

Leadership in Context: How Superintendents Understand, Take Action and Shape the Context of Their Work

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“There is no such thing as the superintendency; instead, there are many superintendencies.”

“We concluded that it is virtually meaningless to study principal leadership without reference to context.”

“The more research I do on the superintendent, the less inclined I am to generalize, and that is due to context.”

A portal for viewing superintendents' work in context

Work Priorities

- Managing the district mission/vision and direction
- Supporting and developing principals and/or a team
- Fostering relationships, communicating with s'holders
- Managing resources

Contributions

- Personal
- Organizational
 - Child-centered
 - Focused on mission/vision
 - Built capacity

Colleagues' Jobs "Similar but Different"

- Geographic location
- School board relations
- Tenure of board members
- Existing cultures
- SIZE

Biggest challenges

- Budgeting
- Political and community influences
- Student Development and Student Achievement



Research Questions

- How do aspiring superintendents and practicing administrators become context-responsive leaders?
- Which learning environments and socialization experiences support the development of context-responsive leaders?

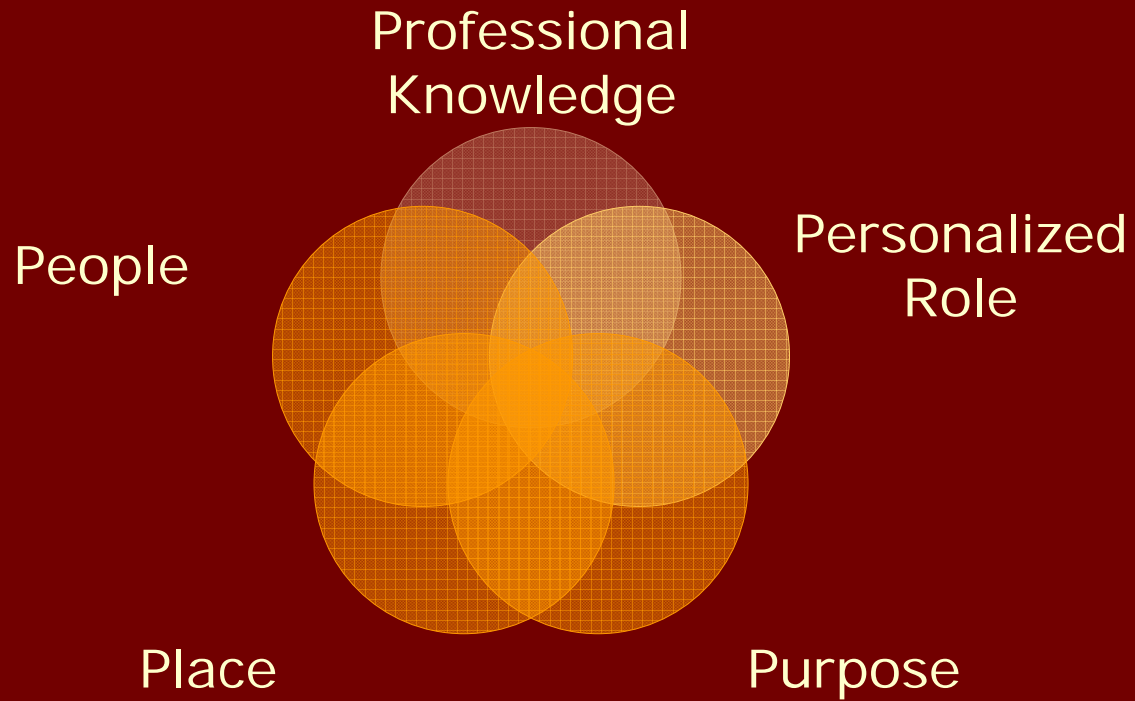
Context-Responsive Leadership is:

- Practical wisdom in action
- A complex mix of knowledge, skills and dispositions
- Expressed through interaction with dynamic contextual variables

