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Past and Present Challenges to Assistant Principals as Instructional Leaders

The full range of the Assistant Principal's (AP's) responsibilities and the demands made on APs remain largely invisible to most who come into contact with them.

—Hartzell, Williams, & Nelson, *New Voices in the Field, The Work Lives of First-Year Assistant Principals*

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What comes to mind when you think of an assistant principal?
2. How did the position emerge in schools?
3. What value is there in understanding the origins of the assistant principalship?
4. What impact can an assistant principal have on the life of a teacher? A student?
5. Can you work with teachers as colleagues even though you have a stake in their evaluation? Explain why or why not.

Carl Glickman once referred to supervision as the "glue" that binds a school together. Although not a very appealing metaphor, "glue" does accurately communicate the importance of an assistant principal (AP) to a school. Undervalued and often unacknowledged, the AP is the often unseen, yet cohesive element that contributes to an efficient and effective school. Much literature has focused on the principalship as vital for successful school success (see, e.g., Lipham, Rankin, & Hoeh, 1985; Lucio & McNeil, 1969; Robbins & Alvy, 2003; Schumaker & Sommers, 2001). Less attention has been given to the role and function of the AP (Gorton & Kettman, 1985). Attesting to this neglect, Timothy J. Dyer (1991), executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), explained:

> There was a time, in the not-too-distant past, when the assistant principal was not accorded much attention in the literature or on the job. Very little was said about the APs job in university training programs, and almost nothing was said about it in professional books or journals. The AP was simply regarded as someone employed—if the school's enrollment justified it—to take some of the burden off the principal. (p. 58)

The Assistant Principal's Handbook is based on the premise that the assistant principalship is a vital resource for instructional improvement and overall school success. Despite its lack of attention in the literature compared to the principalship, the assistant principalship has been seen as a valuable asset to the school organization (Calabrese & Tucker-Ladd, 1991; Glanz, 1994a, 1994b; Hartzell, Williams, & Nelson, 1995; Marshall, 1992; Pellicer & Stevenson, 1991; Simpson, 2000). Traditionally, the AP was a person in charge of disciplinary and selected administrative matters. Today, greater attention is being focused on the expansion of the AP's role and function to include curriculum and staff development as well as instructional leadership (Calabrese, 1991).

Although the assistant principalship has attracted interest of late (Koru, 1993), we know very little about the origins of the position in schools. Understanding these origins may help us to better understand current problems. Our image of the past is also important in framing future possibilities for these important school leaders.

EARLY DEVELOPMENTS LEADING UP TO THE EMERGENCE OF THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, schools were controlled by loosely structured, decentralized ward boards. Superintendents and principals had little authority to effect educational policy and implement meaningful

programs or curricula (Gilland, 1935; Reller, 1935). In the late nineteenth century, however, educational reformers sought to transform schools into a tightly organized and efficiently operated centralized system. These reform efforts brought order and organization to an otherwise chaotic, corrupt, and inefficient school environment (Glanz, 1991). It was during this tumultuous period of time that educational decision making was vested in the superintendency. Daily control of the schools was assumed chiefly by superintendents.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, schooling grew dramatically. Between 1895 and 1920 total school enrollment increased from 14 to 21.5 million students. During the same period, the high school and above population grew from about 350,000 to 2,500,000 students. In 1895 there were slightly more than 398,000 teachers, earning an average annual salary of $286. The number of female teachers was more than double that of their male counterparts. By 1920, in comparison, the total number of teachers increased by more than 280,000 while their salary more than doubled. There were more than five times the number of female than male teachers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960).

The tally of principals and other supervisory personnel only began after 1900. Before this time, supervision was controlled chiefly by the superintendent, with little authority delegated to assistants and principals. After 1900, as urbanization intensified and the school system was growing more complex, the superintendent lost contact with the day-to-day operations of the schools. As a result, supervision of schools after 1900 became the responsibility of the school principal, a person known as the "principal" teacher.

