

AN ANALYSIS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS OF THE NEBRASKA AND DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICTS OF THE
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD (WELS)

by

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SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN DAKOTA-MONTANA AND NEBRASKA WELS SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Servant leadership has emerged as a powerful and effective style of leadership. By using Laub's Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA), the researcher was able to analyze how leadership practices and beliefs impact how members function within an organization. The OLA was given to each Lutheran elementary school teacher and principal in the elementary schools, as well as the district leadership that comprise two districts within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). By taking the OLA, these district leaders, principals and teachers were asked to respond to the various statements as they believe to be true about their district schools. The two districts surveyed were the Nebraska District (NE) and the Dakota-Montana (D-M) District. The Nebraska district consists of seventeen schools, and the Dakota-Montana district consists of five schools. By completing the OLA, WELS teachers, principals and district leaders provide valuable insight as to the extent servant leadership is present in their respective districts, as well as in their individual schools. The results of this study will help participating WELS schools determine how they view the leadership in their district as an organization. These results may also be used by the ten other WELS districts to assess the level at which district leaders, principals, and teachers perceive servant leadership characteristics to be present in their districts and schools.

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I would like to thank all the leaders, principals, and teachers in the WELS Nebraska and Dakota-Montana districts who completed the assessment tool. They are an exceptional group of educators dedicated to sharing Jesus with our youth. May the Lord continue to bless their efforts of serving him and serving one another.

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My encouragement for all who read this paper or work in our beloved WELS school system was written perfectly by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul: *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant...*” (Philippians 2:5-7).

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

There are many theories regarding school leadership. Leaders implement and exhibit differing leadership theories, all aimed at promoting leader-follower relationships within their organizations (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). In 1970, Robert Greenleaf wrote an essay, entitled “The Servant as Leader,” in which he emphasized serving the greater needs of others as the number one goal of leadership. It is the author’s belief that servant leadership is a powerful form of leadership. It is also believed WELS school leaders are quite familiar with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as presented in the Bible. Following the example of Christ, WELS leaders have a solid example of true servant leadership to guide their ministries. Many leaders agree servant leadership has its foundations in basic Christian principles (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003; Thompson, 2002). This study uses Laub’s OLA (1999) to analyze the level of servant leadership present in the WELS Nebraska and Dakota-Montana district Lutheran elementary schools.

Definition of Terms

Principal: The principal is the head teacher or administrator of the school, responsible for overseeing daily operations and instruction within the school building.

Leadership: For the purpose of this study, leadership is the process by which an individual influences other individuals for the purpose of achieving a common goal or vision. “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2012, p. 6).

Followers: Followers, by definition, are individuals who adhere to the direction of their leaders. These individuals will partner with leaders for the purpose of achieving a common goal or vision.

Servant Leadership: Servant leadership is the approach to leadership “with leaders as ‘servants’ who focus on their followers’ needs in order to help these followers become more autonomous, knowledgeable, and like servants themselves” (Northouse, 2012, p. 2). This approach to leadership places the good of the followers over the good of the leaders.

Significance of the Study

Leadership in Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) schools has its roots in the Word of God and is based on the leadership exhibited by Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who taught his disciples to serve when he said, “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28).

Servant leadership has been widely studied in organizations from public schools to small businesses, from public works employees to Fortune 500 companies. This study looks at servant leadership and to what extent principals and teachers perceive servant leadership to be present within their district. The results of this study may also be helpful for all WELS districts to assess the level of servant leadership in their district schools. By using Laub’s OLA instrument, district leaders, principals and teachers will be able to establish the extent to which servant leadership is perceived to be present within their district by focusing on these six key components of servant organizations - Display Authenticity, Value People, Develop People, Build Community, Provide Leadership, and Share Leadership.

