We are pleased to introduce this new series of monographs as part of the ongoing collaboration between the Asia Pacific Centre of Leadership and Change (APCLC) and the Hong Kong Principals' Institute (HKPI). Both organizations are focused on promoting deeper understanding of school leadership through innovative research and to improved leadership practice in schools. We believe that working partnerships between organizations such as ours provide fertile tracts within which ways to more successful leadership can be explored, tested, practiced and disseminated in ways that neither partner can achieve individually.

We hope that you enjoy reading the monograph and that it in some way helps you reflect on what you do as a leader, regardless of where that is.

Allan Walker
Joseph Lau Chair Professor of International Educational Leadership
Dean, Faculty of Education and Human Development
Director, The Joseph Lau Luen Hung Charitable Trust
Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change
Hong Kong Institute of Education

Anissa Chan
Convener, Hong Kong Principals’ Institute
Principal, St. Paul’s Co-educational College
The future belongs to those who give the next generation for hope.

Pierre Yeiland de Chardin (French Philosopher)
Gateways to Leading Learning

Giving Children Hope: Implications for Schools and Leaders

Bruce Barnett

Contents

1 Abstract
2 Introduction
6 Literature Review
19 Embedding Hope in the Curriculum
28 Leadership Preparation and Development
32 Conclusion
36 References
About the author

Bruce is a Professor in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at the University of Texas at San Antonio and Senior Research Fellow of Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. For over a decade, he has become involved in international research and program development, co-authoring books on school improvement; researching mentoring and coaching programs operating around the world; and presenting workshops in Australia, New Zealand, England, Hong Kong, Ireland, and Canada. One of the current projects being implemented is the International School Leadership Development Network, a collaboration of colleagues around the world examining leadership preparation and development in different cultural contexts.
Abstract

Growing concerns about violence, drug abuse, school drop outs, and the civic and political disenchantment of our youth have caught the attention of policymakers, community agencies, religious institutions, and school systems. A significant consequence of these social conditions is the sense of hopelessness expressed by children and young adults. In America, upwards of 30% of adolescents have a sense of hopelessness (Child Trends, 2012), which poses significant challenges for school systems and leaders, whose role is to prepare students for future success. Given these circumstances, this monograph proposes the moral imperative for 21st century school leaders is to build students’ hope for a bright future. To build this argument, the monograph asserts school leaders must become moral stewards by helping students develop a greater sense of future success. Using elements of hope theory--goal development, motivation, and pathways--as the foundation for action, promising ways for how school leaders can understand and apply these elements to become agents of hope for our youth are explored.
Introduction

Confidence in American public schools has been wavering since the release of the Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). This report was a springboard for policymakers, business organizations, and citizens to support several waves of educational reform that have continued into the 21st century. Furthermore, an alarming number of students are dropping out of school, indicating that parents and their children are losing faith in our educational systems’ ability to prepare our youth for future
success. Besides increasing numbers of K-12 students who join gangs, engage in substance abuse, and commit violent crimes, consider these statistics: 35% of students drop out of school, 50% of these dropouts are Latinos and African Americans, and 50% of high school graduates are not prepared for college (Spathas, 2011). The plight of students in urban school systems is even more alarming, as evidenced by these features of urban communities and schools:
High levels of poverty, mobility, homeless families, children in foster care, incarcerated students, drug abuse, and non-English speakers (Barnett & Stevenson, forthcoming; Duke 2008, 2012; Picus, Marion, Calvo, & Glenn, 2005)

Limited instructional resources for teachers who have little control over the curriculum (Chung, 2005; National Center for Education Statistics, 1996)

Politicized school boards, cumbersome central office bureaucracies, incoherent instructional practices, inadequate data management systems and resources, and decaying buildings (Haberman, n.d.; Jacob, 2007; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006)

High teacher absenteeism, low morale, and constant turnover (Barnett & Stevenson, forthcoming; Duke 2008, 2012; Picus, Marion, Calvo, & Glenn, 2005)

Lack of qualified applicants to fill principal vacancies (The New Teacher Project, 2006)

Many students in these school settings have lost hope in their ability to control their lives and become productive members of society. Although American adolescents and undergraduate students tend to be more hopeful than their counterparts in other countries (Lester, 2013, 2015), studies indicate that upwards of 30% of American adolescents have a sense of hopelessness (Child Trends, 2012), which often is associated with high suicide rates (Beck, Brown, Berchick, Stewart, & Steer, 1990; Jain, Singh, Gupta, & Kuman, 1999). Higher feelings of hopelessness have been reported for
various ethnic groups. For example, inner-city African American adolescents report high levels of hopelessness, particularly when they are repeatedly exposed to violence, experience constant disruptions in parental stability, lack a sense of community, and have no religious affiliation (Bolland, Lian, & Formichella, 2005). In addition, hopelessness is prevalent for many Native American adolescents (Johnson & Tomren, 1999), especially when they live in urban areas and do not possess a sense of cultural competence (LaFromboise, Albright, & Harris, 2010).

