EXPLORING LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AMONG K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN NORTH CAROLINA SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING STATE-MANDATED TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

A Dissertation

By

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ABSTRACT

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The leadership role in implementing technological initiatives that are mandated by state policy may require a different set of leadership characteristics in order to navigate and successfully implement the change and systemic reform at the school level. Although principal leadership has been studied in depth with regard to the way in which principals invoke change in their schools, little information exists in how principals navigate the process of implementing state-mandated technology initiatives in their schools. This qualitative study served as an exploration of leadership qualities of North Carolina K-12 public school principals who are successfully implementing state-mandated technology initiatives in their schools. Key questions of this study included: How do K-12 public school principals who adopt a new statewide mandated
student information management system foster a positive experience for their staff that is conducive to introducing, employing, and maintaining a successful implementation of the initiative? What are the ways in which the personal and professional beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and overall vision of the principal for the implementation of policy (specifically, a statewide student information management system) affect the level at which teachers, counselors, and data managers embrace the new technology? and How would school leaders describe the role that choice makes in the effective and efficient deployment of a statewide student information management system? Through responses to electronic surveys, individual interviews, and focus group sessions this study reflected that strong, effective, and committed leadership is defined by the interaction of the organizational culture, policy attributes, preparation and sustainment, and choice, power, and pressure.