Celebrating KSU/School District Academies

Partnering to Develop
Teacher Leadership Capacity

1999–2018

Department of Educational Leadership
Nearly 20 years ago, a small group of university and school district leaders began a difficult conversation about the future of leadership in Kansas schools. After much discussion and planning, a new approach to preparing school leaders was born, seamlessly merging theory and practice and based on true university/school district partnerships. Since that brave beginning, to date some 419 teachers participated across a total of 25 partnership academies with plans for more in the future. On September 27, 2018, participants, contributors, and those benefitting from the leadership capacity produced from these partnerships came together to celebrate.

*Isn’t it wonderful when the spark of an idea develops, becomes a plan, and the plan actually works better than ever anticipated.*

— Dan Yunk, 2018
Celebrating KSU/School District Academies
Approaching 20 Years of Partnering to Develop Teacher Leadership Capacity

September 27, 2018 Agenda

Welcome and Introduction to the Celebration
  Dr. Debbie Mercer, Dean, Kansas State College of Education
  Dr. Randy Watson, Kansas Commissioner of Education

Trailblazers
  Kansas State University Faculty and Geary County, Manhattan-Ogden, Salina Leaders
  First Class – Professional Administrative Leadership Academy (PALA)
    Dr. David Thompson, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership

Charting the Course with Academy Partners
  Dr. Mary Devin, Department of Educational Leadership
    • Topeka Public Schools (2012, 2014, 2016, 2018)
    • Wamego (2016, 2018)
  Dr. Rick Doll, Department of Educational Leadership
    • Marysville (2003)
    • Rock Creek (2003, 2018)
    • Shawnee Mission (2017)
  Dr. Robert Hachiya, Department of Educational Leadership
  Dr. Donna Augustine-Shaw, Department of Educational Leadership
    • Dodge City (2007, 2011, 2016)
    • Garden City (2005, 2016)
  Dr. Alex Red Corn, Department of Educational Leadership
    • Osage Nation (2016)

Introduction of Special Guest – Dr. Mary Devin
  Dr. Linda Lambert
    Professor Emeritus, California State University, East Bay, and President, Lambert Leadership Development
    “The Importance of Teacher Leadership/Response to Partnership Academy Model”

Special Presentation – Dean Mercer, Dr. Thompson, Dr. Devin

You Can't Do It Alone – Valuing Partnerships – Dean Debbie Mercer
  Why Choose to Partner on Multiple Teacher Leadership Academies
    – Dr. Beth Hudson, Interim Superintendent, Geary County
  Academy as a Career Launching Pad
    – Greg Hoyt, Principal, Manhattan High School (Member PALA and academy mentor 2015, 2018)

Going Bravely Where Others Haven't Gone: Sharing Beyond our Boundaries
    – Dr. Ann Clapper, Professor, North Dakota State University
    – Dr. David Flowers, North Dakota Education Innovation Liaison

Adjourn – Dean Debbie Mercer
HONORED GUEST:

Dr. Linda Lambert

Dr. Linda Lambert, professor emeritus, California State University, East Bay is a former teacher, principal, director of professional development and state envoy to Egypt. She is also a best-selling author of eight books on leadership, an international consultant and novelist of historical fiction. Her work on leadership capacity has been translated into Chinese, Malay, Spanish, Hebrew, Turkish and Lithuanian.

Redesigning Schools for High Leadership Capacity

The concept of leadership capacity situates design in the interaction between skillfulness and breadth of participation, a matrix for emerging leadership. Redesign has multiple meanings, dependent upon the context in which it is pursued. To achieve high leadership capacity, the most significant factor in school success, it is essential for a school to consider: 1) shared values and goals; 2) the patterns of relationships; 3) team structures and roles; 4) inquiry processes; and 5) dialogue and decision-making. The dynamic of these features – together with a democratic concept of leadership – creates a design in which deep learning for students and adults thrive.

This interactive workshop will engage participants in an exploratory journey into redesigning for leadership capacity.


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**Rubric of Emerging Teacher Leadership**

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**Adult Development**

**Dialogue**

**Collaboration**

**Organizational Change**
Celebrating KSU/School District Academies

September 27, 2018 – K-State Alumni Center

College of Education
DEAN DEBBIE MERCER
opens the Celebration.

DR. RANDY WATSON,
Kansas Commissioner of Education,
greets those present.

DR. DAVID THOMPSON,
Chair of the Department of
Educational Leadership,
recognizes the Trailblazers and
members of the first partnership
academy whose work almost
20 years ago grew into a
recognized leadership preparation
model focused on partnerships
to merge theory and practice.
A partnership plaque will be displayed in the Department of Educational Leadership, recognizing school district partners.

DR. MARY DEVIN, university academy leader, expresses appreciation to all academy school district partners and introduces partnership awards as they are presented by Dean Mercer and Dr. Thompson to Geary County USD #475 (Trailblazer District), Topeka Public Schools, and Wamego School District.

Dr. Beth Hudson, Geary County USD #475

Mrs. Billie Zabokrtsky-Wallace, Topeka Public Schools
DR. RICK DOLL, university academy leader, recognizes academy partnerships in Marysville, Rock Creek, and Shawnee Mission.

DR. ROBERT HACHIYA, university academy leader, introduces the partnership award to Trailblazer district Manhattan-Ogden.

Mrs. Lacee Sell, Manhattan-Ogden Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

Mr. Scott Harshbarger, Principal, Westmoreland Elementary

Dr. Michael Schumacher, Shawnee Mission Director of Secondary Resources and District Liaison for the Masters Academy for Teacher Leadership

DR. ROBERT HACHIYA, university academy leader, introduces the partnership award to Trailblazer district Manhattan-Ogden.
DR. DONNA AUGUSTINE-SHAW, university academy leader, recognizes partner districts Salina (Trailblazer District), Dodge City, and Garden City and expresses appreciation to other academy supporters in current and previous academies.

Mrs. Shanna Rector, Executive Director of Administrative and Student Support Services and District Liaison for Salina Teacher Leadership Academy #4

Dr. Fred Dierksen, Superintendent, Dodge City Public Schools

Dr. Alex Red Corn recognizes the newest partnership format and partner, the Osage Nation, which graduated its first masters class Summer 2018
Special Guest/Honoree
DR. LINDA LAMBERT is presented with a KSU Trailblazer for Teacher Leadership Award for the contributions her career of research and publications has made to KSU partnership academies and shares comments with the audience.
Dean Mercer introduces district leaders sharing first hand benefits from academy partnerships with KSU.

Dr. Beth Hudson, Interim Superintendent, Geary County USD 475

Mr. Greg Hoyt, Principal, Manhattan High School and member of the first masters academy class

Dean Mercer introduces the far-reaching impact of the KSU/School District Partnerships

Dr. Ann Clapper, North Dakota State University and Dr. David Flowers, North Dakota Education Innovation Liaison, share a North Dakota Governor’s award with KSU for supporting efforts to adopt the KSU partnership model in their state.
Leadership must offer a perspective designed to invite equitable participation, engage participation, engage collaboration, and create sustainable organizations. (Lambert, Gardner, & Zimmerman, 2016) This is a bold reminder that in order to foster this level of collaboration and shared leadership, we have to be operating under the belief that the expert isn’t merely IN the room, the expert IS the room.

It is my mission as a teacher leader to empower others in our organization to not only lead, but to continue to commit to professional growth in teaching and learning practices that ignite outcomes leading to student success, the ultimate end goal.