The principal as school leader and chief supervisor gained in stature and authority in the early twentieth century. Although present in the nineteenth century, the principal did not wield any power or significantly affect the nature and character of schooling. The principal in the nineteenth century was essentially relegated to the relatively noninfluential position of "head teacher." Not until after about 1920 was the principal relieved of teaching duties. As Willard S. Elsbree and E. Edmund Reutter (1954) point out, the principal, up until the 1920s, would "take over classes on occasion, and demonstrate to the teacher exactly how the job should be done" (p. 231). The principal's primary duties were concentrated on offering assistance to less experienced teachers in areas such as instruction, curriculum, and general classroom management skills. In the late nineteenth century the principal was expected to obey the directives of city superintendents. In fact, it was the superintendent who usually appointed an individual "principal" or head teacher. There were no fixed criteria for selection as a principal in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Selection as principal was based on presumed excellence in teaching and essentially was determined by the whim of the superintendent. The principal was given little authority to do more than complete attendance and other administrative reports.

As schooling expanded so did the educational bureaucracy, with the number of principals doubling between 1920 and 1930. Educators accounted for this increase with industrial metaphors. Elsbree and Reutter (1954) explained the role and function of principals as follows: "The principal was looked upon as a kind of foreman who through close supervision helped to compensate for ignorance and lack of skill of his subordinates" (p. 231). Due to increasing administrative duties, however, the principalship gradually shifted away from direct inspections, classroom supervision, and instructional development, and assumed a more managerial position. Consequently, other supervisory positions were established to meet the demands of a growing and increasingly more complex school system.

Special and General Supervisors

In addition to the building principal, a new cadre of administrative officers emerged, assuming major responsibility for day-to-day classroom supervision. Two specific groups of supervisors were commonly found in schools in the early twentieth century. First, a "special supervisor," most often female and chosen by the building principal with no formal training required, was relieved of some teaching responsibilities to help assist less experienced teachers in subject matter mastery. Larger schools, for example, had a number of special supervisors in each of the major subject areas. In the 1920s and 1930s, some schools even had special supervisors of music and art.

Second, a "general supervisor," usually male, was selected not only to deal with more "general" subjects such as mathematics and science, but also to "assist" the principal in the more administrative, logistical operations of the school. The general supervisor, subsequently called assistant principal, would prepare attendance reports, collect data for evaluation purposes, and coordinate special school programs, among other administrative duties.

Differences in functions between special and general supervisors were reflective of prevalent nineteenth-century notions of male-female role relationships. Note the remarks made by a prominent nineteenth-century superintendent, William E. Chancellor (1904): "That men make better administrators I have already said. As a general proposition, women make the better special supervisors. They are more interested in details. They do not make as good general supervisors or assistant superintendents, however" (p. 210). Representative of the bias against women in the educational workplace were notions espoused by William H. Payne (1875), author of the first published textbook on supervision: "Women cannot do man's work in the schools" (p. 49). Payne, like many of his colleagues, believed that men were better suited for the more prestigious and lucrative job opportunities in education.

It is also interesting to note that special supervisors were more readily accepted by the ranks of teachers than were general supervisors. Special supervisors played a very useful and helpful role by assisting teachers in practical areas of spelling, penmanship, and art, for example. In addition, these special supervisors really did not have any independent authority and did not serve in an evaluative capacity as did, for example, the general supervisor, who was given authority, albeit limited, to evaluate instruction in the classroom. Therefore, teachers were not likely to be threatened by the appearance of the special supervisor in the classroom. The general supervisor, on the other hand, was concerned with more administrative and evaluative matters and was consequently viewed as more menacing to the classroom teacher. Special supervisors also probably gained more acceptance by teachers, most of whom were female, because they too were female. General supervisors were all male and perhaps were perceived differently as a result. Frank Spaulding (1955), in his analysis of this time period, concurred and stated that general supervisors "were quite generally looked upon, not as helpers, but as critics bent on the discovery and revelation of teachers' weaknesses and failures, . . . they were dubbed Snoopervisors."

The position of the special supervisor did not endure, however, for a very long period in schools. The duties and responsibilities of the position were gradually, yet steadily, usurped by general supervisors. Although a detailed explanation of why the special supervisor became obsolete is needed, the relative obscurity of the position after the early 1920s can be attributed to discrimination based on gender. Because most were females, special supervisors were not perceived in the same light as were general supervisors, principals, assistant superintendents, and superintendents, who were, of course, mostly male. Gender bias and the sexual division of labor in schools go far toward explaining the disappearance of the special supervisor as such.

