

THE PERCEIVED ROLE OF THE MEDIA COORDINATOR AS SCHOOL LEADER
IN THE SUSTAINABILITY OF A MAJOR TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

A Dissertation by

MAX ALLEN DIGGS, JR.

Submitted to the Graduate School

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

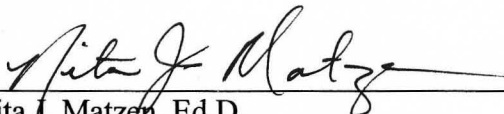
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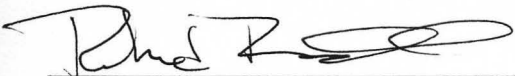
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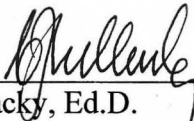
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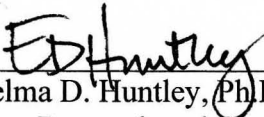
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ABSTRACT

THE PERCEIVED ROLE OF THE MEDIA COORDINATOR AS SCHOOL LEADER IN THE SUSTAINABILITY OF A MAJOR TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

(December 2009)

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The purpose of this study was to explore the factors related to the sustainability of a major technology initiative through the perceptions of the role of media coordinator as an empowered school leader at three North Carolina IMPACT model elementary schools. The focus of the study was on the ways in which perceptions of the media coordinator as school leader held by teachers, principals, technology facilitators, and media coordinators themselves are related to the sustainability of the model. The multiple-case study method of qualitative research was employed in the study. Data were collected from individual and focus group interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. The results from this study indicate that the key factors contributing to the sustainability of the technology initiative include leadership, a shared vision, and staff and community support; and the major threats to the continued sustainability of the model are funding and leadership succession. Results also indicate that media coordinators in the three IMPACT model schools

were perceived by their principals and teachers as valuable school leaders and change agents who significantly contributed to the success and sustainability of the model. These findings suggest that school principals and district leaders should develop plans for the sustainability of reform initiatives well before their implementation, and that dispersed leadership at the school level involving the school media coordinator may enhance the sustainability of a major technology initiative.

Implications for further research include additional studies on the sustainability factors pertaining to school reform initiatives and further empirical studies on the leadership role of the media coordinator. Additional possibilities consist of a related inquiry of IMPACT model schools within the middle school context, and an exploration of student, parent, and superintendent perceptions of the media coordinator as a school leader.