

School Leadership News

The Newsletter of AERA Division A: Administration, Organization, & Leadership

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The American Educational Research Association (AERA), a professional membership organization, strives to improve the educational process by encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education. AERA offers a comprehensive program of scholarly publications, training, fellowships, and meetings to advance educational research, to disseminate knowledge, and to improve the capacity of the profession to enhance the public good. Division A of AERA is devoted to furthering the aims of the organization through scholarly contribution in the areas of educational administration, organization, and leadership.

In this Issue:

Vice President's Column.....	1
Secretary's Report: Minutes of 2006 Business Meeting	2
Graduate Students Report: Fireside Chat with Senior Researchers.. ..	5
New Book by Division A Member.....	6
Listening to Leaders: Part Two of Interview with Irving Hammer.....	7
From the Editors.....	14
Division A Officers.....	15

Vice President's Column

Linda C. Tillman
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
ltillman@email.unc.edu

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

It is my pleasure to write my first column as interim Vice President for Division A completing the term of **Rodney Ogawa** (University of California-Santa Cruz) who resigned in April 2006. On behalf of the members of Division A, I thank Rodney for his outstanding leadership as our Vice President for the past two years. As outgoing VP, Rodney will deliver his vice presidential address at the 2007 AERA Annual Meeting in Chicago.

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss briefly my goals for Division A over the next four years. I have targeted three areas on which I will focus during my term as Vice President.

Increase Membership

Division A currently has 1,837 members. My goal is to increase membership to at least 2,000. This can be done in two ways: (1) When renewing your AERA membership, please choose Division A as your primary division (free membership); (2) encourage AERA members who conduct research and teach in the area of administration, organization, and leadership to join Division A. AERA distributes funds to its subgroups based on membership size, and additional funds can be used to conduct workshops, provide small scholarships for students, and pay honorariums for guest speakers at AERA special sessions. Increasing our membership will require a collective effort, and I urge all current members to encourage cross-divisional membership through your work in other Divisions and SIGs.

Increase Graduate Student Participation

Because graduate students are now full voting members of AERA, it imperative that graduate students become more active

in all aspects Division A. Thus, I hope to appoint at least one graduate student to each of the standing and ad-hoc committees. Graduate Student Representative **Leslie Hazle Bussey** (Saint Louis University) will assist me in identifying students who have an interest in becoming more actively involved in the work of Division A. Please feel free to suggest students for committee work by contacting Leslie directly (lhbussey@mindspring.com).

Collaborate with other Divisions and SIGs

While Division A currently works closely with Division L (Policy), collaboration with other Divisions and SIGs can enhance our presence on the AERA program. My vision is that Division A (a) strengthens links across disciplines, such as Curriculum and Instruction (Division B), Social Cultural Context of Education (Division G), and Teacher Education (Division K), in the areas of teaching, research, and scholarship; and (b) provides collective responses to issues that affect the education of *all* children and the AERA educational research community.

I believe that the accomplishment of these goals will strengthen Division A specifically, as well as contribute to the AERA generally. I look forward to working with you over the next four years. Please contact me with comments or suggestions (ltillman@email.unc.edu).

Secretary's Report

Gary M. Crow
University of Utah
gcrow@ed.utah.edu

Division A Vice President, **Rodney Ogawa** (University of California-Santa Cruz) called the 2006 Business Meeting to order at 6:15 pm on Wednesday, April 19, in the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco. Ogawa welcomed members and made several announcements:

Bylaws Change

A recommendation from the Division A Executive Committee was introduced to change the bylaws: rather than requiring the Program Chair to serve as a section chair during the previous year, the Division A Program Chair must serve as a section chair some time in the past. This recommendation will be presented in the Division Newsletter and voted on at the 2007 Division A business meeting.

Election Results

Michelle Young (University of Missouri) has been elected Division A Secretary, and **Linda Tillman** (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) has been elected Division A Vice President. Ogawa congratulated Young and Tillman.

VP Resignation

Due to family needs, Ogawa is stepping down a year early as Division A Vice President effective at the end of the 2006 business meeting. After seeking counsel from AERA headquarters, the decision was made that Linda Tillman will begin serving as Vice President at the end of this business meeting. This will be considered an interim year preceding her regular three-year term, which means that Tillman will serve four years as Vice President.