Sex-role stereotypes in education as a whole were commonplace and in consonance with bureaucratic school governance. Not only were curriculum and instruction standardized, but hiring, promotion, and salary scales were also routinized. Along with the newly emerging bureaucratic hierarchy in the early 1900s came the expansion of managerial positions, which were almost always filled by men. This is not very surprising given the previously mentioned views on women held by leading educators of the time. Myra Strober and David Tyack (1980) explained that widely held views of patriarchal dominance were consistent with structured forms of control highly valued by urban school reformers. They explained the relationship between gender and social control as follows:

> By structuring jobs to take advantage of sex role stereotypes about women's responsiveness to rules and male authority, and men's presumed ability to manage women, urban school boards were able to enhance their ability to control curricula, students and personnel. . . .

RECOLLECTION

I recall my dissertation research, as I studied school supervision historically (Glanz, 1991). I came across an anonymous poem published in a magazine called Playground and Recreation *in 1929. The poem was titled "The Snoopervisor, The Whoopervisor, and The Supervisor." As I write today, I think about this poem and ask you, the reader, to consider which role you'd want to play?*

With keenly peering eyes and snooping nose,
From room to room the Snoopervisor goes.
He notes each slip, each fault with lofty frown,
And on his rating card he writes it down;
His duty done, when he has brought to light,
The things the teachers do that are not right.

With cheering words and most infectious grin,
The peppy Whoopervisor breezes in.
"Let every boy and girl keep right with me!
One, two, three, four!
That's fine! Miss Smith I see.
These pupils all write well. This is his plan.
Keep everybody happy if you can."

The supervisor enters quietly,
'What do you need? How can I help today?
John, let me show you. Mary, try this way.'
He aims to help, encourage and suggest,
That teachers, pupils all may do their best.

> Rules were highly prescriptive. . . . With few alternative occupations and accustomed to patriarchal authority they mostly did what their male superiors ordered. . . . Difference of gender provided an important form of social control. (p. 35)

In short, general supervisors gained wider acceptance simply because they were men.

With the disappearance of the special supervisor in the early thirties, the general supervisor was the principal's primary assistant. By the forties and

fifties, the literature more accurately reflected the relationship between the principal and the general supervisor by using the title "assistant principal."

APs were selected by principals from the ranks of teachers. Less often, they were appointed by the superintendent and assigned to a principal. APs were subordinate to principals and were seen as advisers with little, if any, independent formal authority. The AP was often warned "not to forget that the superintendent runs the whole system and the principal runs his school, and you are merely an expert whose duty it is to assist. . . ." (Sloyer, 1928, p. 429).

Lessons Learned

Given the fact that the assistant principalship originated as an administrative function, it is not very surprising that the primary responsibilities of APs have generally centered on routine administrative tasks, custodial duties, and discipline. APs have not usually been charged with instructional responsibilities, in large measure due to the historical antecedents that led to the development of the position in schools. General supervisors, and later APs, were traditionally charged with noninstructional issues. Curiously, although special supervisors were, in fact, responsible for more instructional concerns, such as the improvement of instruction, their duties were not assumed by the newly titled AP. Efforts under way today to expand the role of the AP to include instructional leadership can certainly be historically linked to the emergence of the early *special* supervisors.

REFLECT

Think of the APs you have known. Were they male or female? How does gender impact on the assistant principalship? What has the history of the assistant principalship described above taught you? Why is knowing this history important to your practice as an AP?

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A Problem for APs as Instructional Leaders

Although efforts are under way nationally, at least over the past several years, to involve APs less in administrative, logistical matters and more with instructional matters (Weller & Weller, 2002), a seemingly intractable problem still faces APs; that is, the improvement versus evaluation dilemma. Put succinctly, APs are faced with a basic role conflict. They, by the very nature of their positions in the school hierarchy, are authorized to enforce organizational mandates and ensure administrative efficiency. Among other things, one of the responsibilities frequently assigned to APs is evaluating teachers, or at least making recommendations to the principal about evaluation. On the other hand, many are simultaneously responsible for promoting teacher effectiveness and student learning. Herein lies the conflict: the unresolved dilemma between the necessity to evaluate and the desire to genuinely assist teachers in the instructional process.

Role conflicts of this nature have been documented by Catherine Marshall (1992) in her comprehensive study of APs. Marshall stated that "an assistant principal might be required to help teachers develop coordinated curricula—a 'teacher support' function." "But this function," explained Marshall, "conflicts with the monitoring, supervising, and evaluating functions. . . . The assistant may be working with a teacher as a colleague in one meeting and, perhaps one hour later, the same assistant may be meeting to chastise the same teacher for noncompliance with the district's new homework policy." Marshall concluded, "When they must monitor teachers' compliance, assistants have difficulty maintaining equal collegial and professional relationships with them" (pp. 6–7).