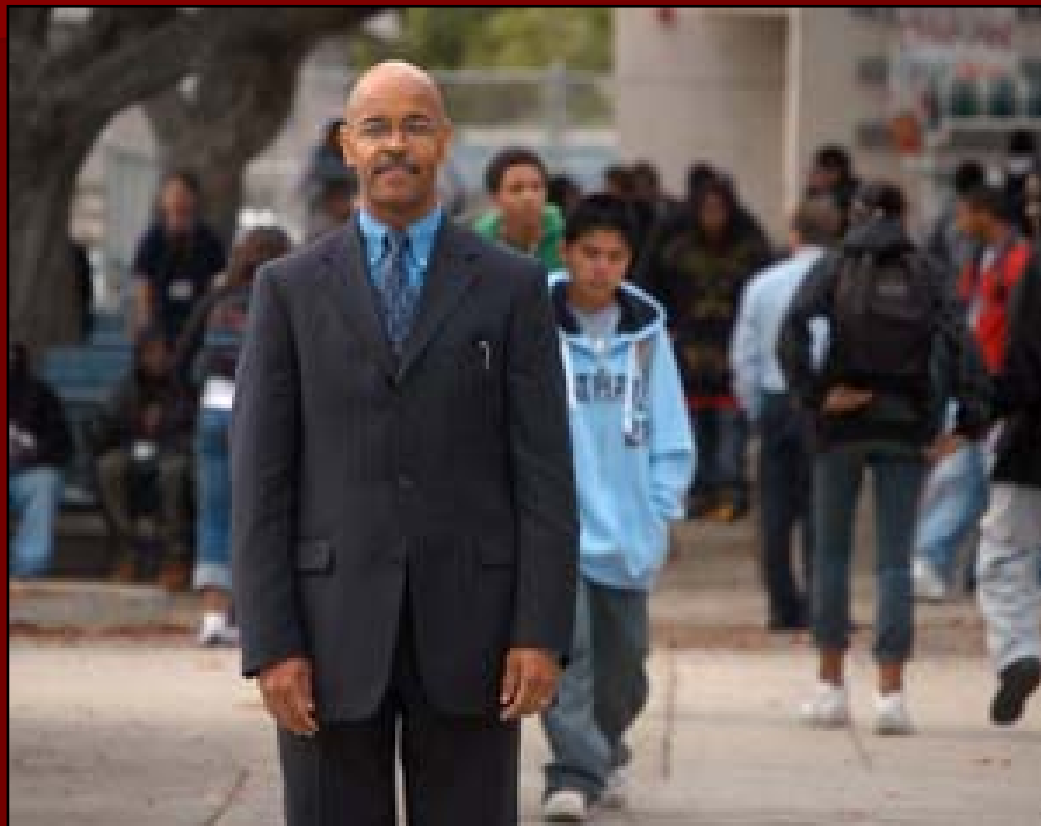
Effective Context-Responsive Leaders:

- Are contextually literate
- Engage in fluid conversation with context
- Recognize that contextual dimensions and their influences vary
- Understand that contextual variables can both enable and constrain their behaviour
- Respond to contextual constraints in appropriate time and manner
- Take action to shape their contexts