Reports from Division A Officers and Committees

Program Committee: 2006 Program Chair **Mary Driscoll** (New York University) thanked authors, reviewers, and especially the section chairs for their contributions to the success of the Division A program: Section 1: Leadership, **Nona Prestine** (The Pennsylvania State University); Section 2: School Organization and Effects, **Michael Dantley** (Miami University of Ohio); Section 3: School Improvement, **Geraldo Lopez** (Indiana University); Section 4: School Contexts and Communities, **Meredith Honig** (University of Maryland); Section 5: Leadership Development, **Michelle Young** (University of Missouri).

Driscoll reported that the program was robust with over 70 sessions representing an acceptance rate of between 40-50% of the 455 individual submissions and 136 session submissions. The submissions and presentations were well linked to the conference theme and reflected a diversity of junior and senior scholars. The submissions using qualitative methodologies were two-to-one more common than quantitative.

Securing a sufficient number of reviewers continues to be a problem. Only 370 individuals agreed to serve as reviewers, but more than 1600 reviews were necessary. Driscoll asked that everyone who submits a proposal also agree to review at least three proposals and informed members that AERA is keeping track of how faithful people are at actually presenting papers. The Division will need to decide what to do with this information. Ogawa thanked Driscoll for her great job as 2006 Program Chair and announced that **Michael Dantley** will serve as the 2007 Program Chair.

Nominating Committee: Members of the Nominating Committee were Chair **Paula Cordeiro** (University of San Diego), **James Scheurich** (Texas A & M University), and **Alan Shoho** (University of Texas-San Antonio). Election results were announced earlier in the meeting.

Membership/New Members Committee: Chair **Cindy Reed** (Auburn University) reported that Division A membership increased by 119 members (6.9%) for a total of 1837 members (as of April 2006). She reported that the New Member Session focused on how to get the most out of the conference and the committee's work to recruit graduate students as new members.

Mentoring Committee: Chair **Linda Tillman** (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) announced that the committee sponsored two sessions—*Mentoring Scholars of Color*, *Mentoring Junior Faculty for Grant Writing*—that were both well attended.

Graduate Student Committee: Chair **Alex Bowers** (Michigan State University) reported that the committee sponsored two sessions: (1) a Fireside Chat that featured a panel of senior scholars, and (2) a Graduate Student Reception.

Division Newsletter: Co-Editor **Tricia Browne-Ferrigno** (University of Kentucky) thanked Associate Editor **Jeffrey Brooks** (Florida State University) for creating a new layout. She reminded officers and committee chairs that the Summer 2006 will include all committee reports, which should be sent to the editorial team by June 10.

Clark Graduate Student Seminar: UCEA Executive Director **Michelle Young** (University of Missouri-Columbia) reported that 40 student participated in the 27th National Graduate Student

Research Seminar in Educational Administration and Policy. Copies of the book by **William Firestone** (Rutgers University) and **Carolyn Riehl** (University of North Carolina-Greensboro) about the Division A Ad Hoc Task Force on Developing a Research Agenda were presented to each student participant. The planning committee included Division A representative **Patrick Forsyth** (Oklahoma State University); Division L representative **James Cibulka** (University of Kentucky); and UCEA representative **Linda Tillman** (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill). Young thanked the planning committee and other faculty who contributed to the Seminar and reminded the members that the best students to nominate for the Clark Seminar are those who are at the proposal writing stage of their dissertation work.

Joint Task Force on Educational Leadership Preparation: TEA-SIG Chair **Terry Orr** (Bank Street College) reported on the collaborative efforts by Division A, UCEA, NCPEA, and the TEA SIG members who are beginning their second year as a task force that aims to stimulate more and better research on leader preparation. At the 2005 AERA conference, domain chairs reported on the work of their subcommittees and identified needed research in these areas. Orr invited Division A members to join task force and participate in the research being proposed. A preliminary report will be posted on the Web sites of the four sponsoring organizations.

ISLLC Revision Process: UCEA Executive Director **Michelle Young** (University of Missouri-Columbia) reported on the ISLLC *Standards for School Leaders* revision process. During the first stage, Division A members have opportunities to make comments on the current ISLLC *Standards*. **Nona Prestine** (The Pennsylvania State University) represents UCEA on the revision steering committee. Orr encouraged members to submit their comments to UCEA, which will transmit these to the steering committee.

The second stage of the revision process will involve an expert panel that will review research literature. UCEA provided a suggested list of criteria for selecting the expert panel, which was accepted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. This panel has been formed and includes several Division A and UCEA members. In the third stage of the revision process, the steering committee will take the information from the expert panel and draft revisions, which will be presented to the field for comments.

Journal of Research in Leadership Education: Editor **Edie Rusch** (University of Nevada-Las Vegas) announced the premier issue of *JRLE* and presented each attendee with a CD of the issue, which includes 15 invited essays that present international views of leadership education. Rusch encouraged members to share the CD with their faculty colleagues and graduate students.