The journey into education leadership continues to be interesting, exciting, and very eye-opening. Linda Lambert best describes what I am striving to be, as I continue to grow as a teacher leader. (Lambert 2003, p. 32–33) “…Those for whom the dream has been kept alive are reflective, inquisitive, focused on improving their craft, and action-oriented; they accept responsibility for student learning and have a strong sense of self.”
“Leadership capacity… depends on understanding the connection between participation and skillfulness…Leadership is about contributing to, learning from, and influencing the learning of others.” (Lambert 2002, p.vii)

I have worked to build capacity within my building and district. According to Lambert (2002), as leaders we are also learners, we co-learn and co-teach.

I was meant to grow into the role of a leader throughout the academy and that is what I feel I have been doing. I am grateful this (Lambert, 2003) was one of the first readings we had in the academy and that Lambert has been referenced frequently throughout.

When starting the Leadership Academy, I knew I would learn more about how to be a leader but during this process, I have ended up not only learning about how to be an effective leader, but also about myself…over and over, I realized the fact that I am capable of so much more than I ever saw before…I am forever changed and forever moved to strive to be more each and every day.”
I love what Lambert stated (Lambert 2003, p.3), "as principals and teachers, we must attend not only to our students’ learning but also to our own and to that of the adults around us."

I can not only do my best to teach, but to lead others to become the best teachers they can be. It all goes back to building capacity. As I think about that, I think back on… Lambert, 2003, p. 20), “It is what people learn and do together, rather than what any particular leader does alone, that creates the fabric of the school.” Leading and learning go together and a leader who focuses on this will know that you can not do one without the other.

To try and put into words what I have learned from this (academy) experience during our first academy year is not humanly possible. It goes beyond the words and discussions we have had. It goes into the authenticity of the interactions we have been introduced to that would never happen in a normal masters program. This program helps you grow in ways that you didn’t realize existed at the beginning of our journey.

What I find most amazing is that as I see myself as a leader, those around me start to see me as a leader.

My new view of leadership is one of growth and is summed up best by Linda Lambert: “leadership an be understood as reciprocal, purposeful learning in a community.”
After completing this program, I feel more fulfilled with my career and myself as an educator than I ever could have imagined.

I have learned a great deal about building leadership capacity within a building or a team. As a leader, I will not be able to accomplish any goal on my own. I will need to be diligent in building the capacity in others if the building to accomplish our goals.

Lambert suggests we move to considering parents as leaders… When we view parents as customers it is easier to protect them from the tough problems that we face and only provide them with the good information. When creating partnerships, it means that we as educators need not hide the information that might not be completely positive.

Over the course of the last year, I have been blessed with many opportunities that have encouraged me to participate, to inquire, provide input and reflect on my practice and the practices within the education system. I am fully alive. Reflecting on the ISLLC Standards has me asking, “What else can I be doing?”

I enjoy the activities that we have done such as discussions, presentations or short assignments that we post around the room to share. Having different ways to demonstrate our knowledge makes the class period go by quickly and connect everything that we have learned.
I use to like to get "the job done" by myself because I was typically faster than most, but that didn't build capacity anywhere. I was a more negative person and I didn't fully collaborate. Now, I pay more attention to others and their needs so that they don't burn out. I've stopped referring to myself as "data-driven" but instead "student-driven," and I have limited my work week from 60+ hours a week to closer to 50. I have a foundation for leadership backed by research to go along with my experiences. I am inspired to lead and learn and am less restricted to a title of "just a..."

I think the highlight of our study together so far has been the connections... The leadership concepts we have been learning: shared vision, collective efficacy, communication, building capacity, the change process, and so forth have been recurring themes in our varying texts. I love seeing how the different authors approach the concept of leadership and effective schools and how it all connects together in the end...in one short semester my schema surrounding leadership in education has definitely evolved.

What academy practices best facilitate your learning?
• The opportunity to collaborate with varying group members
• Discussing the readings, going deeper with probing questions, connecting back to prior learning
• Synthesizing learning through writing, and other modes
• Timely feedback on assignments
• Studying graphics/visual representations/models

Our academy study so far has given me new insight and challenged me in many areas. I have gained a different perspective on what it takes to be a leader and how the decision making process works. One of the highlights has been learning how to facilitate change and helping people through the change process.
I appreciate that this is not a “sit and get” program. We are interacting and discussing constantly. The required activities have also broadened my perspective based on previous experiences. I continue to be reminded that “you don’t know what you don’t know until you know.” I hope continuing to grow as a teacher leader and being more open and aware of others perspectives will allow me to model, encourage, challenge and inspire those around me.

An academy practice that best facilitates my learning is a new perspective on leadership. We have also had the opportunity to meet and hear from different leaders in our district and participate in CPSI. These practices have helped me with new strategies to use in the classroom and new ideas on how to be a better teacher leader.

One practice that facilitates my learning in the academy is tying our learning directly to our schools. I enjoy learning different topics in class and being able to apply it in my own school shortly after class. There are many strategies that I have read about in class and discussed with my mentor shortly afterwards. When we were reading Lambert, I discussed the different archetypes with my mentor and shared topics that we found interesting from the book. We also discussed how to use the various strategies that I learned or how she has used them in our own school.
The highlights of our study together thus far have been when we have worked in teams and created presentations for one another. This personally helps me because I am able to have enriching conversations with others in the program. Another highlight of this program is the situational scenarios we did last class period. These real-world connections are how I learn best. Additionally (the academy experience) has given me the push to take on leadership roles and use these roles as a practice ground to improve my leadership capacity.

One highlight from our first semester together is that leadership has many definitions. It was refreshing to learn that leadership can look different for every person. I think what has been even more reassuring is that one leader can’t do it all. Leadership is about building a team that you encourage and challenge as they use the skills to help all stakeholders.

One of the big academy practices that best facilitates my learning is that a everything is intertwined and related to each other. The spiraling of the information keeps everything relevant. Also, it is really nice to collaborate with other people on half of the assignments.
Another practice that facilitates my learning is being able to work and discuss with others. This opportunity allows me to hear different point of views and think about things that maybe I didn’t think of.

The information that we have learned has allowed me to change my perspective from a teacher to a teacher leader …The thing that I am most excited about is my desire to participate in our school’s redesign. Using the knowledge that I have gained so far has increased my confidence that I will have valuable input when planning the redesign.

This academy positively forced me to look for leadership opportunities.

The (academy) program was an amazing opportunity to learn and grow in my vocation. Education is a form of art as is leadership. I will continue to strive to learn and apply much of what I learned from experienced and knowledgeable professors and instructors.

I AM FOREVER CHANGED! Projects and assignments that had real-life connections – scenario-based most meaningful and helpful to apply learning.

I am a better teacher, a better teacher leader, a better mother, a better person because of this class.
I’ve appreciated the updated research, current, technology and ongoing issues brought to class – this adds sparkle and flavor that traditional classes do not contain.

I loved coming to class and being excited again about education! Lots of hope! I felt the road trips to CPSI cemented our community and provided valuable PD! It also provided an opportunity to be a student on campus. The shadowing of district leaders and principals was extremely beneficial. I love being surrounded by teachers across the district AND having a set of teachers from a completely different district. I feel like I’ve learned SO much more than I ever could have imagined in these last 10 months.

My most powerful experience I got from (academy) was my transformation of my mindset of what leadership is and who is a leader. I entered with the mindset that school administrators were the leaders and my role/duties were my job. The 2 yrs. have changed my view and I believe that I demonstrate many leadership behaviors – informally and formally.

