

The Impact of Educational Leadership Standards on the Teacher Shortage Crisis: A Call for Change

Twianie Roberts¹ , Everett B. Singleton² 

¹Department of Educational Leadership, Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN, USA

²Womack Department of Educational Leadership, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN, USA

Email: trober25@tnstate.edu, Esingleton@mtsu.edu

How to cite this paper: Roberts, T., & Singleton, E. B. (2024). The Impact of Educational Leadership Standards on the Teacher Shortage Crisis: A Call for Change. *Open Journal of Leadership*, 13, 1-5.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2024.131001>

Received: May 4, 2023

Accepted: January 28, 2024

Published: January 31, 2024

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Abstract

This paper examines the Impact of Educational Leadership Standards on the Teacher Shortage Crisis. Studies cite discipline, trauma and stress as implicating factors for why individuals are leaving the teaching profession. This short report paper examines the alignment between the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) standards and some of the major issues affecting education. This paper recommends additional research to examine the alignment between the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) standards and some of the major issues affecting education.

Keywords

Teacher Shortage, National Policy Board for Educational Administration Standards, NPBEA, Educational Leadership Preparation, Principal Preparation, School Discipline, Teacher Trauma and Teacher Stress

1. Teacher Shortage and Discipline, Trauma, Stress

It is essential to examine the Impact of Educational Leadership Standards on the Teacher Shortage Crisis. Studies cite discipline, trauma and stress as implicating factors for why individuals are leaving the teaching profession. Research shows that principal leadership and support are two of the most crucial aspects in teachers' decisions to remain in a school or the profession. The effectiveness of leadership is known to have a significant impact on teacher turnover in studies conducted across the country. Teachers frequently note that supportive school leadership influenced their decision to stay over salary. According to a recent

study, decreased teacher turnover is substantially correlated with improvements in the effectiveness and development of school leadership (Kraft et al., 2016). The school culture and connections among colleagues, the availability of time for collaboration, and the ability to participate in decision-making are significant variables in teachers' professional decisions, in addition to pay and teaching resources—areas in which the principal has a crucial impact (Sutcher et al., 2016). Furthermore, there is an urgent need to support teachers in an approach that “emphasizes mutual care” and supports, transcending basic self-care strategies, such as adequate sleep and movement, which alone is insufficient as teachers navigate turbulent times in education and struggle with issues such as stress, mental health, vicarious and secondary trauma, physical exhaustion, and compassion fatigue (Team, 2022). In fact, what was formerly known as stress or teachers “having a bad day”—which persists even today—has changed as schools become more aware of the real presence and impact of secondary traumatic stress on teachers.

Thus, a critical question emerges in 21st-century school leadership: *Do school leaders have the skills to address teacher and staff community care and support?* Moreover, the PSEL standards reveal a crucial gap in aspects that address teachers' well-being and ability to navigate the demands of today's school climate and culture. While PSEL standards clearly outline a focus on a *Community of Care and Support of Students*, they fail to address critical support for teachers (PSEL, 2015).

Additionally, principals must be able to:

- 1) Foster the academic success and general well-being of *faculty and staff*; and
- 2) Create and maintain a safe, nurturing school environment that meets the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of *teachers and staff*.
- 3) Establish and maintain a school climate in which each *teacher and staff* is acknowledged, appreciated, respected, and cared for, as well as encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school community.
- 4) Offer comprehensive academic and social support, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations for *teachers and staff* to support a variety of their professional development learning requirements.
- 5) Promote and strengthen *faculty and staff* engagement (PSEL, 2015).

Thus, a needed addendum is appropriate to address the PSEL standards incorporating a teacher/staff-centered focus to Standard 5.

2. NPBEA Standards

“The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) guided the two-year development process. It involved a thorough review of empirical research and included the input of researchers and more than 1000 school and district leaders through surveys and focus groups to identify gaps among the 2008 Standards, the day-to-day work of education leaders, and leadership demands of the future. After a leng-

thy comment and review period, CCSSO and the NPBEA boards approved the Standards.” The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) in collaboration with educational entities creates the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) (PSEL, 2015).

The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) are specifically designed for Principals and Assistant Principals. They provide a framework for educational leadership in schools. Colleges and Universities used the PSEL standards when designing Educational Leadership programs. The following standards are covered:

Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL)

The PSEL standards are covered in Educational Leadership programs throughout the United States. However, none of the standards directly address teacher well-being, hence teacher attrition data suggests this may point to why teachers are leaving the teaching profession.

Standard 1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values;

Standard 2. Ethics and Professional Norms;

Standard 3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness;

Standard 4. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment;

Standard 5. Community of Care and Support for Students;

Standard 6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel;

Standard 7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff;

Standard 8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community;

Standard 9. Operations and Management;

Standard 10. School Improvement.

(PSEL, 2015)

3. Additional Research—Standard 5a: Community of Care and Support for Faculty and Staff

The current PSEL Standard 5 focuses on Community of Care and Support for Students. A need exists for Standard 5 to be expanded to cover Community of Care and Support for Faculty and Staff. Additional research is needed to determine the language and policy implications associated with a new PSEL standard. The new standard’s language might include:

Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of faculty/staff members.

Effective leaders:

- a) Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets that the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each faculty/staff member.
- b) Create and sustain a school environment in which each faculty/staff member is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school com-

munity.

c) Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extra-curricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of needs of each faculty/staff member.

d) Promote relationships that value and support learning and positive social and emotional development.

e) Cultivate and reinforce faculty/staff members' engagement.

Leadership theories help to identify characteristics or traits of effective leaders. Transformational, Situational and Relationship theories of leadership cause leaders to focus on relationships or the well-being of others. According to the Servant, Emotional and Transformational theories of educational leadership, leaders maximize organizational functioning when staff needs are supported (Lynch, 2019). Substantial research is needed on the interplay of the PSEL standards and leadership theory alignment. The current standards seem to focus on students and academics without addressing the discipline, trauma and stress support needs of teachers and staff members. The lack of support, and need to address this issue, is appearing in teacher shortage/attrition data.

4. Conclusion/Recommendations

Across the United States, K-12 educational institutions are experiencing shortages in their teaching workforce. Research has identified teacher stress and a lack of leader preparation as factors affecting the teacher shortage crisis. This paper recommends revisions to current Educational Leadership Standards to better address School Wide Discipline, Teacher Trauma and Teacher Stress. This paper recommends additional research:

- to examine the alignment between the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) standards and some of the major issues affecting education;
- to determine the language and policy implications associated with a new PSEL standard (5a);
- to determine the interplay of the PSEL standards and leadership theory alignment.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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