Setting

This study was carried out by administering Laub's Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA). The OLA was sent to the district leaders, principals and teachers connected to each WELS Lutheran Elementary School within the synod's Nebraska and Dakota-Montana Districts. Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

Through the use of Laub's OLA, this study focused on servant leadership and the extent it is perceived to be present within WELS schools in two districts within the WELS. The OLA instrument was given to each principal and teacher at each WELS elementary school in the Nebraska and Dakota-Montana districts. The OLA will provide an objective look at how servant leadership is perceived by each school's faculty. It is assumed that any differences in perception of the level of servant leadership will be revealed in this study. This study assumes servant leadership exists in all WELS schools to varying degrees, based on the scriptural principles set forth by the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

A second assumption of this study is that WELS principals and teachers are students of the Word of God on a regular basis. They understand, from scripture, what it means to lead through service. This assumption also stems from the annual WELS Principal and Teacher Performance Assessment forms which evaluate each principal and teacher's service in their current school. Principals are evaluated in the areas of spiritual leadership, educational leadership, professional relationships, and administrative characteristics. Teachers are evaluated

in the areas of classroom instruction, classroom management, relationships, and professional characteristics.

A final assumption is that the individuals completing the OLA answered honestly about their perceived level of servant leadership within their respective districts.

This study was limited to district leaders, principals and teachers from WELS Lutheran elementary schools within two of the twelve districts of the WELS. The two districts in this study are the Nebraska and Dakota-Montana districts.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholarly articles about servant leadership have appeared in magazines, journals, and newspapers aimed at organizational leaders in the corporate world. Servant leadership has become an “emerging” leadership style in the world of education today (Northouse, 2012). The theory of servant leadership continues to gain support and credibility, as is evident in the amount of research and documentation on the topic (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Marzano, Walters & McNulty, 2005; Thompson, 2002).

The concept of servant leadership is not new. Robert Greenleaf is credited with introducing this concept in his 1970 essay, *The Servant as Leader*. In this essay, Greenleaf stated, “the Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve” (1970). According to his visionary essays on servant leadership, Greenleaf claimed this form of leadership is one that serves others first, putting the needs of the followers before the needs of the leader.

Greenleaf’s inspiration for the servant leadership concept stemmed from the main character in Herman Hesse’s novel, *Journey to the East* (1956). In this novel, the main

character, Leo, accompanies a group of individuals on a journey. Leo is the servant who takes care of all the chores for the group and is the one who keeps the group's spirits high along the journey. The trip goes well until Leo disappears. The group quickly begins falling apart in despair. It wasn't until Leo was found several years later, the group realized Leo had been the leader all along. He was first known as the servant, yet through his actions, attitude, and demeanor, Leo was truly the leader of the group. Greenleaf summarized this idea in his writings by defining a leader's greatness as being seen as a servant first.

Larry Spears, the president and CEO of the Spears Center for Servant Leadership, has spent several decades studying Greenleaf's documents. In his *Insights on Leadership*, Spears identified ten dimensions or characteristics of true servant leadership. These include the following: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (1998). Spears concluded that the development of a servant leader will include these ten characteristics. Although this list is not exhaustive of what a servant leader exhibits, they are central in the development and actions of servant leaders. In one of his essays, Greenleaf stated that these characteristics will show themselves in the way the leader lives his or her life (Greenleaf & Spears, 1998).

Bolman and Deal (1995) include the idea of empowerment as a key aspect of servant leadership. Servant leaders must be able to hand over some of their power to their followers, better yet, work to empower their followers. It starts with a care for others and a care for the organization at large. Whitaker (2003) states, "Once we create an environment where it is cool to care, there are no wrong decisions" (p. 90). It is at that point that true servant leaders will work to empower their followers to make decisions, give input, and lead in some capacity.

Empowering followers does not happen by giving in to follower demands, but rather asks the leader to care, to listen, and trust in his team to do the right thing. The idea of “hoard power, dampen spirit” (Bolman & Deal, 1995), can destroy all attempts at servant leadership and ultimately have a negative impact on the entire organization. Hoerr (2005) describes listening as a key ingredient for successful leadership, and that listening helps a leader establish relationships with those who are led. Bolman and Deal would conclude that if a leader works hard to empower his followers, he will find himself having more power and a higher level of satisfaction as leader. Goldberg (2001) goes a step further stating that in order to have a successful organization in the long-term, sharing power will “broaden leadership and skill capacity and build expertise among people” (p. 53). Empowering followers will help develop a broad base of leaders. Regarding empowering followers, Spears and Lawrence (2002) state, “You can focus instead on vision and values and release the enormous human creativity, the human ingenuity, the resourcefulness, the intelligence of people to accomplish those purposes” (p. 29). *Those purposes* include the common vision and values of the organization as well as vital relationships.