I like that the academy participants are active in the learning process with you as the facilitator. I love the immediate applicability our learning has. As a whole, I’ve loved the experience!!
Thank you for this incredible opportunity. Thank you for bringing the academy experience to Dodge City…to us…to me. Thank you for the role you'll play in the change we experience out here, in the success our students achieve because you and K-State were willing to ensure that needy students (us!) received our fair share (Standard 5!) of the education we desperately needed!

Definitely moved me out of my comfort zone which led to my growth; feeling “disturbed” was very uncomfortable for me, but it allowed me to grow and do some balcony thinking.

CPSI sessions – having the opportunities to attend was great – I gained a lot of knowledge and info from the various presenters this year and last… Attending the sessions was very valuable.

On the job training and projects – we were able to make them relevant to building needs, put me in the role of teacher leader and allowed me to model for others, increased and influenced leadership capacity in others.

The Academy has caused me to reflect deeper. My reflections now include my personal growth and what is needed of continued growth; incorporating reflective thought in my assignment, under protest, has been extremely helpful… The reflecting was something I will take with me into the future – asking my own students to reflect has impacted how I teach.
I was truly unsure about how much I would actually learn and be able to apply later in my career. However, it seemed that every week I learned new things that I could apply the very next week at school. I am leaving a much more confident person.

I can’t think of another education experience that has been more meaningful, thought provoking, or useful to me.

I’ve seen my students grow in the same way I have. At the beginning of the year they will often ask, “What do I need to include to get an A?” Near the end, I do not hear those questions because they have grown as I have.

My team was changed by my behavior and they are all reflecting. We are there to work on student needs, assessment, increase performance and use our time better.

I found my voice.

I feel like a better educator, more knowledgeable. I understand more about the profession than I did in all my years before.
The biggest change is the way I interact with team members – the level of collaboration and focus on shared responsibility for all students (Lambert).

I learned the importance of teacher leadership. I don't wait for my principal to ask, I notice building needs we need to address and I go to the principal to see what I can do to help.

I've learned the importance of including staff in decisions, being a leader and learner, being on the balcony and dance floor, teacher and learner.

A highlight of learning for me: My idea of working collaboratively has changed. Working collaboratively – learning it is more than going along with what others say.

I was a conflict avoider … now I have conversations instead of conflicts.

I was always in leadership positions but I didn't have any formal training leadership. This has helped me understand materials and know skills.

I liked the spiral (curriculum design) and that we kept revisiting topics.
During the (academy) I realized that one way to put my knowledge into action was by pursuing a building license, after which I became an Assistant Principal. But that was not all (the academy) had to offer me, directly and indirectly. My thinking was reshaped, my mind was more open and more clear about education, and my goals grew with my learning. With the encouragement of my professors, (the academy experience) put me on the path that I am on today, finishing my doctoral program at Kansas State University. Getting a doctorate had been an elusive goal of mine for quite a while and the (academy) definitely gave me the confidence, mindset, courage, and tools to pursue it.

(Current update: The academy graduate has now completed the doctorate degree and is a building principal in the district.)

My academy experience was 15 years ago. I have been a principal in three elementary schools in one district and one in another district. I am currently beginning a leadership position at the district level. If it wasn’t for the academy I don’t know if I would have had the opportunities afforded to me today. The academy exposed me to leading educators like Michael Fullan, Thomas Sergiovanni, Linda Lambert and Richard DuFour, just to name a few. To this day I still continue to read and reflect and put into action the theory and research of these educators along with others. The academy taught me how to take a collection of ideas and understandings illustrating different leadership styles and personally reflect and assess on how a school can be transformed by one’s leadership.

In my first year of school administration, I do not think I have been exposed to anything that we didn’t discuss at one time or another in (the academy). I can’t imagine where I would be with our school improvement efforts and staff development planning had it not been for the knowledge we received in (the academy).

My participation in (the academy) was a genuine life-changing experience. I look at the entire educational field differently than I did before, because for two years I got to view education from the lenses of some of the best administrators in education today. I was so fortunate.

The reflecting was something I will take with me into the future – asking my own students to reflect has impacted how I teach – I liked how my teachers encouraged self-direction and independent thinking.
This academy has helped me to grow professionally in ways that I couldn’t have imagined when this whole process got started! I have literally felt myself changing, evolving, thinking differently about my practice and planning differently for my future.

I loved hearing from different speakers doing a variety of activities in class, and having a variety of assignments. I found it very helpful applying our learning within my school and talking things through with my mentor. I think starting with the 21 responsibilities and ISLLC 6 was extremely helpful.

Incorporating all the “classes” we were taking into a blended instructional model made what I was learning much more meaningful.

I think differently. I think before I speak. I see the big picture. I want to be part of the solution.

Thanks to the PELA facilitators/teachers as well as my fellow students for providing me with a strong background with which to launch my administrative career. It was one of the best educational experiences I’ve had, and I’m glad I got to share it with such great people.
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### District Partners by Academy Date/Enrollment (May 2018)

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<td></td>
<td>August 2018</td>
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<td><strong>Rock Creek</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Osage Nation</strong></td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>4*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>August 2018</td>
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<td><strong>District Partner 8</strong></td>
<td>January 2005</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 2016</td>
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<td><strong>District Partner 9</strong></td>
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<td>August 2018</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>District Partner 10</strong></td>
<td>September 2016</td>
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<td><strong>District Partner 11</strong></td>
<td>Summer 2017</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Academy Participants to Date = 419**

**Total Academy Groups to Date = 25**

*Joint partnership with another district
A 6 PALA
First Masters Degree
KSU/District partnership Academy
(3 district partners)
March 2000 – February 2002
District 383 Manhattan-Ogden
Greg Hoyt
Jim Armendariz
Melisa Hancock
Traci McCarthy
Bev Fulton
Kathy Hund
Carlita Pederson
Cleon Morton
District 305 Salina
Barbara Coleman
Juanita Erickson
Linn Exline
Jean Hrabe
Christal Lantz
Jim Smith
Roanne Stein
District 475 Geary County
Carol Arjona
Phyllis Boller
Katina Brenn
Samrie Devin
Terry Heina
Vickie Kline
Tim Newton
Vern Steffens

ACADEMY 7
Rock Creek/Marysville
Spring 2002 – Spring 2004
Rock Creek Teachers
Janet Duncan
Steve LaRocque
Carol Thierolf
Terrance Schmitz
Debbie Hodges
Brandey Nelson
Ronald Donoho
Brian Harvey
Brenda Page
John Harshbarger
Brian Weillert
Shirley Vandahl
Sara Miller
Tatia Shelton
Sherry Helus
Marysville Teachers
Colin Bargen
Brian Cook
Lona Dittmar
Gay Frazee
Sheri Harmer
Kim Houtz
Mary Kessinger-Wassom
Kristopher Thexton
Joe Wilmes

ACADEMY 8
Geary County Teacher Leadership Academy (TLA)
September 2003 – May 2005
Connie Aumen
Jennifer Blair
Jenny Black
Melisa Burgess
Sandy Gray
Felix Grimmett
Catherine Hedges
Lynn Inkman
Jean Johnson
Johnnie Johnson
Julie Johnson
Lynn McClusky
Ginger Powers
Doug Sallee
Scott Snyder
Deb Stevens
Jenny Strahley
Megan Thomann
Dana Williamson

