

## **“One Voice” International Conferences 2009 The One Voice Institute of Elemental Ethics and Education**

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Dr. Cray is a faculty member in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program at the University of Northern Colorado. She has been an assistant superintendent, program evaluator and consultant with school reform efforts at district and building levels. Her current research interests focus on education reform, principal leadership and small school studies.

### **Supporting New School Leaders**

What are the noted pitfalls in that first year of a principalship? What are the gaps in the general administration preparation programs for principal licensure that surface within the localized environments of district schools? This study asked superintendents about their newly hired principals. The intent behind this query was to review the professional needs of new principals in order to frame a transition process that recognized both the universal skills necessary for successful school leadership and the local behaviors or orientations necessary for successful leadership within the district context. The findings and the interstate school leaders licensure consortium standards suggest that a transition period is to be expected. Of concern however, is the degree to which this transition must be borne by the individual him/herself. The array of new administrator needs noted by the superintendents in this study suggests a need to formalize strong, on-going connections between preparation programs and local districts. Such coordination could serve to bring effective teachers through leadership development and assure on-site support for interpreting and managing the year one challenges of a new principal.