This inherent role conflict, experienced by many APs that I personally know, has been documented by other prominent scholars as well. Tanner and Tanner (1987), in their noteworthy and scholarly textbook on school supervision, acknowledge this dilemma. Although not discussing APs specifically, Tanner and Tanner's analysis rings true to the experiences I have encountered as an AP. Supervisors are challenged daily, they say, to assist teachers "in solving classroom problems" (p. 105). As such, they are inclined to interact with teachers personally and professionally. To be effective leaders, APs maintain friendly, helpful relationships with teachers. However, when evaluations must be done, these collegial relationships may be jeopardized. Tanner and Tanner observed, "No doubt, many teachers are afraid to ask for help from supervisors because they believe that by exposing a problem with their teaching, they are inviting a low evaluation of their work" (p. 105). They stated that this role conflict is inherent in supervisory work. They called it a "basic conflict" between "inservice education" and "evaluation" (pp. 105–6).

As an AP in a large urban school in New York City, my primary function was to serve as a disciplinarian. Our school attempted to restructure

governance and redefine role expectations of APs and teachers under a plan known as site-based management. As a result, my role as AP was refocused as primarily concerned with "improving" the instructional process on the grades I supervised. Parenthetically, we created a new position, "dean," whose primary function was to serve as disciplinarian. An important part of my job was to assist and advise teachers on how best to improve instruction and promote learning. After all, "supervision is about helping people grow and develop. . . . It is the job of the supervisor in schools to work with people to improve the educational process and to aid the growth and development of students" (Wiles & Bondi, 1991, p. 85).

Although I was quite satisfied with my instructional responsibilities, I realized that a dilemma was emerging. I was still charged with evaluating the effectiveness of teachers. As an evaluator, I had to make judgments as to their effectiveness. Teachers were observed formally and informally. Observation reports were placed in teachers' files and used for promotional and tenure considerations. APs, as evaluators, are at times perceived by teachers as intrusionary bureaucrats or "snoopervisors" (Hill, 1992, p. v; see also Glanz, 1989) and are met with resentment. Consequently, teachers may be unwilling to ask for assistance because the AP is seen as an adversary. Teachers are reluctant to willingly seek help from an AP for fear that they will be evaluated unsatisfactorily. Costa and Guditus (1984) observed that supervisors are often confronted with the task of having "to evaluate and assist in dismissing incompetent teachers." They contended that this evaluation process tends "to interfere with the helping relationship needed to work productively with other staff members" (p. 24).

Tanner and Tanner (1987) asserted that the conflict between the "helping" and "evaluative" functions present almost insurmountable problems for supervisors. As a former AP, I can personally attest to this problem. Tanner and Tanner stated, "The basic conflict between these functions is probably the most serious and, up until now, unresolved problem in the field of supervision" (p. 106; also see Liftig, 1990).

RECOLLECTION

Improvement Versus Evaluation: One Case Example

P.S. X was located in Brooklyn, New York. It was built in 1905 and was a large elementary school serving approximately 1,500 pupils (kindergarten through Grade 5). The school was administered by a principal and three

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assistant principals. It was identified, in 1990, by the New York State Department of Education as a school "in need of assistance" as a result of low scores in reading at the third-grade level. The 1990–91 pupil ethnic survey provided the following data about the school's student population: African American 85%; Hispanic American 10%; Asian American 3%; and Other 2%. The socioeconomic data indicated that 95% of the students were eligible this year for free lunch.

P.S. X was located in a district that had traditionally accepted bureaucracy as the primary authority for supervisory policy and practice. Therefore, as described by Sergiovanni (1992), teachers were subordinates in a hierarchically arranged system, were expected to comply with predetermined standards, and were, among other things, directly supervised and closely monitored to ensure compliance to bureaucratic mandates. Within this system, it was not surprising to find APs, for example, whose role expectations and performance on the job conformed to districtwide bureaucratic rules and regulations.

My first appointment as an AP was at P.S. X. When I arrived, I was greeted by my predecessor. Mr. Stuart Oswald Blenheim (fictitious, of course) was known as a stickler for every jot, tittle, and iota inscribed in the Board of Education's rules and regulations. He actually carried a tape measure, stethoscope, and portable tape recorder as he daily patrolled the hallways. He informed me at our first meeting that teachers were, by and large, incompetent and could not be trusted.