Action Item

Ogawa presented an Executive Committee to establish an award for the outstanding book in educational administration, leadership, and organization. If accepted by Division A members, the award would be presented to a volume that makes a significant contribution to the field. Edited volumes are not eligible for the award, and the award will be presented only when warranted. The Division Awards Committee in conjunction with the Division Executive Committee will establish the criteria for the award. A vote was taken and the recommendation passed unanimously.

Presentation of Division A Awards

Davis Award: *EAQ* Editor **Diana Pounder** (University of Utah) explained the Davis Award and thanked the selection committee: **Jackie Blount** (Iowa State University), **Erin Camburn** (University of Wisconsin-Madison), **Marilyn Tallerico** (Syracuse University), and **Sally Zepeda** (University of Georgia). Pounder announced that the 2006 Davis Award goes to **Mengli Song** (American Institutes for Research) and **Cecil G. Miskel** (University of Michigan) for their article published in the February 2005, “Who Are the Influentials? A Cross-State Social Network Analysis of the Reading Policy Domain.”

Division A Dissertation Award: Chair **Catherine Lugg** (Rutgers University) thanked her committee and announced the winner of the 2006 Division A Dissertation Award: **Martin Scanlan** (University of Wisconsin-Madison), *Epistemologies of Inclusivity: The Possibilities and Limits of Including Traditionally Marginalized Students in Select Catholic Elementary Schools* (**Colleen A. Capper**, Advisor). Honorable mentions included **John LaNear** (University of Wisconsin-Madison), *Academic Freedom in Public Higher Education: For the Faculty or Institution* (**Julie Mead**, Advisor); and **Carolyn L. Mears** (University of Denver), *Experiences of Columbine Parents: Finding a Way to Tomorrow* (**Elinor Katz** and **Cynthia McRae**, Advisors).

Ogawa again thanked 2006 Program Chair **Mary Driscoll** and outgoing Secretary **Gary Crow** for their leadership and contributions to Division. Before adjourning the meeting, Ogawa invited members to the Division A-Division L-Corwin Press reception.

Graduate Student Report

Alex J. Bowers
Michigan State University
bowers@msu.edu

Leslie Hazle Bussey
Saint Louis University
busseylh@slu.edu

The Division A Fireside Chat in San Francisco brought together **Rodney Ogawa** (University of California-Santa Cruz), **Michael Dantley** (Miami University of Ohio), **Linda Skrla** (Texas A & M University), and **Jennifer O’Day** (American Institutes of Research) to discuss the challenges of researching the “leadership effect” in schools. Although the room was a little chilly, the conversation quickly warmed up as panelists debated the very meaning of leadership, modeling the first challenge of any leadership research endeavor: defining terms. Does leadership reside within individual leaders? Does it reside in relationships between individuals? Is it manifest in many points within an organization, wherever leadership is exerted? Or is it contextually bound, so that it can only be defined by individuals within a particular organization?

The conversation then turned to methodological challenges and pitfalls to measuring leadership. Drawing on their research experiences, panelists described a range of research approaches from

measuring indirect effects of leadership to backing into leadership effects by studying leadership succession. With every measurement approach, panelists offered a lively critique of limitations.

Out of this provocative exchange came important lessons for future researchers of educational leadership, particularly the importance of being careful, deliberate, and thoughtful about definitions. Establishing what is meant by leadership and bringing a critical lens to traditional notions of “school success” and “student achievement” are important in moving forward knowledge about leadership.

New investigations of leadership must ask the right questions. In particular, researchers have an ethical obligation to conduct research that is meaningful to and usable by practitioners—school leaders, teachers, and parents. Finally, as one panelist put it, new researchers must simply “pick your poison” (methodological approach). Rather than excessively wringing our hands over methodological limitations, experienced scholars at the Division A Fireside Chat encouraged new researchers to roll up our sleeves, investigate, and “see if it works.”

New Book by Division A Member

***Curriculum Leadership Development: A Guide for Aspiring School Leaders* Carol A. Mullen**

This text provides an up-to-date, useful, and relevant text for practitioners interested in becoming curriculum leaders. Part I provides an effective summary of curriculum history and curriculum thinkers; part II offers a series of case studies illustrating curriculum leadership, all authored by experienced teachers and beginning school leaders; and part III function as a teaching guide, complete with ready-to-use tools for university leadership courses. Part I provides an effective summary of curriculum history and curriculum thinkers; part II offers a series of case studies illustrating curriculum leadership, all authored by experienced teachers and beginning school leaders; and part III function as a teaching guide, complete with ready-to-use tools for university leadership courses.