South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s words provide a resounding statement of the effects of hopelessness:

A great deal of violence happens among young persons who feel that their lives will end in a cul-de-sac. They may come from depressed communities and lack father figures or caring adults. Without human comforts and outlets for wholesome recreation, they may turn to drugs for excitement and seek status or security in guns and knives. They desperately want to count but take short cuts to gaining respect. If you can’t be recognized for doing good, maybe people will take notice of you if you are troublesome. (as cited in Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Brockern, 1990, p. x)

Although hopelessness is not related to income and wealth (Gallup, 2009a), dropout and suicide statistics indicate significant numbers of students have given up on their educational future, which can negatively affect their income, increase the likelihood of being incarcerated, and raise the probability of enrolling in social programs (Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, & Palma, 2009). Therefore, an increasingly important moral imperative for school leaders is to build students’ hope for a bright future. As a foundation for this argument, the monograph begins by reviewing literature on the learning expectations for 21st century students followed by an explanation of hope theory, illustrating how school systems and leaders can provide a more optimistic future for our nation’s youth. As the moral stewards for students’ learning and future life chances, we highlight how educational leaders can use the elements of hope theory to create school-based programs and practices. Some of the illustrations are from research findings emerging from the International School Leadership Development Network, a multi-national study of school principals who are committed to working in high-need schools where hopelessness prevails. The monograph concludes by suggesting implications for how to prepare and develop school leaders’ capabilities to promote hope in their students and local communities.
of-of-class activities (e.g., community visits, service projects). School officials must provide support for students to: (a) be healthy, (b) stay safe, (c) enjoy and achieve, (d) make a positive contribution, and (e) achieve economic well-being (Morrison et al, 2009). In addition, governmental policies, such as Getting It Right for Every Child in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2012) and massive efforts to direct resources to disadvantaged schools in China (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2005), have attempted to integrate services for children regardless of their social and economic standing.

Furthermore, the recently-formed Partnership for 21st Century Skills (n.d.) is a collaborative national organization

**Student Success in the 21st Century**

Attention is being directed to understanding the essential knowledge and skills students need to become successful citizens, consumers, and contributors in the 21st century. For instance, based on growing concerns about social disintegration, disorder, moral decline, and civic and political disenchantment in the United Kingdom, the Every Child Matters (ECM) reform initiative has been implemented. One of the tenets of this reform is the inclusion of citizenship education in formal classes (e.g., Enterprize, Health and Relationships, Finance, Careers Education) and in out-
One of the challenges facing schools and their leaders will be how to build time in the curriculum to address these types of skills, especially with so much emphasis placed on raising students’ academic performance. Developing curriculum and organizing schools dedicated to achieving these types of 21st century knowledge and skills will demand school leaders who not only value these learning outcomes, but who also have the moral courage to advocate for those students who have lost hope in achieving success, especially their motivation to develop life and career skills. Before describing promising hope-building learning activities, we first examine how hope has been conceptualized, measured, and affects individuals’ thoughts and actions.
The Importance of Hope

Defining hope. Hope has been defined as a positive motivational state that influences our ability to expend energy to pursue individual goals (Helland & Winston, 2005). Hopeful people set goals, value progress in meeting these goals, enjoy existing relationships and establishing new relationships, are less anxious in stressful situations, adapt well to environmental change, and have compassion for others (Peterson & Luthans, 2003). One of the earliest conceptualizations of hope is reflected in the Beck Hopeless Scale (BHS), which examines individual’s feelings about the future, motivation, and expectations. The BHS has been used primarily with adult psychiatric patients (Beck & Steer, 1988; Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974).

To further refine the concept, scholars in the field of positive psychology developed what has been come to be known as hope theory (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991). Similar to Beck’s conceptualization of hopelessness, hope theory is comprised of three interrelated components: (a) setting goals, (b) being motivated to achieve goals, and (c) possessing the means to overcome obstacles in pursing goals (Helland & Winston, 2005; Luthans & Jensen, 2002). Setting goals provides individuals with direction and a future orientation. High-hope individuals pursue goals enthusiastically and have more goals than low-hope individuals,
believing they have “something significant yet to do in their lives” advocated by Barker (1991). The second component, *motivation* (also referred to as agency or willpower), is believing we possess the personal capacity and determination to maintain the effort to reach our desired goals (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Luthans & Jensen, 2002). Finally, having the *means* (also referred to as pathways or waypower) is the ability to generate alternative solutions when obstacles are confronted during goal pursuit (Luthans & Jensen, 2002). These pathways are based on a person’s problem-solving abilities, resilience, and coping strategies (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Persistence is similar to Seligman’s (1998) notion of optimism, claiming it helps individuals react positively to setbacks, guards against depression, and improves physical and emotional health. The following formula captures the elements of hope theory:

\[
\text{Hope} = \\
\text{Goal setting} \quad (\text{direction/future orientation}) + \\
\text{Motivation} \quad (\text{agency/willpower}) + \\
\text{Means} \quad (\text{pathways/waypower})
\]

Hope has been compared to other psychological constructs (see Table 1). On one hand, it is quite similar to resiliency and creativity. Resilient individuals meet challenges, overcome them, and learn from their experiences...
to deal with problems they may encounter in the future (Milstein & Henry, 2008). Research has shown that high-hope individuals not only have more effective coping strategies, but also are more persistent when they possess clear goals, motivation to achieve goals, and the means for achieving their goals (Helland & Winston, 2005). Hopeful people also tend to be creative because they can envision various future outcomes, are self-directed, and have the patience and willingness to accept alternatives. On the other hand, Helland and Winston (2005) suggest hope differs slightly from optimism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. Optimism is the perceived ability to pursue goals; however, it ignores the means for achieving goals. Self-efficacy, the belief that an outcome can be achieved, does not acknowledge how
emotions affect our ability to achieve goals. Finally, self-esteem is the personal estimation of how well we conduct our lives, but does not account for the goals we seek to achieve.