ACADEMY 9
Garden City/Manhattan-Ogden
Spring 2005 – Fall 2006
Garden City
Albert Carillo
Vicky Gile
Tracy Lukens
Ricco Perez
Midge Simmons
Roger Syng
Carol Wethington
Manhattan-Ogden
Brook Blanck
Vicki Ekart
Joel Gittle
Gail Hughes
Angie Messer
Chris Payne
Kathy Stitt
Andrea Tiede
Jim Webber
Susan Wendland
ACADEMY 10
Geary County Professional Education Leadership Academy (PELA 1)
January 2006 – December 2007
Patricia Dozier
Jeanie Glessner
Susan Guinn
Ron James
Jennifer Lashley-Hill
Shannon Molt
Kay Murphy
Heather Oentrich
Alicia Pecenka
Susan Pender
Courtney Pfizenmaier
Sarajane Schubert
Thomas Wesoloski
Susan White
Randall Zimmerman

ACADEMY 11
Dodge City Educational Leadership Academy (DCELA)
Spring 2007 – Fall 2008
Arturo Amaro
Nancy Becker
Justin Briggs
Justin Burke
Cynthia Cammack
Chris Doussa
Heather Gleason
Dennis Hamilton
Kathy Hayes
Karen Herrman
Karalee Huck
Amy Loder
Martha Mendoza
Maria Ortiz-Smith
Lisa Pelton
Michael Pelton
Lisa Rumbaugh
Erin Schaffer
Shawn Steiner
Shirley Voran
Anne Woods

ACADEMY 12
Geary County Professional Education Leadership Academy (PELA 2)
September 2008 – May 2010
Deb Barnes
Judy Beemer
Stephanie Bogenhagen
Erin Bohanan
Daniel Dinkel
Kim Dressman
Amy Leturgez
Anneliese Kowalik
Jessica Peterson
Cathy Phillips
Barbara Savant
Ursula Popovich
Pamela Ricard
Amy Roether
Alicia Scofield
Jennifer Stuck
Brian Hastings
Jayne Jones
Lisa Juel
Taviana Lowery
Jamie Maledon
Teri McPhaul
Lisa Pierce
Maria Ramirez
Tyson Schroeder
Kevin Self
Pamela Setzkorn
Heather Steiner
Diana Temblador
Erica Teran
Joe Vinton
Melyssa White
Laura Woolfolk

ACADEMY 13
Salina Teacher Leadership Academy (STLA 1)
Fall 2008 – Summer 2010
Deanna Cullin
Jen Marshall
Patricia Huerta
Melinda Eitel
Angela Durzweiler
Jennifer Davis
Katrina Paradis
Anna Bonilla

ACADEMY 14
Geary County (PELA 3)
September 2010 – June 2012
Erin Bodlak
Regina Freyberger
Sally Jerabek
Brandi Lundgren
Mary Mignano
Nicholas Morgan
Sheryl Pierce
Mary Schmutz
Bryan Scruggs
Paige Sessa
Rolinda Smith
Jodi Testa
Andrea York
Jared Larson
Mandy White

ACADEMY 15
Dodge City (DCELA 2)
January 2011 – December 2012
Bianca Alvarez
Kathy Barnett
Michelle Bogner
Kathy Doussa
Dustin Ferguson
### Academy Rosters by Academy Number, 2000–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academy Number</th>
<th>Academy Name</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
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<td>ACADEMY 19</td>
<td>Topeka Public Schools (TLA 2)</td>
<td>Spring 2014 – Fall 2015</td>
<td>Carolyn Altmann, Brenna Dooley, Keith Glotzbach, Amy Gress, Brittany Mathis, Michelle Morrison, Sandra Ortiz, Stacy Schreiner, Melissa Seacat, Paula Swartzman-Waters</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACADEMY 20</td>
<td>Geary County (PELA 5)</td>
<td>Fall 2015 – Summer 2017</td>
<td>Tyrek Artley, Kristin Barker, Sara Brown, Elizabeth Dierking, Mathew Duckworth, Jennifer Garrison, Katie Hagenmaier, Crystal Holzer, Meredith Lenfestey, Erin Lopez, Stephanie McMamar, Sarah Maxwell, Nichole Monroe, Sandra Orellana, Kristin Reeder, Dylan Richardson, Stephanie Sowell, Emily Warren</td>
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<td>ACADEMY 21</td>
<td>Salina (STLA 3)</td>
<td>Fall 2015 – Summer 2017</td>
<td>Amanda Araujo, Shelby Babcock, Kylene Comeau, Sabrina Fink, Amanda Freeman, Patricia McVay, Krista DeVoe, Brittany Kisker, Deirdre Hoff, Kate Lindsay, Ava Owen, Nick Owen, Anna Voth, Agnes Zadina, Brandon Cheeks, Miriam Gogadi, Eryn Koons, James Lynam, Angela Lumley, Elane Stein</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACADEMY 23</td>
<td>Dodge City/Garden City</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>Amy Alfrey, John Alfrey, Jordan Burr, Katie Corwin, Katlen Downey, Kathy Gemaellich</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACADEMY 24</td>
<td>Topeka Public Schools/Wamego (Topeka-Wamego)</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>Ryan Arnold, Mary Susan Cooper, Jason Drinkard, Ann Gorusch, Cynthia Hopp, Stacey Kramer, Matthew Lancaster, Kathryn Locke, Loretta Logan, Michelle Lucht, Emily Rhoades, Michelle Shambow, Yvonne Spalding, Alauna Thornton, Amy Wagner, Lauren Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACADEMY 25</td>
<td>Osage Nation Educational Leadership Academy (ONELA 1)</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>Boyna Bear, Dana Daylight, Joni Hall, Lauren Long, Amanda McKinley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cameron Pratt
Coley Streater
Manon Taylor
Mary Wildcat

**ACADEMY 26**
Shawnee Mission Masters Academy for Teacher Leadership (SMMATC1)
*Summer 2017 – Spring 2019*
Erin Aldrich
Maggie Carter
Jenny Collier
Jonathan Ferrell
Gloria Hastings
Jennifer Juday
Molly Hoener
Jessica McGovern
Joanna Roche
Amie Schick
Kendra Shamburg
Carolina Salguaro
Jeremy Wayne

**ACADEMY 27**
Geary County (PELA 6.0)
*Spring 2018 – Fall 2019*
Abby Allen
Nicole Bergeron
Elizabeth Chou
Lauren Davis
Sally Dreher
Sara Elliott
Marlies Gipson
Elaine Gonzalez
Stephanie Kabriel
Haley Kaus
Cody Hill
Mallory Larsen
Rachel McGehee
Jessica Roche
Kylie Seymour
Kimbre Smice
Matt Westerhaus
Chelsea Willems

**ACADEMY 28**
Salina (STLA 4)
*Fall 2018 – Summer 2020*
Ayla Beaugh
Anna Dechant
Jennifer Ebel
Jayson Emig
Jill Graff
Melanie Hammond
Kerry Ingram
Stephanie Johannes
Ashley Long
Tiffany Lowe
Charlie Lynn
Melissa Mall
Anna Morrisette
Jessica Painter
Madison Resley
Kimberlee Stauffer
Cody Stockwell
T.J. Turner

**ACADEMY 29**
Topeka Public Schools (TLA 4)
*Fall 2018 – Summer 2020*
Cherryl Delacruz
Kaylee Erickson
Kathleen Foster
Elaine Henry
Sara Hoyt
Alicia Julian
Kelly Legleiter
Alyx Nash
Lindsey Noonan
Thomas Ross
Brandy Ruby
Kara Schuetz
Erin Shirron
Travis True
Jennifer Walker

**ACADEMY 30**
Manhattan-Ogden/ Wamego (TLA 4)
*Fall 2018 – Summer 2020*
Manhattan Teachers
Carrie Andrade
Natalie Archuleta
Renee Cassel
Jordan Hevel
Melissa Huff
Sherree Lambert
Crystal Oglesby
Shane Sieben
Kayla Simon
Dane Sylvester
Madeline Tenbrink
Emily Yeager
Wamego Teachers
Crystal Brunner
Rock Creek Teachers
Megan Umscheid
Transforming the Preparation of Leaders into a True Partnership Model

Mary Devin

Dr. Mary Devin is Professor of Educational Leadership at Kansas State University and has been directly involved with master’s partnerships since the program began. She served as a school superintendent partner in the first two years of the model and as the university partner liaison for the last fourteen years.