“Dr. Mullen offers an excellent representation of and comprehensive approach to a difficult topic. It is obviously based on thorough research that is extensive and current. I can write this statement with some accuracy since I teach a curriculum development course to master’s students. The author has devised unique approaches that will help students understand the complexity of curriculum leadership. Specifically, her use of case studies in Part II should be a tremendous help to teachers who usually talk about curriculum as an abstract item forced on them by a central office or the state board of education. Part III, which is devoted to the use of the text in university classrooms, is new and refreshing. Part I offers an effective summary of curriculum history and much more.”

—David L. Gray, Ed.D., Educational Leadership & Foundations, University of South Alabama

“*Curriculum Leadership Development* provides an up-to-date, useful, and relevant text for those interested in becoming curriculum leaders. The content includes the latest information on accountability legislation, something that is often missing from most texts on this subject. I appreciate the critical perspective that Dr. Mullen has taken (see Part I in particular). Too many educators are not asking the right questions about curriculum and the influences that affect its development. The text should prove useful as a teaching tool—education students will find it thought-provoking yet accessible. Case studies typically lead to lively discussions.”

—Allen H. Seed, Ph.D., Instruction & Curriculum Leadership, University of Memphis

Listening to Leaders: Social Justice in Action: Leading Change in the School Improvement Zone of Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Jeff Brooks
Florida State University
Jbrooks@mail.coe.fsu.edu

*Executive Vice President of The Millennium Group and Visiting Professor at the Center for Urban Education and Innovation at Florida International University, **Dr. Irving Hamer, Jr.**, is one of the nation's foremost leaders and education activists, an experienced educator and skilled strategist with a successful record of leadership, innovation, and service in the public, private, and academic sectors. During his 30-plus years as an educator, Dr. Hamer served as Deputy Superintendent for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Department of Education, member of the New York City Board of Education, school administrator, teacher, and professor. His entire career has been dedicated to improving education for the most vulnerable students in the nation's school systems. In his most recent assignment, he designed, developed, and managed the implementation of the School Improvement Zone for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools in Florida. After one year of re-deployed resources and intensive interventions, nearly 8,600 students in 39 low performing schools improved at least one performance level as a result of their developmental gains on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test.*

***Dr. Anthony H. Normore** and **Dr. Mary V. Alfred**, professors in Department of Educational Leadership at Florida International University, recently interviewed Dr. Hamer about his experiences in this landmark urban reform effort. [Editor's note: This is the second of two parts of this interview; part one was published in the Spring 2006 of School Leadership News.]*

AN: Has there been any shift in perspective of the Zone schools throughout the year?

IH: I think there's been a shift in perspective about the Zone from being a kind of punishment, a bad place to be, to being a totally viable, interesting reform agenda. So anyone who wants to be in this business, who wants to do really serious work, can see a set of opportunities. That was really punctuated when the FCAT scores were released. Anyone who reads the data carefully will recognize that what happened in the Zone schools exceeded what happened in the rest of the district. And, in lots of ways, it exceeded what's happening in a lot of the state. Naturally, our folks continue to need a lot of additional work, confidence building, skill building.

The other thing that happened is that in previous years there has been an out-migration of the best talent in the Zone schools. People came for three years,

fulfilled their three-year commitment, and left. And when we started the Zone, one of my biggest nightmares was sort of discovering that there were 5-6 hundred people who wanted to transfer out in October. This was horrifying.

Nearly a year later, it's so interesting to see the number of people who want to transfer in are three or four times the number of people want to transfer out.

AN: With the number of people who want to transfer into the Zone schools, do you see similarities with the enrolment of students?

IH: It's too early to tell. I've been trying to get the census data because we had a different enrollment too. Some people said they didn't want the extra day, didn't want the extended day or year. We saw a dip in the number of children. We originally started with 45,000 and

has stabilized at 44,000. It's going to be interesting to see what happens at those schools that made lots of progress, and who will almost certainly be "B" schools next year, and whether their enrollments will go up. The enrollments have been dipping because of the decimation and resettlement of certain areas.

There's a bunch of parents up here, on what they call, the upper-east side in Miami. They organized themselves and came into my office. These parents are young parents, have young children who are all elementary-aged. All sorts of new housing units are being built and the housing stock has gotten expensive. They came to this office and said, "We need a public school...and we think Morningside...has made remarkable progress this year. We don't want to take the school over but we are paying \$17,000 a year to go to private school. We think, our neighborhood should have a school, and we think Morningside is the school. We've been watching it, and we've been watching it, and this is the first year that we've seen major movement.' It's so interesting but it's certainly too soon to say yet.