**Measuring hope.** Various instruments have been developed to measure adults’ and children’s hope (Helland & Winston, 2005). As noted earlier, one of the first instruments was the Beck Hopelessness Scale, a 20-item self-report inventory examining feelings about the future, expectations, and motivation. The BHS has been found to be a highly valid and reliable instrument, one that continues to be used today by clinically-trained professionals. This scale has been translated into Chinese, Danish, Finnish, and Portuguese and used to measure the hopelessness of adolescents and adults in countries where these languages are spoken (e.g., Lam, Michalak, & Swinson, 2005; Shek, 1993; Shek & Merrick, 2007). Another popular instrument is the Adult Hope Scale (AHS), a 12-item self-report measure that asks questions related to two of the domains of hope theory - motivation and pathways (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991). The AHS has been found to be valid and reliable and has been used in hundreds of studies to better understand hope in adults (Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008).

In the late 1990s, the AHS was adapted for school-aged children (Snyder, Cheavens, & Michael, 1999). Referred to as the Children’s Hope Scale (CHS),
this six-item self-report examines children’s perceptions about their goals and the ways they strive to meet them. Reporting high validity and reliability, the instrument was initially developed for seven to 16 year olds (Lopez, Snyder, & Pedrotti, 2003). Originally focusing on White students, there have been recent attempts to broaden the use of the CHS to other cultures, including Mexican-American (Edwards, Ong, & Lopez, 2007) and African-American youth (Valle, Huebner, & Suldo, 2006); however, “more information is needed regarding conceptual equivalence of the construct of hope across cultures” (Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008, p. 102).

Effects of hope. Interest in understanding hope and its influence has emerged in nursing, counseling, business, bioethics, and education (Li, Mitton-Kukner, & Yeom, 2008). Not only are empirical findings related to hope in their infancy (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004), but current measures also tend to focus on individual hope, rather than collective hope in organizations or communities (White-Zappa, 2001). Despite these shortcomings, tentative claims about the effects of hope reveal its effects on adults’ thinking and performance. For instance, hopeful leaders not only increase company profits, but also improve employees’ retention rates, job satisfaction, and commitment (Helland & Winston, 2005; Peterson & Luthans,
In addition, hope is associated with improving academic and athletic performance, enhancing mental and physical health, reducing stress, and living longer lives (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Stern, Dhanda, & Hazuda, 2001). Research has focused on ways in which hope positively influences children’s and adolescents’ thoughts and actions. Studies indicate hope is related to:

- Personal and social outcomes, such as accomplishing goals (Snyder, Symposon, Michael, & Cheavens, 2000), achieving satisfaction (Chang, 1998), and relieving depression (Kwon, 2000; Snyder, Cheavens, & Michael, 1999)
- Academic performance, including attendance and credits earned (Gallup, 2009b), grade point average (Marques, Pais-Ribeiro, & Lopez, 2009; Snyder, 2002; Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991; Snyder, Cheavens, & Michael, 1999), scholastic competence (Onwuegbuzie, 1999), problem-solving (McDermott et al, 2000), and dropout rates (Worrell & Hale, 2001)
- Career-development skills, particularly vocational identity development (Diemer & Bluestein, 2007) and future identity development (Super, 1980)

We contend school systems and their leaders have the moral and ethical responsibility to ensure the academic, social, and emotional development of students in their care. If educational institutions are serious about developing successful citizens, consumers, and contributors, then school leaders must create the conditions for students not only to achieve and overcome obstacles in their current situations, but also to thrive in the future. Therefore, this moral obligation to affect the hopes and dreams of children and adolescents rests on school leaders’ core values and ethics, which we now examine.
Values and Ethics for School Leaders

Because large numbers of children and adults are affected by school leaders’ decisions, administrators must possess strong values and model ethical behavior. The importance of this stance is echoed by Willower (1992): “[A] significant portion of the practice in educational administration requires rejecting some courses of action in favor of a preferred one, [so] values are generally acknowledged to be central to the field” (p. 369). Popular literature and research studies constantly emphasize the importance of “values,” “ethics,” “principles,” and “morals” when describing the world of educational leadership. The connection between these concepts is evident in Webster’s (1987) definition of ethics being “a set of moral principles or values; a theory or system of moral values” (p. 426). Although many American researchers view ethics, morals, and values as synonymous, Canadian scholars are more likely to view values as a generic term with ethics being a particular category or instance of values in action (Begley, 2003). Generally, values are what individuals, groups, or societies find desirable or worthwhile, and ultimately shape their behaviors (Begley, 2003). Any discussion of this topic poses a fundamental question: Why are values and ethics so critical for school leaders? In attempting to answer this question, some of the reasons and forces behind a values orientation for school leaders are examined below.