The Context

In the early 2000s, as public education moved into the accountability era spawned by passage of No Child Left Behind in 2001, landmark research produced convincing evidence of the importance of leadership (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, K., 2004). These researchers found that among school-related factors, the influence of leadership on student success is second only to classroom instruction, and further, that leadership makes the most difference in schools with the greatest need. Even more attention-getting was that virtually no documented instances were found of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. While other factors and positions were necessary in the process, leadership was found to be the catalyst.

Teachers were also recognizing the importance of leadership. In 2006, 36% of respondents to the Kansas Teachers Working Conditions Survey selected leadership as the single factor most influencing the decision about staying in their school and 97% ranked support from school leadership as important or extremely important in influencing personal decisions about future plans (Miller, Devin, and Shoop, 2007). Prior to these affirming statements from research, practitioners in school districts were experiencing the need for quality leadership firsthand. Expectations of school leader position holders were changing, and district leaders responsible for hiring principals were finding that current preparation programs were not producing candidates ready to be successful in this new leadership setting.

A Story of Change Begins

Insightful chief district leaders in three neighboring Midwest school districts united with courageous faculty members from a nearby university to address leadership concerns in their area. They were superintendents from each of the three districts with their most immediate leadership teammates and the dean and senior faculty members from the department of educational administration at the nearby
In significant departure from typical practice, members were selected or the date of a first class session was set. They quickly found they shared a vision of a more effective merger between theory and practice and that they were ready to commit their respective organizations to planning and implementing a new program consistent with that shared vision. Everyone agreed a new approach to curriculum was needed, but it must be one anchored firmly in research and designed to reflect a growing body of knowledge behind best practice in schools of today and the future.

Finding a Research Base for a New Approach to Preparing Leaders

This was just as the century changed and professional organizations and coalitions had gathered to produce guidelines related to successful leadership. After much deliberation over current professional activities and conversations, these planners chose two research-based components to form the structural framework for their new preparation program:

- ISLLC Standards (1996). The Council of Chief State School Officials (CSSO) and the National Policy Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA) jointly sponsored a coalition of professional organizations and representatives from prominent leadership preparation programs known as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). In 1996 ISLLC published six research-based leadership standards endorsed by the profession. These six standards were the best match for the shared vision the district and university partners had identified.

Their choice proved to be a fortuitous one. State departments of education across the country soon adopted those same ISLLC standards as the basis for leadership licensure. The ISLLC standards continue to undergird the partnership model today, even as they were revised by ISLLC in 2008 and the Performance Indicators were added to bring clarity to the research base that same year.

- NPBEA Leadership Competencies (1993). At the same time the academy initiators were planning their work, researchers were seeking answers to questions about what leadership looked like on the job – what leaders did to accomplish the work of these standards. The partnership planners adopted the current body of knowledge from work in this area by the NPBEA to support the six standards in the new academy curriculum. This was another wise choice; the NPBEA research led to what is now known as the 21 Leadership Responsibilities (Waters et al., 2003).

Planners for this new approach to preparing leaders made many significant decisions before any class members were selected or the date of a first class session was set. In significant departure from typical practice, members of the new two-year closed cohort were selected by the home district through an open application process based on consideration of demonstrated leadership potential. Each of the three districts filled eight student spaces; the only university requirement of participants was successful admission to graduate school.

Face-to-face class session dates (compatible with district schedules rather than the university calendar) were scheduled with mentor interactions on field experiences supplementing them. Tuition was the responsibility of individual academy students, but books and published materials were provided for all by the districts. The university contributed towards costs in the form of compensation for district staff assisting with the academy. The details of district selection of students, material provision, and university cost sharing would vary over the coming years, but all continue to be distinguishing characteristics of the partnership model.

The New Program of Study

Continuing the partnership framework, decisions related to curriculum and instructional delivery were made collaboratively. An integrated, spiraling curriculum replaced discrete course delivery, but was designed to remain continuously open to new research and to changes in context of practice. District leaders brought forward specific challenges facing their districts and university faculty aligned that context with research-based leadership standards (ISLLC and the 21 Responsibilities) and university preparation program standards (national and state accreditation). Delivery of instruction was also a partnership activity. As best practice and research-based knowledge was presented by university staff, district leaders reinforced the concepts by exposing students to real-world applications in the district, much like mastery in a magnet school within the context of the interest theme. Academy students practiced new skills through meaningful involvement in current school improvement work in their buildings, keeping strong connections between theory and practice foremost in implementation of the new model.

Systems thinking, networking, and greater understanding of the district operations were goals for student growth in the first academy. To facilitate learning and to bridge the distance between theory and current district practice and priorities, each student was assigned a mentor (a building leader in the district). Interactions among aspiring leaders and practitioners produced even more opportunities than expected as college of education staff, district leaders, mentors, and more experienced teachers learned from each other while working with the academy participants. A culture of learning for all emerged, exceeding all partners’ expectations. These student goals and learning for all outcomes remain visibly important elements in current academies.

Impact of the Academy

After months of planning, the first university/district partner master’s academy got underway in February 2000. Details of how this was accomplished are available in firsthand accounts of the story (Devin, 2004, Miller et al., 2007). Two years later,
twenty students across the three participating districts had acquired building leader licensure and were viable candidates for leadership openings in their respective districts as a result of completing the first master's degree district-university partnership academy. Planners rated the academy experience an overwhelming success. The superintendent of the district where all eight selected participants completed the academy summarized expected and unexpected benefits in a communication to her board of education shortly after the academy was completed:

**Benefits of the Academy Partnership Leadership Preparation Model**

- The district has a cadre of leaders with broader skills and commitment to call on for future school improvement efforts.
- District leaders participating on the planning committee grew professionally as they interacted with university staff and were stimulated by the responses of the academy participants.
- Many of the special projects completed by the participants were directly connected to school improvement efforts at the building level and produced positive results for students.
- Academy participants shared their experiences often with other district teachers and administrators, extending the professional growth beyond the eight directly involved.
- Mentors cited their own growth as they worked with the academy students in problem-solving situations.
- University staff introduced additional resources that are useful to the professional growth of practicing administrators in the district.
- The close working relations between the university and the district rose to yet another level. The direct involvement with our staff and programs has created even greater awareness of and respect for the quality present in the district.
- There are now even more opportunities for future collaboration with the university, for the benefit of staff and students.
- The district/university project was featured in the recent process of national accreditation for the teacher preparation program at the university, taking the positive exposure for the district even beyond Kansas. (Miller et al., 2007, p.99)

Later research on the first academy partnership design for preparing new leaders documented important findings in interviews with the participants themselves at the end of the academy. Quotes from academy completers in Figure 1 indicated the new preparation model more than accomplished the goals of those who partnered on its design. Reflective comments from completers in subsequent academies express similar opinions on the same themes.