AN: Many charter school kids are now enrolling into the Zone schools and students who left Zone schools last year in fear of what might happen this past year, are now returning to those schools for September. Is this a common phenomenon within the Zone schools?

IH: We've been hearing all kinds of anecdotal stuff like that. I don't have the data yet. The year just shut down, so the final attendance run hasn't been done. And, it's too bad, because the way the state does it, the final runs for the year happen before the end of the year. So, their formulas are set up on enrollment

figures that happen before the end of the year.

Now, we're going to get hurt, because we know we had this out-migration. We are seeing some re-populating of zone schools, but we're not going to receive the funding benefit for next. So, we've already lost some position. Now the question is: How are we going to get those back? The FTE allocation is predicated on this attendance data. This attendance data is made available around May. Now, we have these children returning. It's going to be a really interesting challenge to manage this.

MA: How has the Zone experience changed or enhanced your thinking about Urban Education Reform and Change?

IH: I guess I have been influenced by a bunch of the literature and the research that says school change is a three to five year process. Everyone around you has embraced that idea. I had some of that as well. I've never accepted it because I knew if I accepted that proposition, I could never get support from the corporate and the political arenas.

Nobody can stand the argument that my child is in a low-performing school, and that I have to wait three years before I see improvement. It's just not a sellable idea to anyone - not to a parent, not to a funding agency, not to a state agency. It's not really viable. My anxiety as I've taken this on is whether or not we could actually show consequences in what we can do.

Now, I'm totally convinced that that's just bogus and you can get positive consequences in a short period of time. In every other sector of the society

where outcomes and productivity are a function of measurement, even when measures are relatively small, they are embraced with a lot of celebration. So one percent gain in the reduction of the amount of cancer proliferation, HIV, or if I can get two percent gain on the bottom line in some corporate situation, that's bonus. Everybody could get a really big bonus for a two percent gain.

So, I entered this initiative thinking that the standard in education has been terrible. A one percent gain doesn't get you so much. Now, part of that is that some of these schools are so far down. So, I entered with the perspective that if we could get some gain, we will celebrate. Nobody can ever say to me again, this is going to take five years of change before positive results are around. This was not a pilot initiative. This was sweeping - 39 schools, 44,000 children.

That's a huge change in world-view. This cuts across what research indicates. It's going to be very hard for folks to hear my side. You are researchers, so you know folks who will be looking for all the soft spots. They're going to say, "It's just one year. Does it hold? Is it sustainable?" I mean, there's a lot of argument against the one-year performance. I thought we could move 3,200 children in one year. Nearly 8600 students improved at least one performance level on the FCAT in year one.

AN: The results of this School Improvement Zone initiative will undoubtedly have state and national implications in both the policy and practice arenas. As outside evaluators, how would you like us to share your message?

IH: I hope you will do that through your institution. We picked your institution to be the guise. You need to create forums, involve the students and faculty. You need to create little colloquia about this with the higher-education folks from other institutions. You need to create forums within the district too. Folks need to hear this story from the point of view of an external evaluator. Folks are not going to want to hear this.

For example, Chicago's been engaged in a school reform agenda since 1995, but got nowhere close to this kind of momentum. When you see the data on what we did with 3rd grade retainees, you're going to weep. That was the primary target of my work. Retaining 3rd graders does not work. We moved numerous third graders out of the retinee position this and on to the next grade. They moved achievement levels this year, right? So, you know, all of this is huge, and I think there is some implication.

Elected officials and foundations have not wanted to hear that argument. They want it now. Another changing world-view is the importance of urgency in organizing change. Organizing change initiative - you don't get a whole year to find this out. It can't be justified, given what we've done.

AN: Does the School Improvement Zone initiative have any impact on non-Zone schools?

IH: Well, there's a lot of emulation. The professional development component is a negotiated component for Zone teachers, but not for the rest of the district. So, folks are trying to figure out how to get a structured coherent professional development program for

the rest of the district. The scaling-up is a real challenge. I could deconstruct some of this. I know what it costs to negotiate this contract with the union, requiring 56 hours of professional development every year for teachers in the Zone. Can I do that for the whole district? Can I do that for all 22,000 employees in the district? That's the level of conversation that makes this really complicated. At a minimum, you have to be able to say from this experience that there are at least 40 schools in Chicago that could turn around. The scalability question comes later, but right now, let's turn the 40 schools that are most fragile, the lowest performing, and let's do this by the board. So that's a changed sense of urgency. It's a big beginning.