The school leadership literature...
When mediating conflict, leaders must reconcile personal, professional, organizational, and societal values. Leaders need to be aware of their core values to determine if they are compatible with the values of the organization and community. When leaders’ espoused values do not match their actions, they lose credibility. As a result of the increasing concerns about social disintegration and moral decline, Murphy (2002) believes school leaders need to be moral stewards capable of defining the purpose of schools, articulating their own personal beliefs and values, and being passionate about their role. This shift in leaders’ responsibilities means that the days of solely managing budgets, obtaining resources, and telling others in their organizations what to do have long passed.
The Moral Obligation of Creating Hope

Because our society expects schools to instill hope in our youth (Lopez, 2008; Rath & Conchie, 2009), school leaders play a vital role to ensure this occurs. This proposition is very compatible with other concepts and models of leadership that emphasize future aspirations and commitment (Shorey & Snyder, 2004):

- **Spiritual leadership** examines the fundamental needs of leaders and followers that influence their commitment and productivity (Fry, 2003).
- **Positive approach to leadership** (PAL) deals with optimism, emotional intelligence, and confidence (Luthans, Luthans, Hodgetts, & Luthans, 2001).

Consequently, the concepts of leadership and hope both deal with envisioning the future, developing relationships, and affecting outcomes. The explicit connection between leadership and hope is articulated by Burns (2003):

> A leader not only speaks to immediate wants but elevates people by vesting in them a sense of possibility, a belief that changes can be made and that they can make them. Opportunity beckons
In conceptualizing the moral and ethical obligations of school systems and leaders, Starratt’s (1991, 1994) typology of the ethic of care, justice, and critique has shaped the discourse on this topic for well over two decades. The ethic of care is concerned with relationships with others and how school leaders attend to humans’ individualism, dignity, and potential. The fundamental question school leaders ask themselves using the care lens is: How do relationships with others influence the quality of our lives? When addressing situations from the ethic of justice perspective, school leaders examine how policies and practices affect access, due process, and rights. The justice lens forces school leaders to consider: How do we govern ourselves to ensure equitable participation in societal and school affairs? Finally, the ethic of critique demands school leaders recognize who has the power and privilege in the decision-making process. The key question guiding the critique perspective is: Who benefits and is compromised by those in control and power? Other scholars have expanded these ethical dimensions to include the ethic of community (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005), which is similar to the notion of cosmopolitanism advocated by Appiah (2006).

Despite potential tensions between these three ethics, Starratt (1994) maintains they are compatible and
leaders take a proactive approach to educating children; however, little attention is devoted to the types of student outcomes an ethical school would promote. General student outcomes, such as becoming responsible society and community members, developing social skills, and enjoying a fully human life, are envisioned in an ethical school environment (Starratt, 1991, 1994). Hope theory, on the other hand, clearly acknowledges that student success is a direct result of goal development, self-efficacy, and persistence. To demonstrate how the tenets of hope theory can guide schools and their leaders, we now turn our attention to describing how educational leaders can infuse hope in the curriculum.

mutually reinforce one another:

[E]ach ethic needs the very strong convictions embedded in the other; the ethic of justice needs the profound commitment to the dignity of the individual person; the ethic of caring needs the larger attention to social order and fairness if it is to avoid an entirely idiosyncratic involvement in social policy; the ethic of critique requires an ethic of caring if it is to avoid the cynical and depressing ravings of the habitual malcontent; the ethic of justice requires the profound social analysis of the ethic of critique in order to move beyond the naive fine-tuning of social arrangements in a social system with inequities built into the very structures by which justice is supposed to be measured. (p. 55)

The ethic of care, justice, and critique frame the conditions for establishing an ethical school environment, rather than providing a recipe for school leaders’ actions. Starratt’s framework is extremely valuable in helping school
Embedding Hope in the Curriculum

Because school leaders’ daily decisions impact students’ life chances and future aspirations, they have the power to build students’ hope for future success. This sentiment is espoused by Lorraine Monroe, the principal of the Frederick Douglass Academy in Harlem, New York, who indicates educators need to “be allowed to work [students] into their bright future” (60 Minutes, 2009). Therefore, school leaders who are familiar with the elements of hope theory would be equipped to provide learning activities aimed at developing students’ capabilities to set goals, foster their motivation/willpower, and establish means/pathways for dealing with obstacles and failure. Specific strategies and learning experiences that focus on developing these three pillars of hope are examined below. In addition, examples are provided from the International School Leadership Development Network (ISLDN), a collaborative research project sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) and the British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society (BELMAS). The ISLDN is examining principals from around the world who are committed to promoting social justice by working in high-need schools where hopelessness often prevails (Bryant, Cheng, & Notman, 2014).
Setting Goals

To successfully establish and monitor goals, the fundamental properties of this process must be understood, which include: (1) determining an accomplishment to be achieved, (2) identifying measurable outcomes of the goal, (3) setting timelines and milestones for goal achievement, and (4) assessing personal and resource costs (Rouillard, 2003). Wilson and Dobson’s (2008) ten-step process clarifies the essential elements of effective goal setting. They advocate that goals must:

1. Be written
2. Be defined in measurable terms
3. Be visualized
4. Be achievable
5. Have realistic deadlines
6. Consist of manageable parts
7. Identify potential problems or obstacles
8. Identity solutions to these roadblocks
9. Be reviewed periodically for progress
10. Be rewarded when accomplished (Wilson & Dobson, 2008)

It is important to note that the seventh and eighth processes reinforce the importance of confronting obstacles to goal completion (third dimension of hope theory) and processes 3, 4, and 10 deal with motivation (second element of hope theory).