CRL Framework



Personalized Role



Professional Knowledge



Propositional
Procedural
Personal
Process
Tacit

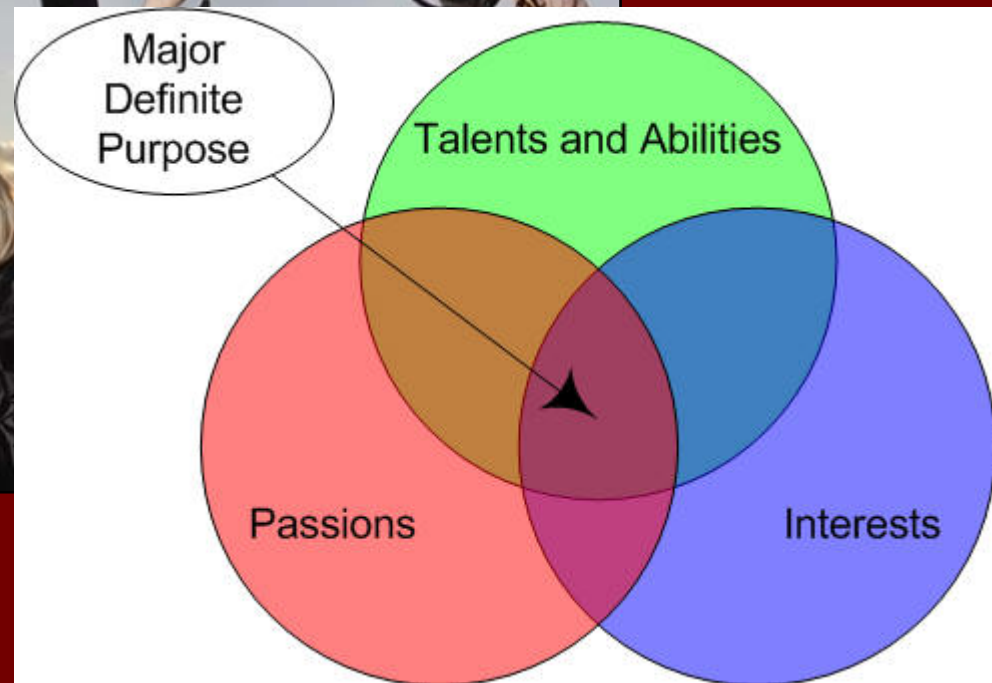
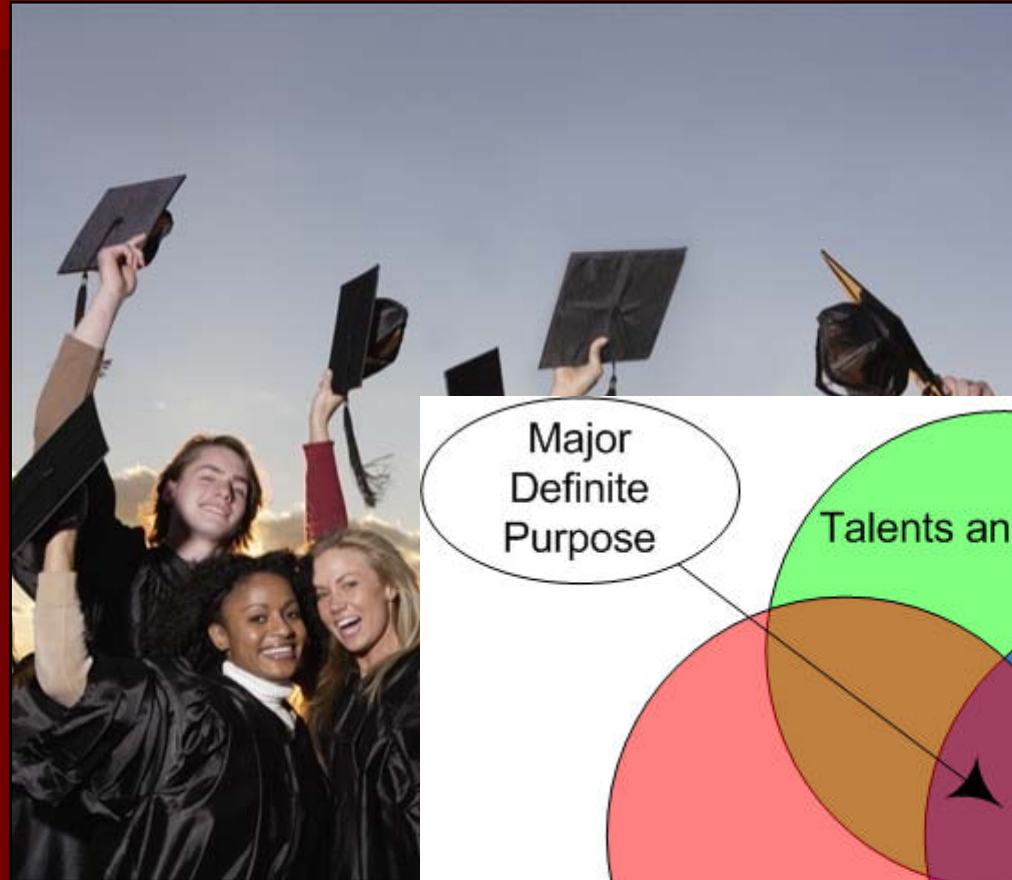
People