**Shift of Focus to Teacher Leadership Brings More Academy Partners**

Shortly after the conclusion of the first master's degree partnership academy, two of the three original district partners experienced changes in the top leadership position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Partnership Model...</th>
<th>Program Graduate Reflection</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>changed the way people think about themselves.</td>
<td>&quot;I had never given much consideration to becoming a building principal. Now I think I am glad to have an opportunity to get a principal license even if I never use it. I will be a much better teacher because of this experience.&quot;</td>
<td>(Gustafson, 2005, p. 108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed classroom practices.</td>
<td>&quot;I clearly remember the very first reflective assignment — what a chore! Now, reflective thought is a daily part of my life, and a part I have included in the assignment of my students. The reflecting was something I will take with me into the future – asking my own students to reflect has impacted how I teach.&quot;</td>
<td>(Miller &amp; Devin, 2005, pp. 2–3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provided authentic experiences.</td>
<td>&quot;In my first year of school administration, I do not think I have been exposed to anything that we didn't discuss at one time or another in (the academy). I can't imagine where I would be with our school improvement efforts and staff development planning had it not been for the knowledge we received in (the academy).&quot;</td>
<td>(Miller, et.al., 2007, p. 85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developed systems thinking.</td>
<td>&quot;My participation in (the academy) was a genuine life-changing experience. I look at the entire educational field differently than I did before, because for two whole years, I got to view education from the lenses of some of the best administrators in education today. I was so fortunate.&quot;</td>
<td>(Gustafson, 2005, p. 131)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and attention to the academy partnership model was set aside for a time. In the third of the original partner districts, conversations turned to 1) student feedback indicating significant benefits from the academy even if the graduate remained in the classroom, and 2) the risks of preparing too many good teachers for more administrative openings than the district would need. This discussion led to a second university partnership academy with two changes. First, all participants came from a single district; second and more importantly, the focus shifted from principal preparation to expanding teacher leadership capacity. Academy content remained much the same with more emphasis on teachers as leaders working on school improvement from classroom positions or, as an individual option, as a foundation for the building level administrative license. This shift in focus is the foundation for the many university/district partnership academies that have followed to this date. Figure 2 is a visual demonstration of the partnership master’s model for teacher leadership.

From the onset, the university partners agreed that team leadership is an essential component of the shared vision and they were pleased to enter into a second partnership with the district. Instead of a 36-hour master’s encompassing all requirements for a building principal license, the academy program of study was reduced to a 30-hour master’s in educational leadership with the individual option of adding six additional hours outside the academy to complete building license requirements. The new format created district interest in a series of academy cohorts in order to give greater numbers of teachers the opportunity to be involved. It was also a way of showing value placed on teachers as learners and a way of supporting those interested in pursuing advanced degree work. The focus on building leadership skills was especially useful as nonadministrative positions such as coaches, coordinators, team leaders, etc., became more common across districts. At the university, the University/District Teacher Leadership Master’s Degree academy would become the primary delivery model for the master’s program and the building leader preparation program of study over the next fifteen years. See Figure 3 for the history of university/district partnership academies since the model’s introduction in 2000.

The redirection to a focus on teacher leadership did not diminish the importance of thoughtful planning for each academy on how to embed theory in the context of local practice, but the shift did alter the conversation between the university and district partners as new academies formed, either with first-time partners, or when beginning a new group as part of a series with a familiar partner. Projecting leadership needs became even more holistic in nature.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academy Name</th>
<th>District Partner(s)</th>
<th>Dates of Academy</th>
<th># Enrolled</th>
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<td>Professional Administrative Leadership Academy (PALA)</td>
<td>Geary County (8) Manhattan-Ogden (8) Salina (8)</td>
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<td>Leadership Academy</td>
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<td>Garden City/Manhattan-Ogden Teacher Leadership Academy (GC/MO TLA)</td>
<td>Garden City (12) Manhattan-Ogden (12)</td>
<td>Spring 2005 – Fall 2006</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>Professional Education Leadership Academy (PELA)</td>
<td>Geary County</td>
<td>January 2006 – December 2007</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Dodge City Education Leadership Academy (DCELA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Education Leadership Academy 2 (PELA 2)</td>
<td>Geary County</td>
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<td>Salina Teacher Leadership Academy (STLA)</td>
<td>Salina</td>
<td>Fall 2008 – Summer 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Education Leadership Academy 3 (PELA 3)</td>
<td>Geary County</td>
<td>September 2010 – June 2012</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Dodge City Education Leadership Academy 2 (DCELA 2)</td>
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<td>Salina Teacher Leadership Academy 2 (STLA 2)</td>
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<td>Topeka Public Schools Teacher Leadership Academy (TPSTLA)</td>
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<td>Professional Education Leadership Academy 4 (PELA 4)</td>
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<td>Topeka Public Schools Teacher Leadership Academy 2 (TPSTLA 2)</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Professional Education Leadership Academy 5 (PELA 5)*</td>
<td>Geary County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salina Teacher Leadership Academy 3 (STLA 3)*</td>
<td>Salina</td>
<td>Fall 2015 – Summer 2017</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD 383 Teacher Leadership Academy 3 (TLA 3)*</td>
<td>Manhattan-Ogden</td>
<td>Fall 2015 – Summer 2017</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge City/Garden City Teacher Leadership Academy (DC/GC TLA)</td>
<td>Dodge City (12) Garden City (12)</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topeka/Wamego Teacher Leadership Academy **</td>
<td>Topeka (17) Wamego (4)</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osage Nation Educational Leadership Academy (ONELA)**</td>
<td>Osage Nation (Oklahoma)</td>
<td>Fall 2016 – Summer 2018</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Leadership LEAD 512***</td>
<td>Shawnee Mission</td>
<td>Spring 2017 – Fall 2018</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In progress. (Fall 2015 – Summer 2017)  ** Begins Fall 2016  *** Begins Spring 2017
Table listing District Partners by Academy Date/Enrollment (May 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Partner</th>
<th>Academy Start Date</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salina</td>
<td>March 2000, September 2008, September 2011, August 2015</td>
<td>8*, 8, 6, 21 Total = 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan-Ogden</td>
<td>March 2000, Spring 2005, September 2015</td>
<td>8*, 12*, 16 Total = 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge City</td>
<td>January 2007, January 2011, September 2016</td>
<td>21, 22, 12* Total = 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topeka</td>
<td>January 2012, January 2014, September 2016</td>
<td>10, 9, 17* Total = 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td>January 2005, September 2916</td>
<td>12*, 12* Total = 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wamego</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>4* Total = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osage Nation</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>12 Total = 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total academy participants to date | 318 |
| Total academy groups to date | 19 |

(District Partner 9) (In planning for January 2017 Start) (TBD)

* Joint partnership with another district

especially as emerging research reinforced the importance of building leadership teams and districts broadened the manner in which they relied on teacher leadership as an essential component of successful school improvement. The planning group morphed into the Planning Committee and was acknowledged to be an ongoing part of the process throughout the full two years of the academy.

Interest in partnerships grew quickly as word spread among education leaders regarding the positive outcomes of early academies. Figure 4 illustrates this growth, as they list academies by district partners, showing how the number of individual district partners participating with the university in leadership master’s academies will have tripled in the first 16 years of its implementation.