Examples of hope-generating techniques used in school counseling provide
educational leaders with practical goal-setting guidelines and strategies. Snyder, Feldman, Shorey, and Rand (2002) claim the first step in engaging youth about hope is to help them identify goals in various aspects of their lives (e.g., school, friendships, family). When students complete inventories to assess their values, interests, skills, and abilities, they identify and prioritize important goals. Typically, when goals are clearly stated and have distinct endpoints, students have a better chance of determining how well they are progressing towards goal achievement. Rouillard (2003) suggests a useful exercise is for students to identify opportunities, write goal statements, develop goals, and formulate and implement action plans. Other examples include student-led conferences and assessment “for” learning strategies (Stiggins, 2002).

The ISLDN studies point out how principals prioritized goal setting within their schools and with students (Bryant, Cheng, & Notman, 2014). Many of these school leaders demonstrated the importance of goal setting in working with staff to alter the school’s vision and culture. Examples include clarifying and communicating desired values and performance expectations (Gu & Johansson, 2012; Hipp & Baran, 2013), developing integrated intervention plans using comprehensive data collection and decision-making processes (Drysdale, Gurr, & Villalobos, 2012), and being organized and planning thoughtfully (Notman, 2012). More importantly, principals had an unwavering commitment to expand students’ goals, aspirations, and life chances. They strived to give students a voice by treating them as individuals, ignoring their past mistakes, and providing them with learning opportunities they had not previously experienced (Richardson & Sauers, 2014; Slater, Potter, Torres, & Briceno, 2014). Their compassion for students’ future success is evident in these comments:

I think about equality, opportunities, human rights, dignity for all, and trying to level the playing field. I think one cannot help but live here in India and not question, why me? Why do I have these opportunities in life? Why not this other person? (Indian principal). (Richardson & Sauers, 2014, p. 107)

Every person has a value, not only to themselves but to the world. You never know which student might be that one student that ends up making a difference. Taking the time to figure out those individual needs and taking the time to get to know how to fulfill those needs makes a tremendous difference. It is important that we maximize our resources. Our resources are our kids (American principal). (Norberg, Arlestig, & Angelle, 2014, p. 103)
The second pillar of hope, having the motivation or willpower to achieve goals, can be nurtured in a variety of ways. Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester (2006) identify promising strategies for fortifying the willpower of youth by developing their emotional capacities. First, positive emotion strategies use emotional responses (e.g., smiling, laughing) to trigger a wide range of thoughts and actions. The ability to self-manage emotions, referred to as emotional intelligence, can be developed with practice and feedback (Goleman 1995, 1998). Second, individuals who possess self-enhancement strategies can channel their positive emotions in order to adapt to new situations, cope with stressful events, and believe they will find a way to succeed. Third, attribution strategies focus on examining perceptions of whether the causes of events are within or outside an individual’s influence. Similar to internal (self) and external (other) locus of control, practicing these strategies allows youth to emotionally disassociate themselves from stressful situations, a quality of people with high optimism. Finally, meaning making, self-reflection, and self-awareness exercises intentionally develop hardiness strategies whereby youth can find purpose in their lives, realize they can influence their surroundings and outcomes, and learn from
positive and negative experiences. One of the best examples of how these types of strategies can build young adults’ emotional intelligence and the agency to succeed is the “live it forward” philosophy (Julian, 2010) or the ability to confront barriers in life by developing optimism, passion, excellence, integrity, energy, and leadership.

The ISLDN research suggests principals worked with their local communities to help motivate parents and students (Bryant, Cheng, & Notman, 2014). For instance, they capitalized on local needs and interests in designing the curriculum. A Costa Rican principal developed art, music, and computer video game programs to allow students to see the school as a place where their talents and interests were relevant and could be applied (Slater, Potter, Torres, & Briceno, 2014). An Australian principal recognized the students’ and community’s love of art by displaying murals and pictures around the school, designing math lessons to incorporate artistic drawings, and creating an art gallery to display students’ work (Wildy & Clarke, 2012). In addition, principals were highly visible in the community in order to better understand physical, economic, social, and cultural aspects of the environment. This first-hand knowledge allowed them to re-connect with communities that had lost confidence in the school, seek additional resources to address the community’s needs, and incorporate community values within the school environment and curriculum (Qian, 2013; Szeto, 2014). They viewed community values and culture as an asset, rather than a liability to the school. Advocacy for students, families, and communities is expressed in these principals’ words:

I educate the youngsters other schools do not want - my school protects other schools from the challenge these students present and the low base of their starting point... I cannot spend my money just on teachers, I have to spend it on social support, enforcement officers, personal tutors and the like... The social injustice is that this is not understood (England principal). (Slater, et al, 2014, p. 114)

As a principal, I feel the pain and the struggles that the families are going through. So, when the parent calls you and says “My car is broken in the driveway, I need to get my child to school,” I’ll put them in my car and I’m going to bring them to school. Some parents do not have money to [purchase] their children’s uniform, some do not have money for electricity, and their children cannot do homework (American principal). (Medina, Martinez, Murakami, Rodriguez, & Hernandez, 2014, p. 95)

The parents need to know that other children are equal to and as important as their own. Every student in our school should enjoy equal [and fair] opportunities to learn and be shown mutual respect. This is the notion of social justice we want to share with the parents (Hong Kong principal). (Szeto, 2014, p. 119)
Developing Pathways

The final leg of hope theory is possessing pathways, or the ability to surmount obstacles arising during goal pursuit. This may be the most challenging aspect of hope to instill in our youth since two-thirds of American students do not believe they are capable of overcoming the problems they encounter in their lives (Lopez, 2010). In addition to some of the previously-mentioned strategies for goal and motivational development, a variety of other approaches can be used. Notable examples include:

- **Solution-focused training** includes “solution talk,” not “problem talk” by teaching people to monitor negative self-talk by creating positive self-statements (e.g., “I can do this,” “I’m a capable person”) (Snyder et al., 2002) and keeping a personal journal to monitor the types of language used to describe personal actions, thoughts, and behaviors (Lopez, Rose, Robinson, Marques, & Pais Reibero, 2009).

- **Mental rehearsal** uses visual imagery, similar to watching yourself in a movie. This process is similar to systematic desensitization used by psychologists to help clients overcome their phobias or fears (Luthans & Jensen, 2002) and psycho-cybernetics, which assists individuals to visualize positive outcomes (Maltz, 2002).

- **Hope reminding techniques** explore solutions by working with trusted friends, colleagues, and mentors. School counselors assist students develop manageable sub-goals by providing resources (e.g., finding a peer tutor, completing extra assignments) and offering assistance as obstacles arise in pursuing these goals (Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008).
Finally, strong pathways are developed when students possess resiliency. One way to help students become more resilient is to promote conditions that build internal protective qualities that can be used to cope with setbacks and failure to accomplish goals. Resilient individuals possess certain internal mechanisms, such as having a sense of humor, possessing an internal locus of control, being independent, holding a positive view of the future, being flexible, and being self-motivated (Milstein & Henry, 2008). Another strategy for building resiliency is to lower students’ risk and stress, provide them with personal and organizational resources, and develop their cognitive abilities (Luthans, Vogelgesang, & Lester, 2006).

Principals working in high-need schools in the ISLDN studies demonstrated a keen interest in building the capacity of students, parents, and community members to withstand the continuous challenges and obstacles they faced (Bryant, Cheng, & Notman, 2014). They did this by gaining an understanding of the factors affecting their community contexts, especially the values and assets of parents and community organizations. They were well aware of the chronic problems facing families living in poverty, such as lack of food and health care services (Gurr, Drysdale, Clarke, & Wildy, 2014; Medina et al., 2014; Richardson & Sauers, 2014). Attempting to overcome these challenges, principals utilized school resources to purchase food for students; worked with local agencies to provide medical, social, and educational services; organized multicultural activities for parents and community members; and provided job training for disabled adults (Richardson & Sauers, 2014; Szeto, 2014; Wildy & Clarke, 2012). To gain greater parental involvement, some schools established formal agreements with parents, requiring them to monitor their children’s homework assignments, attend conferences with teachers, and provide transportation (Hipp & Baran, 2013).

Furthermore, community members gained a renewed sense of hope for and commitment to the school when leaders revitalized the school grounds (Sharvashidze & Bryant, 2014) and acknowledged how the school was overcoming previous failures and inefficiencies (Drysdale, Gurr, & Villalobos, 2012; Qian, 2013). Based on their own significant life experiences (e.g., religious upbringing, personally experiencing disadvantaged conditions), principals were staunch advocates for their students and communities. Their words capture the important life experiences that shaped their commitment to under-privileged youth and families:
Developing Pathways – cont’d

Growing up in an at-risk home, but hanging around with a friend who had money and a father who exposed me to other areas, other than I was exposed to when I was growing up, helped me to broaden my vocabulary and allowed me to learn new things. I can pay attention to those kids with the same background as I had and say to them that regardless of where you come from, you actually have the ability to be anything that you want (Swedish principal). (Norberg, Arlestig, & Angelle, 2014, p. 104)

As a Latina leader, I work for restorative justice because we had a difficult road growing up and in our education. We will never forget the struggles we had within our families (American principal). (Medina et al, 2014, p. 95)

My parents, my grandmother... they never had any patronizing comments about others. And I have also seen people suffer at close distance (Swedish principal). (Norberg, Arlestig, & Angelle, 2014, p. 103)

Table 2 summarizes the types of learning activities that can be used to foster each element of hope. As these examples of goal-setting, motivation, and pathway development demonstrate, the three pillars of hope are interdependent and mutually reinforce one another. For instance, when developing goals, potential roadblocks are identified and solutions are proposed (Wilson & Dobson, 2008). In addition, the motivational development strategies of improved self-enhancement, attribution, and hardiness (Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester, 2006) also focus on pathway development. Finally, the “live it forward” philosophy relies
on motivation (e.g., developing passion and energy) as a means for creating pathways to confront life’s obstacles and setbacks (Julian, 2010).