MA: Having completed year one in the Zone, what do you consider your major high. Which one stands out?

IH: This is a big conversation. I haven't gotten the highs yet. There are a couple of reasons for that. First, I don't like these high-stakes tests. I think the high-stakes tests are wrong. I came in being suspect of the high-stakes test in the first place. Nevertheless, we managed the imperative of the externally imposed high-stakes exam and not by installing a whole bunch of test prep. I didn't buy one FCAT program. I'm simply not interested in that. If you have internet based program that's not test prep, I like to consider throwing that out and using the same infrastructure to help us teach writing.

We really don't know how to get students to really do serious work. Teachers don't have the supports to evaluate and use their judgment. Furthermore, standardized high-stakes

tests have nearly eradicated teachers' judgments. We tried to organize exhibitions this year of student work. My big high didn't receive nearly the play that the test scores did. FCAT scores are getting all the play. Student work is getting no play and that's a heart-break.

In retrospect, in another year I would place those student exhibitions squarely in the middle of the year – probably once or twice - so the student work gets as much attention and focus as the FCAT exams. This year has demonstrated that these test scores are manageable, and in order to give us the opportunity to get to the real work (i.e., teacher-student relationship, student work, teacher judgment). It's nearly impossible to get to those conversations unless you manage these high-stakes testing.

AN: Let's talk about the Student Expositions during the last week of school. . As you know, many of us were out in the Zone schools during that week. What kind of feedback did you get concerning the "Expo"??

IH: The feedback is mixed. The teachers and the students were just exhilarated. They enjoyed doing this work. But, they're totally downtrodden and disappointed at the lack of community response to coming in the buildings. Parents didn't show up in large numbers. Community organizations didn't showed up in large numbers. No business organizations showed up in large numbers. The work was amazing to me. I mean, it was a high. But it didn't get the play.

We didn't get one shred of media attention. We spent a lot of money advertising it and putting it on the radio.

But it didn't catch. It's too late in the year for folks. We should do one in the fall, and one in the spring. Or, we should do it around Christmas Break, just before or just after. People have some interesting ideas on where to position. But, the school people, the principals, the teachers just loved the energy the children put in. Children loved doing as was evident in the schools. The children were just so excited about what they did for the expo.

AN: Was there more participants at the elementary level than at the middle and high schools?

IH: The middle and high schools were the disasters. There are a couple of high schools that were exemplary. The middle schools were a little bit better than high schools, and the elementary schools were really gorgeous. They were gorgeous, they were gorgeous. The cynicism at the high school for this kind of exhibition is typical.

High school teachers are typically more textbook-driven than hands-on. I'm generalizing of course. But, there were a couple that did a nice job. I was generally pleased about the enthusiasm of the children. It was an interesting use of time and resource. It happened during the extended week of the school year too. I suggested that the five days be repositioned for another year. This year we had no option. When we negotiated the contract on November 7, there was no front end. I had to put all the five days at the back end. So, that's how it played out this year. Next year, it won't have to be like that.

AN: Can you talk a little about the extended school year. Were there any challenges?

IH: Well, once school got let out for the rest of the district on June 1st, a common refrain was "Why we coming back?" That was particularly challenging for high school students. The elementary children had decent attendance. The disappointment at the middle and high school, was their basic attendance took a big dip after the regular closing of schools. I was a little worried that the FTE would be hurt as a consequence of the dipping in attendance in the school. That was a big criticism. Parents liked the idea that we constructed this exhibition as a part of the extended year and the idea of the student-lead parent-teacher conferences. Every conference had to have a child at the center. So that was a big change.

AN: Let's talk about the teachers in the School Improvement Zone. What's the general feeling among them? Are you receiving feedback from them?

IH: We have been getting a lot of feedback from the teachers. I don't quite know how to weigh it because it's all first round implementation. But, the two big overwhelming complaints are 'exhaustion' and 'staff development time'. Folks are tired. Then, there is a bunch of subtexts that go along with that.

One subtext is that the extended day is less successful because the children become tired, the teachers are tired, and some children don't come for the extended day. Much of that depends on what's been organized and what's available. That's not the case in elementary. The children in elementary just flock. The parents are thrilled. The kids are thrilled. Teachers are still tired. At middle school level, I'm getting a little bit of resistance and less creativity.

When I look and see why the children, or why the teachers are not as thrilled, it's generally because the administrators have been less creative in figuring out how to use the additional time.