Within academies, field experiences became more diverse in order to meet the needs of the teachers coming into the program from various assignments across the districts. While face-to-face time continues to be an important element in the academy model, the challenge of geographic distance is often an item on each planning committee’s agenda. A typical academy meets face-to-face on the district site eight times each semester with technology facilitating communications in-between. However, the partners have found various creative ways to package face-to-face time over the years. Longer weekend sessions reduce travel time and developing technology resources such as PolyCom and Zoom can create a degree of physical togetherness without so much travel.

Academy Materials

Materials selected today are very different from those used in the first academy, but choosing them collaboratively remains a major part of the planning process. The first academy relied on a series of titles from the mid-90s based on the 21 competencies identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) to describe what principals should know and be able to do. The 21 themes were grouped into Functional, Interpersonal, Programmatic, and Contextual domains. When McREL research introduced the 21 Leadership Responsibilities of building leaders, materials shifted to those related to the newer research (Waters et al., 2003, 2007). Another influence on materials has been the growing body of knowledge from many sources on what works in schools and how to build leadership capacity at all levels. Approximately twenty titles are selected by the respective planning committees for each academy currently, looking at the most recent materials available that best match issues, interests, and professional development in the partner district.

While authors and titles vary across academies (even in the same district), they remain contemporary research-based publications on topics related to building leadership capacity at all levels; such topics include using data to inform decisions, understanding and leading the change process, and leadership in special education, technology, curriculum, and team building. Other consistent elements in the integrated, spiraling curriculum are influencing a culture supporting school improvement, safety and equity issues, and ethics that underlie educational decisions. Authors...
Educational Considerations

expanding the partnership model to more districts. Successor leaders in the first three districts became familiar with the model and its past successes and interest grew in working together again. Roles or faces of all leaders had changed since initiation of the partnership model, but its reputation for accomplishing the goal of merging theory and practice was growing rapidly. In a very short time the number of academies increased dramatically, taking shape as a series of academies with original district partners and new first-time partnerships with others.

Successor leaders in the first three districts became familiar with the model and its past successes and interest grew in working together again. Roles or faces of all leaders had changed since initiation of the partnership model, but its reputation for accomplishing the goal of merging theory and practice was growing rapidly. In a very short time the number of academies increased dramatically, taking shape as a series of academies with original district partners and new first-time partnerships with others. Staffing needs continued to be affected as the model matured. Thorough planning before the first class session reduced the need for impactful decisions to be made during the academy. With this preplanning in place, the direct participation of chief decision makers (superintendents) was no longer essential after commitment was made to enter the partnership. A new district liaison role took shape replacing the one held by the original superintendents. With the strong team from the university, a district liaison was needed to coordinate between the academy activities and the district, to facilitate communication, and to assist in making whatever connections were important between the academy staff, students, mentors, and others. The liaison position holder shifted to an Assistant Superintendent or a central office director. The selection of the liaison remained collaborative and the university assumed responsibility for compensating these positions as adjunct instructors.

Over time the increasing number of partner districts and the challenges of geographic distance led to other staffing alterations. At the university, the two faculty members leading academy expansion recognized the need to work separately and build leadership capacity in others in order to accommodate twice the number of district partnerships. The district liaison became a co-teacher with equal responsibility for planning and delivering the curriculum within the guidelines established by the district/university planning committee. Position holders began to include principals and in some cases districts chose to split the assignment between two district leaders. Selection remains collaborative and the university continues to provide compensation for the position in whatever format best serves the partnership at that time.

Academy Planning Committee

The presence of an academy planning committee composed of both district and university members is another unique feature of the university/district partnership. The purpose of the committee is to provide guidance throughout the two academy years; it does not shut down after initial planning and the first class session. As the model matured, transitions influenced the Planning Committee makeup, not its importance. Today in addition to the university representative(s), the district members typically include the superintendent or a top assistant, central office directors involved with staff development and school improvement, representative principals, and sometimes representatives from past academies.

When a district expresses interest in forming an original partnership or another in a series in the same district, university and district leaders form a Planning Committee to

Mentored Field Experiences

From the first academy through the present ones, each academy participant is assigned a one-on-one district mentor to work with over the two-year program. The mentor assists the student in finding suitable applications, increasing responsibility over time. As topics are explored in class, students are expected to find opportunities to put what they have learned into practice at an appropriate level. When topics reappear in the integrated, spiraling curriculum, the level of involvement in practice increases for the student. The purpose of the mentor relationship remains the same, but planners have learned that good mentor programs require a program of support and skill building. District partners are responsible for assigning mentors, but the university partner can provide assistance with developing mentoring skills. Mentor support includes establishing a network of mentors where they can learn mentoring skills and share ideas, successes, and challenges with each other.

Staffing and Linking the Partners

An important staffing element separating the partnership model from previous preparation approaches was the blending of both university and district personnel as first-line staff during the two years the cohort works together. The first partnership academy was staffed by the three experienced district leaders (each of whom had served as a university adjunct instructor), who were individually teamed with a designated university faculty member with expertise on content. These three superintendents were the connecting links between the university and the staff. As planners, each accepted an active role in designing and delivering topics in the proposed curriculum. In addition, practitioners and outside experts were called on to enhance topics as they were studied in class settings.

Staffing changes among and within the partners themselves played a significant part in the evolution of the partnership academy model. The last remaining superintendent from the three original partners transitioned to a full-time university faculty position and joined forces with another faculty member who had recently made a similar transition from the principalship to the university. This educator was also well-versed in the new model, having served as a mentor in the first master’s academy prior to moving to the university. These two, now university colleagues, assumed leadership for expanding the partnership model to more districts. Successor

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...
collaboratively plan and implement a preparation program for future leaders. All decisions are made collaboratively. The Planning Committee remains in place throughout the two years of the academy and periodic meetings are scheduled to share information on student progress and to make sure support systems are working satisfactorily. The involvement of the Planning Committee is what has made it possible to effectively merge theory and practice. Its goal is to extend academy benefits across the district, beyond personal growth of students in the program. The Planning Committee is where relationships are built between the university and the district.

**Impact on District and University Cultures**

In the sixteen-plus years since the first university/district partnership began, some generalizations about this approach to preparing leaders have become evident. The number of district partners choosing to have a series of academies indicate the model has become an ongoing component of professional development opportunities offered to staff; teachers anticipate the beginning of the next academy cycle. The nature of the academy structure itself benefits districts beyond the professional growth of the participants in the class. As teachers learn in the academy classroom, they become actively involved in real school improvement efforts in their building or district. Participants across all academies consistently speak to the benefit of being able to apply immediately what they are learning, and to seeing the positive impact of what they have learned on their performance, whether they remain in the classroom or move to another assignment in the future. School improvement efforts benefit from the skills academy students bring to their assignments. For those academy completers who have gone on to building leader positions, feedback indicates support for the strength of preparation for leadership responsibilities provided by the academy model.

The opportunity to select academy students through an application process gives the district significant influence on who will pursue personal leadership development, an especially important factor when increasing diversity of staff is a district goal. The influence of supervisors has been identified as a major factor in the decision teachers make to pursue a career in administration (Zacharakis, Devin, & Miller, 2006), and in making decisions for future leadership positions, district leaders can consider their extended observations of student growth in leadership over their time in the academy. Beyond professional growth for academy students, mentors report their service to be an especially valuable professional growth for them, as well.