Table 2. Learning Activities Promoting Hope

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Elements of Hope Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals (direction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-setting processes</td>
<td>Hardiness strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest inventories</td>
<td>Positive emotion strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem based learning activities</td>
<td>Self-enhancement strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attribution strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership Preparation and Development

Given the social, health, and emotional problems many students experience, leadership preparation programs must help leaders to better understand how they can influence students’ hope for future success. While research is clarifying how school leaders can improve the academic performance of students (e.g., Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall, & Strauss, 2009; Robinson, 2010; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008), far less attention has been directed at how leaders can improve students’ social and emotional well-being, especially in developing their sense of hope. Preparation programs should help school leaders develop a sense of empathy for the situations children experience that create and maintain hopelessness. By taking to heart the admonition of Beck and Murphy (1994), the profession may well begin to redefine itself:

... preparing administrators for ethical practice requires more than the establishment of courses. It demands that faculty and students engage in ongoing reflection and conversation about their beliefs and commitments and the ways in which practices and policies support or contradict these... [S]elf-examination and dialogue can ensure that efforts to address ethics in preparation programs resist the tyranny of technique and, instead, promote moral thinking and acting in departments of educational administration and in our schools. (p. 95)

So, what would a leadership development curriculum look like...
that focuses on creating more hopeful students? Summarized below are promising activities aimed at developing aspiring and practicing school leaders’ capacities to ensure students are provided with learning experiences to build their hopefulness.

**Study Existing Programs for Developing Hope**

Although educational programs to foster children’s and adolescents’ hope exist, aspiring and practicing school leaders may have little or no knowledge of these initiatives. One tactic would be to introduce them to hope-generating curricula being used in educational, psychotherapeutic, and adolescent foster care settings (Shorey, Snyder, & Heim-Bekos, 2004; Snyder, Lopez, Shorey, Rand, & Feldman, 2003). Particular attention could be devoted to learning about the Making Hope Happen for Kids (MHHK), Making Hope Happen (MHH), and Making Hope Happen High School (MMH-HS) programs (Bouwkamp & Lopez, 2001; Edwards & Lopez, 2000; Pedrotti, Lopez, & Krieshok, 2000). Leaders also can learn about instruments measuring hope (e.g., Children’s Hope Scale), administer them in schools, and employ action research to determine the effects of programs intended to increase hopeful thinking and behavior (see next section for examples).

Furthermore, leaders can understand how hope is conceptualized and practiced in different cultures. Brendtro,
Brokenleg, and Van Brockern (1990) have examined ways of providing hope for troubled youth, especially Native Americans. Based on the spirit of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity, those who are successful in building hope with Native Americans recognize the importance of creating “reclaiming” environments by: (a) relating to the reluctant, (b) using brain-friendly learning strategies, (c) developing discipline for responsibility, and (d) having the courage to care.

Implement Promising Practices and Programs

Over the past 25 years a host of reforms have been proposed by national commissions and organizations concerned with educational leadership preparation (e.g., National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, National Policy Board for Educational Administration, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium), some of which have underscored the importance of values and ethics (Beck & Murphy, 1994). A recent effort is the creation of the National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation (NCAELP), whose purpose is “to improve the practice of educational leadership through high-quality preparation and professional development” (Young & Petersen, 2002, p. 131). Through the collaborative efforts of various constituencies committed to leadership preparation and development, this initiative intends to: (a) examine contextual issues affecting preparation, (b) describe innovative preparation and professional development programs, (c) define how programs can support leadership aimed at student learning, and (d) develop action plans for program improvement and evaluation (Jackson & Kelley, 2003; Young & Petersen, 2002).

In addition to reforms suggested by the NCAELP, many educational leadership scholars have made strong recommendations for preparing moral and ethical leaders whose awareness of and sensitivity to different value systems are raised. In building educators’ capacity to lead democratic institutions, Starratt (2003) urges instructors to blend readings, discussions, and research by engaging in rigorous discussions about what is known about school transformation, critical reflection on what students are learning about their experiences with democratic deliberation, and action research aimed at assessing their attempts to practice democratic leadership. Grogan and Andrews (2002) argue that leadership preparation “must attend to belief, attitude, and philosophy” (p. 249) and focus on “leadership that leads to an improvement in student performance” (p. 250) through the collaborative efforts of practitioners and university
faculty by:

- Admitting students who have demonstrated a commitment to social justice and are highly competent reflective practitioners
- Focusing knowledge and learning activities on problems of practice
- Allowing experts and novices to reflect together on their actions
- Structuring programs to assist students to understand that social justice is a moral obligation of schools and their leaders
- Immersing students in year-long internships in diverse settings where social justice is practiced

