educational leadership and, in turn, student outcomes. Although I did not ask a research question specifically about equity, it is clear that equity was front and center as evidenced by the data collected and analyzed in this study. Increasing the awareness and development of self-knowledge skills positively influenced equity leadership practices in the LEAD graduates.

In light of what I have learned from my review of literature and my study's findings, I recommend the following in terms of policy, practice, and future research on the preparation of emotionally intelligent school leaders. I recommended that the California CTC revise the CAPEs to include emotional intelligence within a framework of leadership qualities and dispositions and to adapt leadership preparation programs to support the development of educational leaders who can

demonstrate the leadership skills needed to lead change to cultivate just, equitable, and inclusive education.

Additionally, I recommend that we reexamine how we are measuring student and school progress and consider a more holistic approach for progress monitoring. Finally, I recommend that further research be conducted in understanding how to better support educational administrators in developing emotional intelligence and leadership practices through leadership preparation programs and in-service professional development.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, my operating theory of action is that if we improve the emotional intelligence of our school leaders, then outcomes for underserved students will improve. Ultimately further research should be conducted to examine the impact of emotional intelligence development on equity leadership and how this influences the cultivation of a just, equitable, and inclusive education.

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

GRADUATES

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. As a reminder, this interview will be recorded on Zoom. I'm Katie Christmas and working with Professor Jennifer Goldstein on studying the extent to which the development of Emotional Intelligence ("EI") or "self-knowledge" in the graduates of the LEAD program. We are all, including District & LEAD leaders, interested in learning to what extent they were successful as they begin planning for the second cohort of LEAD.

1) I see in the Fall of 2018, at the start of the LEAD program, you marked [rating on "self-knowledge" domain] and at the end of the LEAD program, you marked [rating on "self-knowledge" domain]. There is a shift. Tell me more about that.

- Then prompt, can you talk about a specific/concrete example of something that happened in LEAD that contributed to your growth in ["self-knowledge" domain]?

2) [Given the above] How is that affecting your leadership practices now?

3) Is there any question you think I should have asked that I didn't?

SUPERVISORS

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. As a reminder, this interview will be recorded on Zoom. I'm Katie Christmas and working with Professor Jennifer Goldstein on studying the extent to which the development of Emotional Intelligence ("EI") or "self-knowledge" in the graduates of the LEAD program. We are all, including District & LEAD leaders, interested in learning to what extent they were successful as they begin planning for the second cohort of LEAD.

1) As you know, [program graduate's name] graduated from LEAD. From your perspective, as her/his [supervisor], how is she/he doing as a leader at [school name]?

- Then prompt, in comparison to other recent graduates of admin credential programs/new APs?

2) The Lead Program was organized around 3 curricular domains: systems, equity & self-knowledge, where "self-knowledge" is those domains commonly known as Emotional Intelligence. We are interested in learning about your sense of [program graduate's name]'s "self-knowledge" and how that plays out in her/his leadership practice. To scaffold our discussion, I'd like to show you the LEAD Candidate Performance Standards document that was used in the first round of LEAD, which had 21 subdomains for self-knowledge. I'm going to share my screen and ask you to take a few minutes to read through. As you read, be thinking about [program graduate's name]. I can give you time to read through the whole thing first, or if you prefer, you can also talk as you read through if specific examples come to mind you would like to share. [give time to read]

What comes to mind for you about how these "self-knowledge" subdomains are, or are not, informing [program graduate's name]'s leadership practice? (And please keep in mind, we're asking this not to learn about [program graduate], but about how effective we were with LEAD. This discussion will help inform the design of LEAD 2.0 that begins in August.)

3) Is there any question you think I should have asked that I didn't?

Again, thank you for your time today. It was a pleasure speaking with you and learning more about the LEAD program.

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