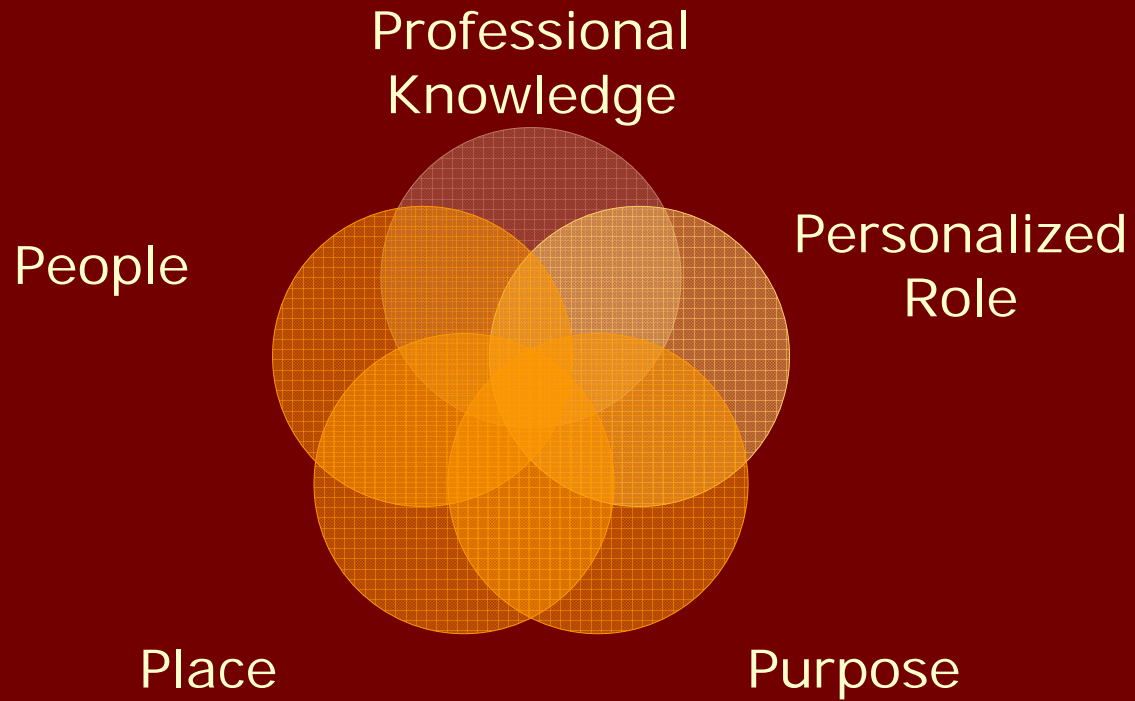
Place



Purpose



CRL Framework



The Path to Context-Responsive Leadership



Practitioner

Superintendent

Preparation

On-going



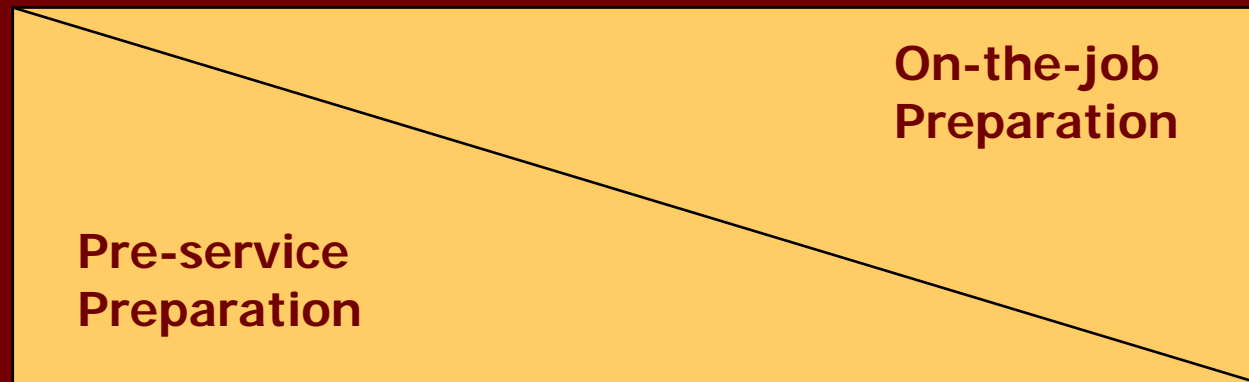
Practitioner

Preparation

On-going



The Path to Context-Responsive Leadership



How do aspiring superintendents and practicing administrators become context-responsive leaders?

A combination of settings:

- Formal learning

- Informal learning

- Job-embedded learning

- On-going professional development

Time

Resources

Supportive social interactions

Motivation & willingness to learn

Which learning environments and socialization experiences support the development of context-responsive leaders?