At the high school level, there's a conflict with work and after-school activities, whether it is ROTC, football, basketball, track, theater, dance clubs and stuff like that. Those things are conflicting with the extended day. I've had a debriefing with teachers and a debriefing with students. I've had a bunch of conversations with people about what kind of modifications might be made to the extended day.

I think programming and scheduling, particularly in middle and second, and in high school could be better managed. My favorite language to describe this year is 'managed chaos'. In fact, if I were giving a talk right now, I would say, 'School achievement via managed chaos'. It's been so much for teachers and administrators to take in. Again, that runs against conventional wisdom. Conventional wisdom says, 'Give them one thing, 'cuz that's all they can handle'. But we took a completely different posture. 'One thing' is not going to get this done. It's not about 'one thing'. We tried to implement many elements at the same time, and it was chaotic.

Secondly, I wanted 100 hours of required professional development for teachers and negotiated it down to 56. And that seemed really doable, but it's very hard even though we're paying for it. We built a menu, of courses that we wanted them to take. But then, figuring out the time when they could actually take the 56 hours was another issue. I've gotten pretty resounding complaints.

Some people wanted to transfer out because of the professional development requirement being too much, particularly if you have a self-perception that you don't need it. It affected time with family, arranging baby-sitting, interfered with university courses, personal work-out time, and the list goes on. But, it too needs a full cycle. For the amount of time after implementation, we had a 28-hour requirement in a relatively short period of time. So we had to do all kinds of adjustments to help people accommodate that requirement.

But, my thinking now is, that if we were to extend it out over the course of a whole year and loaded up a bunch of professional development before school actually started, more than a half, almost two-thirds of the PD requirement could be taken care of in the summer time, and we could use the academic year for coaching, guidance, and refreshers.

MA: If you are sitting with someone who wants to embark on an initiative similar to this, what advice would you have for them?

IH: I guess there are three elements to this work that really represent what happened here. One is to do conceptual work. Someone has to sit down, conceive what it is. To me, what are you trying to get done here? What's the core piece? How do you conceive of this And if you can get the conception, then you need the design. In our case in Miami, at the Zone schools, the centerpiece was our literacy initiative. Because what we figured out from the data was that there is just a humongous literacy problem. So, that was the core, but that was not all of it. You can collaborate with consultants. Somewhere, folks can inform us what's happening, but

someone has just got to sit down and figure out what the conception is, what the design is, and then, subject it to all kinds of scrutiny and critique and modification. The heart-breaker is always in the initiative. Unless you have the managerial skill-set to get successful implementation, there's no point.

Around the country, what I see in a lot of places is people do have some concept. They even have the design, but they're just dotting the line, and the implementation just dies. There are other folks who just do programmatic work, with no design. There's no fidelity. There's no sustainability. Folks just don't do deep-rooted implementation strategies. Someone gets sick, someone goes away, and the implementation is over. One great big test of the Zone with my departure is the extent to which, how much of it will stay over.

AN: What will it take to sustain the initiative?

IH: I think there's a whole bunch of maturation that has to happen with this initiative. It's going to take a whole bunch of people that are in on it this year, to stick to it. There are 39 schools. We will need some segment of those principals to stay devoted to what it is that we started doing.

AN: What would you recommend to state policymakers at this point?

IH: It is a big policy issue. If I were a state agent, the fragile schools would be exempted from the children who are being moved from a chronically low-performing school into another low

performing school due to closures and so forth. I agree that we should either close or reconstitute schools that are "triple F" (three consecutive years). Children need to be placed somewhere else. They need to go to a really strong school, that's been "A" performing the last four years.

Moving them to a "C" or "D" school makes no sense because it compromises the integrity of those schools. Now, the other huge policy question is how will schools return to their original configuration after the three years are completed in the Zone. Will they lose the professional development? Are they no longer on an extended day, extended year? There's a huge body of work to figure out. We do not want our schools such as the one that moved from a "D" to an "A" (and several others that have made many performance gains) to revert back to their former alignment. We don't want them to come out prematurely. All zone schools will stay for the whole three years so time is allocated for growth and sustainability. The idea of locking them in for three years is to get them very stable, very strong, so when they go back, without the same set of supports, that the likelihood of them slipping backwards is at least mitigated a little bit.

Another issue will indeed be the eventual process of transitioning back to their regional configurations. It's a huge barrier. It's very complicated. We'll see what happens.

MA: Indeed. We'd like to thank you for sharing your thoughts with us today. Your time is most appreciated.