Mr. Blenheim's daily plan was to patrol the corridors to catch wandering pupils who did not have appropriate documentation. He would escort them to class where he would then check if the windows in the room were opened no more than six inches, which was the amount prescribed by Board of Education regulations. He also routinely made certain that teachers were maintaining pace with the Comprehensive Instructional Mathematics Services (CIMS) math program, which was mandated by the district. He checked plans on the desk, observed the aim written neatly on the board, and as he left would utter comments into his small, pocket-sized recorder. Teachers would frequently receive a follow-up letter describing any and all infractions of Board of Education policy.

It was an unwritten law in the school that any teacher who observed this latter-day Napoleon lurking in the halls would, duty-bound, pass the information on to his or her neighbors. A note referring to "Pearl Harbor,"

"Incoming Missiles," or "Sneak Attack" was enough to raise blood pressure and churn digestive juices.

Such was Blenheim's repute that all the teachers whom I supervised avoided my presence like the very plague. On one occasion, I passed by a room and noticed a teacher caringly assisting a pupil at her desk. Suddenly, the teacher "felt" my presence, quickly straightened her posture, and proceeded nervously to the front of the room to resume writing on the board. I soon realized the problem and couldn't blame them.

During the first meeting with my teachers, I asked rather than told them not to think of me as their supervisor. I hoped that they would consider me a colleague with perhaps more experience and responsibility in certain areas. I wanted to share my knowledge with them. I wanted to work with them, help them, assist, guide, coach, collaborate. . . . I was not going to spy on them. They had a difficult time accepting this. They had not only experienced what one teacher called a "petty tyrant" but also indicated that many APs they had had in this and other schools were not unlike Mr. Blenheim. Even "those nice APs" still, in the words of one teacher, "evaluated us and were just picayune."

Several teachers asked if I was required to evaluate them several times a year. I informed them that I was required to, but they would find me fair and even-handed. I told them I would never base my evaluation on merely one observation. We would work together, I told them, and mutually arrive at an acceptable evaluation schedule and policy. We would do our best to cooperate and coexist. I would help them teach more effectively, share my experiences, and readily accept their expertise and ideas. Despite my reassurances, I sensed their doubts and apprehensions.

Teachers later shared their apprehensions about the AP/teacher relationship. Many teachers, for example, stated that they hesitated asking for assistance from APs fearing negative evaluations. In my school, several teachers confided in me a year and a half later that they felt uncomfortable about working closely with APs who might "form negative opinions about me while working on the curriculum committee." "I prefer to stay away from my AP . . . I never know when I'll be written up."

My intention here is not to address the pervasiveness of the improvement versus evaluation conflict, but merely to provide personal testimony to its existence and indicate that through gradual trust building much can beaccomplished. As APs who work with teachers on instructional improvement projects, you must be aware of this problem and find personal ways

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to circumvent it. For me, involving teachers on shared decision-making councils, conferring with teachers, asking their input, and treating them as colleagues had a beneficial effect on how teachers perceived me as their AP. As one teacher put it: "I now know that Blenheim is gone."

What shared leadership and collaborative planning do is to develop trust. Involving teachers in collaborative planning (e.g., curriculum and even budget meetings) demonstrates to them our commitment to partnership and shared governance. Teachers realized, as a result of our collaborative efforts at P.S. X, that we all had a stake in working together to attain our shared goals.

Suggestions for APs as Instructional Leaders

An examination of the history of supervision, in general, indicates a gradual move away from "bureaucratic inspectional approaches to more refined democratic participatory" practices (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000, p. 21). Democratic supervision, as embraced by APs for instance, is centered on working with teachers in a collaborative environment to help them improve instruction. Although vestiges of the bureaucratic legacy remain (were they reflected in your personal images from the Reflect exercise), APs as instructional leaders in their own right can overcome the negative images of their past and can develop strategies to resolve the improvement-evaluation dilemma. Following are some suggestions:

- **Acknowledge the past and articulate a vision for the future.** Realize that the position you hold and even your actions are rooted in a past with which you were not involved. Therefore, people may react to you, at least initially, based on their experiences with former supervisors or with assumptions about the role of AP (recall Blenheim in the previous Recollection). Make it clear through words and deeds that your vision for school improvement is rooted in democratic, participatory instructional leadership.