These recommendations and the actions and quotes from the principals participating in the ISLDN research embody the tenets of social justice, noting the importance of “fairness for all” and recognizing that social injustice means unequal life chances based on poverty and discrimination (Risku, 2012; Tian, 2012; Torres, Cerdas Montano, & Slater 2012). Therefore, one of the important ways prospective and practicing school leaders can focus on social injustice, especially the factors contributing to hopelessness, is to conduct action research studies. Typically, action research occurs when small groups of practitioners and researchers identify a problem, determine a plan of action, collect and analyze data, and use the results for future action (Caro-Bruce, 2000; Sagor, 2000). A premise of action research is its focus on social change (Kemmis, 1988), which means research team members need to have an

“explicit ideological commitment to addressing social and political problems of education through participatory research” (Hollingsworth, 1997, p. 89). Illustrations of the social and political issues affecting students that action researchers have explored include:

- How belongingness affects African-American students’ achievement
- Teaching strategies that improve reading development of struggling high school students
- How non-English language learners segregate themselves during academic and social activities (Caro-Bruce, 2000; Hollingsworth, 1997)

A promising approach would be to conduct action research studies on school programs explicitly designed to increase students’ sense of hope. For instance, at the elementary level, Making Hope Happen for Kids (MHHK) is a series of five sessions aimed at helping students apply hope constructs in their lives. In addition, junior high students have participated in the Making Hope Happen program (MHH), a five-week program using didactic teaching and group work. Finally, Making Hope Happen High School (MHH-HS) is a program for 9th grade students in urban schools, consisting of five 70-minute sessions with groups of 20 or more students. (For a detailed description of MHHK, MHH, and MHH-HS, see Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008.)
How might our schools and society be affected if school leaders and teachers were committed to creating hopeful students? In other words, what benefits might occur if communities, schools, leaders, and teachers paid more attention to helping students set goals, become motivated to reach these goals, and possess the means for overcoming adversity? One approach would be to determine how the curriculum is affecting 21st century learning outcomes, especially students’ adaptability, self-direction, accountability, and responsibility (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, n.d.). Another way is to measure the degree to which students are becoming more hopeful about their life chances. Administering the Children’s Hope Scale (CHS) not only can determine the degree of hope reported by elementary, middle, and high school students (Lopez, Snyder, & Pedrotti, 2003), but also can reveal the hopelessness expressed by various racial and ethnic groups, including Mexican-American (Edwards, Ong, & Lopez, 2007) and African-American youth (Valle, Huebner, & Suldo, 2006).

Using an instrument to assess hope does not reveal the underlying reasons for or consequences of hopelessness. Therefore, the real benefits of increasing our students’ sense of hope will be evident in their social and emotional actions. Tangible evidence that schools are successfully implementing the programs and,
activities described above would include:

- Reduced school dropout rates, especially for Latino, African-American, and low-income students
- Lower violence and gang activity
- Lower suicide rates
- Improved college retention and graduation rates, especially for first-generation students
- Improved mental and physical health, resulting in reduced health care costs
- Greater personal accountability and responsibility, resulting in less criminal activity and reduced police, social welfare, and court costs
- Improved civic engagement as demonstrated by increased community participation and voting in local and national elections

To achieve these outcomes, school leaders must have an unwavering belief in students’ learning capabilities, maximize instruction time, develop the problem-solving capacities of their teachers, and use empirical evidence to monitor results (Chenoweth & Theokas, 2013). Schools, however, are not the only institutions that can affect these outcomes. Recent studies have identified factors outside the school that impact student learning, such as prenatal care, diet and nutrition, environmental pollution, medical care, family relations and stress, and neighborhood norms (Berliner, 2009). Therefore, parents, social agencies, businesses, and religious organizations must contribute to creating
environments of hope. In concert with these individuals and agencies, school leaders need to confront negative stereotypes about race and class that can promote deficit thinking. They can lead the way by modeling an “asset-based” view of students and communities by following the guiding principles of the National Institute for Urban School Improvement (2004-2005), which underscore that educators should value the knowledge and experience of children and families, use community resources, and provide an education based on care and respect. School administrators also can work collaboratively with other organizations committed to strengthening high-poverty urban schools, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools (Brown University), School Development Project (Yale University), Communities in Schools (headquartered in Arlington, Virginia), Institute for Urban School Improvement (University of Connecticut), and National Institute for Urban School Improvement (Arizona State University).

When our youth, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds, begin displaying the anticipated positive social and academic outcomes listed earlier, we will know our schools, leaders, and communities are creating more hopeful students. We also will know Robert Kennedy’s words have come true:
Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

(as cited in Lopez, 2010, p. 41)
REFERENCES


Risku, M. (2012). *ISLDN project on social justice leadership: Finland case study findings*. Paper presented at the annual convention of the University Council for Educational Administration, Denver, CO.


Tian, M. (2012). *ISLDN project on social justice leadership: China case study findings*. Paper presented at the annual convention of the University Council for Educational Administration, Denver, CO.