From the Editors

Rodney Muth, Co-Editor, University of Colorado at Denver, rodney.muth@cudenver.edu

Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, Co-Editor, University of Kentucky, tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu

The editors encourage members to use the Division A Newsletter as a forum to debate articles published in it, present new or timely perspectives about topics about educational administration, or make announcements of interest to members. Manuscripts will be edited to conform to the Newsletter layout and editorial style.

Call for Support

Our goal continues to be expanding the content and distribution of the Division A Newsletter. To make our Newsletter a "must read" for our entire membership, we seek

- commentaries that focus on topical issues
- perspectives that provide readers with insights about Division A concerns
- critiques and recommendations to improve the newsletter content and format
- information and announcements to include in future issues
- volunteers to serve as reporters, historians, and so forth

Submissions or suggestions for improving the newsletter should be sent to **Linda Tillman** (tillman@email.unc.edu) or the editorial team. Specific suggestions to improve the newsletter layout should be sent to **Tricia Browne-Ferrigno** (tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu). Anyone wishing to assume responsibility for one or more of the content areas should contact **Rod Muth** (rodney.muth@cudenver.edu). Copy and other contributions should be sent to all four editors. Please help us keep each other well informed about Division A and our fields of interest.

Submission Guidelines and Deadlines

In addition to the sections included in this issue, *School Leadership News* periodically considers publication of brief articles on issues that are trenchant and of interest to Division A members. Restrictions for publication will apply (preferably no more than 1,000 words or 5 to 7 pages of double-spaced text) in order to meet newsletter page limitations (2-3 pages). The editors reserve the right to edit for style and length. Suggestions for articles will be accepted from Division A officers, committee chairs and members, and members of Division A and related Divisions or SIGs.

Deadline for submitting material to be included in the Fall 2006 newsletter is **September 20, 2006**. Please send your copy to any newsletter editor: rodney.muth@cudenver.edu or tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu.

Submission and Publication Schedule

	Submissions to Editors	Published Online	Announced Via E-mail
Fall 2006	October 20	November 15	November 15
Winter 2007	December 1	January 15	January 15
Spring 2007	January 20	February 15	February 15
Summer 2007	June 20	July 15	July 15

We welcome you to browse both the AERA Division A Web Site and the Archives of the Division A Newsletter, both available at www.aera.net.

Division A Officers

Vice President

Rodney T. Ogawa
University of California, Santa Cruz
rtogawa@ucsc.edu

Immediate Past Vice President

Patrick B. Forsyth
Oklahoma State University
forsythp@okstate.edu

2006 Program Chair

Mary Erina Driscoll
New York University
mary.driscoll@nyu.edu

Section 1: Leadership

Nona Prestine
Penn State University
prestine@psu.edu

Section 2: School Organization and Effects

Michael Dantley
Miami University of Ohio
dantleme@muohio.edu

Section 3: School Improvement

Gerardo Lopez
Indiana University
lopezg@indiana.edu

Section 4: School Contexts and Communities

Meredith Honig
University of Maryland
mihonig@umd.edu

Section 5: Leadership Development

Michelle Young
University of Missouri
youngmd@missouri.edu

Secretary (2003-2005)

Gary Crow
University of Utah
gcrow@ed.utah.edu

Affirmative Action Committee

James Earl Davis, Chair
Temple University
james.earl.davis@temple.edu

Membership Committee/New Members Committee

Cynthia Reed, Chair
Auburn University
reedcyn@auburn.edu

Newsletter Editorial Team

Rodney Muth, Co-Editor
University of Colorado at Denver
rodney.muth@cudenver.edu

Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, Co-Editor
University of Kentucky
tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu

Jeffrey S. Brooks, Associate Editor
Florida State University
jbrooks@coe.fsu.edu

James Crawford, Copy Editor
University of Nevada Las Vegas
jamesc@unlv.nevada.edu

Nominating Committee

Paula Cordeiro, Chair
University of San Diego
cordeiro@SanDiego.edu

James Scheurich
Texas A & M University
jscheurich@tamu.edu

Alan Shoho
University of Texas--San Antonio
ashoho@utsa.edu

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Mentoring Program Committee

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ltillman@email.unc.edu

Ad Hoc Division A International Committee

Selahattin Turan, Chair
Osmangazi University, Turkey
sturan@ogu.edu.tr

Graduate Student Seminar Planning Committee

Patrick B. Forsyth, Chair
Oklahoma State University
forsythp@okstate.edu

Graduate Student Representatives

Alex J. Bowers
Michigan State University
bowers@msu.edu

Leslie Hazle Bussey
Saint Louis University
busseylh@slu.edu