- **Create a democratic learning community.** Imagine new ways of viewing learning. Learning is no longer conceived as predictable but rather as a complex and differentiated process. Teaching moves from simply rote methods to informed reflective judgments. Supervision is no longer concerned with ensuring adherence to bureaucratic regulations but is concerned with helping

teachers discover and construct professional knowledge and skills. Teachers and supervisors are no longer isolated and independent technicians, but are collegial team members, mentors, and peer coaches. Schools are no longer bureaucratic teaching organizations, but rather are democratic teaching and learning communities.

- **Serve as a role model by encouraging collegiality.** Several individuals within the system will still try to adhere to the old industrial model based on an obedient workforce that was predisposed to following orders from above. As you know, schools are too complex for such isolated decision making to persist. You realize the importance of allowing others to assume more responsibility and to participate fully in shared decision making. Avoiding impersonal or bureaucratic relationships in favor of encouraging personal relationships within a learning community can be one of your foremost contributions.

- **Support shared governance opportunities.** Encourage others to aspire to democratic leadership by facilitating teacher empowerment and developing democratic structures and processes in a variety of school contexts (e.g., peer-coaching activities, school-based leadership teams to revise curricula, etc.).

- **Focus on fundamental instructional issues.** Although you are cognizant of the many political complexities that affect a school or district, focus on what really matters to students—instruction. Strive to encourage good pedagogy and teaching. Faculty and grade meetings should focus almost exclusively on instructional issues.

- **Communicate an "ethic of caring."** Improve your listening skills. The next time a staff member has experienced a personal challenge, ask her or him about what happened. Listen, say you're sorry, and offer to help in any way. That's it; that's all you should or could do. Also, inspire all those you meet to aspire to excellence. Offer them the means to do so by providing appropriate resources and suggestions, if they inquire.

- **Empower others and give them the credit.** As a confident leader you feel comfortable in empowering others to participate in school improvement initiatives. You lead by example and are ready, willing, and able to stand in the background to allow others to take the credit. As long as you are attaining your objectives, you should not be concerned about receiving all the credit. You realize that a good leader is one who can empower others to share their leadership qualities in order to achieve a "greater good."

- **Build trust by your actions.** No matter what you articulate, in writing or in speech, teachers and others will always rely on your actions to speak for themselves. Can they trust you? Do you talk the talk *and* walk the walk?

IN-BASKET SIMULATION

During an interview you are asked the following questions:

- What would you do to encourage teachers to trust that you are there to "help" them and not merely to "evaluate" them? (Here are some suggested solutions merely offered to get you started: Tell them so; show them so by not writing an evaluation that includes information gleaned during one of your "helping" sessions; help them at every opportunity; get them some extra monies/supplies to support classroom instruction; etc.)

- How would you forge a role for yourself as an instructional leader and not merely a manager, especially in a school in which the former APs did not focus on instruction? (Here are some suggested solutions: Allot time for instructional involvement with faculty; conduct a demonstration lesson for them occasionally; discuss teaching and learning with them on many occasions; conduct workshops on various topics of teacher interest, and bring in speakers to discuss instructional issues; etc.)

Here are suggestions to guide you as you complete this in-basket exercise and all the others to follow in *The Assistant Principal's Handbook:*

1. Think and respond as if you are an AP, not a teacher or, perhaps, principal.
2. Place yourself mentally in each situation as if the case were actually happening to you.
3. Draw on your experiences and from what you've learned from others. Think of an AP you respect and ask yourself, "What would Mr. X have done?"
4. In your response, include the principal (after all, you're her or his "assistant"). That said, there are situations in which you might want to handle the situation yourself without consulting (bothering) the principal. What are some circumstances in which you would have to consult the principal? See the following suggestions.
5. Involve parents and community whenever feasible and applicable.
6. Make distinctions between actions you would personally take and actions you would delegate to others.
7. Utilize resources (personnel or otherwise) to assist you.

8. Think about your response, and then share it with a colleague for her or his reaction.
9. Multiple correct responses are possible, but know that some responses to these scenarios might not be appropriate. See the Recollection in Chapter 2 in which I responded inappropriately to a real-life situation when I was an AP.
10. Record your response and then a day later reread the scenario and your response. Would you still have reacted the same way?

Times when you should consult the principal:

- Any serious incident involving the media
- Any time the daily schedule is interrupted due to a special event, an emergency, a dangerous situation, and so on
- A chronic situation in which you need principal support, such as a major complaint by a parent, an unsatisfactory teacher, a school hazard, and so on
- Faculty/staff concerns
- District/community concerns
- Whenever a board member talks with you

Can you think of other situations in which you should consult the principal?