**Figure 5 | One District’s Report of the Effectiveness of Academies by Providing Leadership for Future Positions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Academy Graduate’s Current Position In or Out of the District</th>
<th>Number of Graduates in Current Position (Across all six academies completed in the district between 2002–2014)</th>
<th>Percent of Academy Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of academy graduates serving as principal or assistant principal in the district</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of academy graduates serving in a central office position in the district</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of academy graduates serving in a building level nonclassroom assignment in the district (coach, coordinator, etc.)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of academy graduates remaining in a classroom teaching assignment in the district (with teacher leader responsibilities on building and district committees as needed)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*10 of these individuals graduated from the most recently finished cohort and have had only one academic year to pursue administrative positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of academy graduates departed from the district</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total graduates during time period</strong></td>
<td><strong>89</strong></td>
<td><strong><em>*</em></strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This district partner was one of the three original university partners and since beginning the first academy, and has partnered on a total of six completed academy cohorts. In Fall 2016, 18 more teachers enrolled in a seventh partnership academy scheduled to be complete in Summer 2017.

*due to rounding, figure does not equal 100%
District satisfaction is evidenced by the fact that in every district where a partnership academy has been completed, two or more additional academies have now been completed. Several districts have sponsored three or four academy cohorts. One large district has completed six master's academies and is presently midway through a seventh cohort group since the model was first used in 2000. Focusing on this one longtime district partner, one way to assess the impact of this investment in professional growth is to follow teachers who have completed an academy, and Figure 5 charts graduates from these six academies in this one district. For this district with high mobility due to its location, it is important to note that only 26% of academy completers left the district, meaning that 74% of completers stayed. This speaks to the value of the academies as a retention tool for good teachers.

Academies affect the culture of both the district and the university partner. In the district, academy participants change the conversations in faculty lounges, in team discussions, and in leadership team planning. Across the district, there is a growing appreciation for and understanding of the complexity of decisions and actions, even when those decisions are not viewed favorably. A greater sense of system is blended with personal interests as issues emerge and problems are solved.

University staff benefit equally from this connection between theory and practice. The opportunity to be involved at a closer proximity to practice provides important insight for university staff. Networking with district personnel and district programs has led to additional unexpected opportunities for collaboration beyond academies between the university and districts. The reputation as a partner/collaborator is a growing asset to the college and to the larger university. The university has frequently recognized district partners by acknowledging their leadership by presenting them with formal recognition such as the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Excellence in Educational Leadership Awards.

Future of the Academy Partnership Model
Efforts continue to make an academy partnership as effective as possible. Keeping curriculum topics current, attracting potential leaders in the application process, selecting the most up-to-date materials to support the topics, making sure field experiences are authentic, and listening to feedback from district leaders and students themselves continue to be routine parts of academy operations.

Keeping the academy connected to the district is important to the success of the mission of this leadership preparation program. Seated principals must see the academy as an important capacity-building opportunity for teachers. Identifying the best academy students depends on district leaders and principals encouraging potential leaders to apply for the academy. This influence is the most significant factor in building leadership capacity for the future. Teacher leaders often lack self-confidence and fail to see their own strengths or potential. Principals who have had faculty members in academies report a positive influence on building culture itself as new skills and conversations are introduced in building team and school improvement activities.

One area tagged for improvement in academy operations is skill development and support for mentors of academy students. District partners with the most successful outcomes have an organizational plan for mentors during the academy period. University staff assist with skill-building materials and activities and the district liaison acts as a facilitator for mentor networking.

Even absent efforts to recruit new partners, requests for expanding the number of partnerships continues to grow. The capacity of the department to match the level of interest will challenge leaders in the coming years. Prospects for finding coalitions of smaller districts not large enough to support an academy within their own district are untapped, but certainly feasible. Capacity in current academy staff must continue to grow and may need to be applied in changing fashion. New ways to organize in district support systems are likely to emerge. Technology improvements will open new options that preserve the face-to-face benefits while reducing barriers. Blocks of time will be reshaped to better fit needs of new partners. Extended blocks (several days) during summer, for example, can replace current shorter, more frequent schedules now typical.

Interest in the academy model has spread beyond the parent university. Another state university requested assistance from academy leaders to establish university/district partnerships out of their own leadership preparation program. The two-person university team that had taken the teacher leadership model to scale in their department provided direct consulting services to support this effort by a university colleague. Unfortunately, the effort produced only a single academy partnership experience, perhaps at least partly because of unrelated leadership changes in both the university and the district involved.

As a result of professional information shared through university networks, a similar request was received from a university peer outside the state. The former superintendent turned university liaison worked with interested staff from North Dakota State University. Based on this support and their own good ideas and hard work, the academy partnership model in that area has been successful in its first application and is presently expanding for additional partnerships.2

Concluding Comments
Some things have changed since the first university/district academy model was initiated. Perhaps the most significant event: the focus moved from principal preparation to teacher leadership. Research and best practice continue to support the absolute necessity of team leadership in education and in other settings. In schools, this means leadership skills are as important for teachers as they are for formal position holders. Today’s academy model gives participants the option of completing the required state license for building leader positions, while also filling leadership needs at the classroom level.
Details of the roles of those working within the academy system have been altered slightly, but the emphasis on a collaborative merger of theory and practice remains as strong as in the original experience. In order for this to happen, both the university and the district must be committed to a partnership relationship, building together what neither could accomplish on its own.

Endnotes

1 An important distinction is made here: This “second wave” is the current model at KSU and is the primary model discussed throughout this themed issue. The earliest versions (1987 - 1998) of leadership academies, as they were called, were post-master’s degree professional development for practicing school leaders. Subsequent leadership academies of this “second wave” have been partnerships for preservice prospective school leaders, providing master’s degrees to the selected participants. For more on this distinction, see previous commentary in this issue, David Thompson’s “Revisiting Public School/University Partnerships for Formal Leadership Development: A Brief 30-Year Retrospective.”

2 See later in this issue Tom Hall and Ann Clapper’s "North Dakota’s Experience with the Academy Model: A Successful Replication."

References


From a survey of district executives in partner districts:

Superintendents reported that graduates of the academies have been more ready to lead these efforts and principals have had a leadership pool ready to take on new responsibilities. They have learned not only effective leadership skills but have gained a better understanding of “big picture” issues, such as accreditation and the change process. The development of teacher leaders has also helped to break down barriers between administrators and teachers…

Another superintendent reported that the academy takes quality educators and helps them think differently – from a leadership perspective, whether they desire to be future administrators or not.

As the Assistant Superintendent of Topeka Public Schools, in 2011 I had the honor and privilege of working with Dr. Devin in developing the Leadership Academy that is currently serving its fourth cohort of teacher leaders. I believe in “growing your own,” and what a better way than partnering with Kansas State University in developing a teacher leader course that is custom designed to make the courses relevant to the district’s strategic goals and initiatives. The sense of pride, confidence, and accomplishments by all of the participants was a joy to watch and be a part of.

– Tammy Austin

Being involved with multiple leadership academies was a highlight of my academic career! The collaborative model exemplified my beliefs in how groups should work together to grow stronger and nurture new leaders. Enjoy this celebration and renew your commitment to identifying and nurturing new leaders!

Doris Kearns Goodwin just released her new book, Leadership: In Turbulent Times. It offers a perspective of presidential leaders in tough times and the very different ways they reacted to those times. Her analysis should provide multiple discussion topics for leadership classes. Enjoy!

– Teresa Miller, Academy Co-Facilitator