A natural question might be, “Who is a servant leader?” or “What does a servant leader look like?” In their book, *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership*, Sipe and Frick offer this definition of a servant leader: “A Servant-Leader is a *person of character* who *puts people first*. He or she is a *skilled communicator*, a *compassionate collaborator* who has *foresight*, is a *systems thinker*, and *leads with moral authority*” (2009, p.4). These seven pillars parallel Spears’ ten characteristics of servant leaders. Sipe and Frick focus on how an individual transforms into a servant leader, taking into account the behaviors a leader must exhibit in order to develop leadership that not only works, but also endures. These pillars, and the set of skills that

accompany them, are key for WELS principals to reflect upon and put into practice as servant leaders in our school system today.

Laub (1999) developed the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) tool to determine the various characteristics of servant leadership. In his 1999 dissertation, Laub states that “the purpose of this study is to collect, from literature and a panel of experts, an agreed-upon list of characteristics of servant leadership, and to develop an instrument for assessing the level at which leaders and workers perceive that these characteristics are displayed in their organizations” (p. 4). The OLA’s design is not only intended for research, but also designed to help organizations diagnose areas of weakness and strength. Organizations intending to promote a culture of servant leadership can use the OLA as a self-analysis tool to find and target areas of weaknesses and strengths. Organizations using the OLA effectively believe in a “culture based on openness, trust, teamwork, leadership at all levels and integrity” (Laub, 1999, p. 24). Such organizations would use the OLA to assess the status of their current culture and see what the level at which the perceptions match between leaders and workers.

For this study, a perception match analysis was conducted between teachers and principals, teachers and district officials, and district officials and principals. This perception match analysis stated how each group perceives servant leadership to be present in their districts and then compared the similarities and differences to see how closely the perceptions match. The perception match analysis revealed the differing perceptions of those who took the OLA. A high perception match indicated a strong level of district-wide awareness and open communication among district schools.

The result of Laub’s work defined several characteristics of servant leadership. Laub placed these characteristics into six categories – Shares Leadership, Displays Authenticity,

Values People, Builds Community, Develops People, and Provides Leadership. Laub’s definition of servant leadership, the six key components of servant leadership, and the definition of the servant organization can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Laub’s servant leadership and servant leadership model

Servant Leadership is ...	
an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organization and those served by the organization.	
The Servant Leader ...	
Values People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By believing in people • By serving other’s needs before his or her own • By receptive, non-judgmental listening
Develops People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By providing opportunities for learning and growth • By modeling appropriate behavior • By building up others through encouragement and affirmation
Builds Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By building strong personal relationships • By working collaboratively with others • By valuing the differences of others
Display’s Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By being open and accountable to others • By a willingness to learn from others • By maintaining integrity and trust
Provides Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By envisioning the future • By taking initiative • By clarifying goals
Shares Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By facilitating a shared vision • By sharing power and releasing control • By sharing status and promoting others
The Servant Organization is ...	
an organization in which the characteristics of servant leadership are displayed through the organizational culture and are valued and practices by the leadership and workforce.	

* Laub, 1999, p. 25.

Within the OLA instrument, there is a set of questions that address job satisfaction. Dr. Laub (1999) included job satisfaction variables in the OLA, because he found that the more a

worker sees servant leadership in action within his or her organization, the higher the level of job satisfaction that individual has. Embedded in the last section of questions on the OLA are the six questions dealing directly with job satisfaction. More information and results of this facet of the OLA are shared in Chapters Four and Five of this study.

True servant leadership can clearly be seen in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Throughout his life there are many examples of what it means to be a servant. Jesus washed the feet of his followers (John 13), demonstrating his love for sinful man. In 2 Corinthians we are reminded that for the sake of his followers, Jesus became sin so that man could be saved (5:21). He showed his love for the entire world by taking the world's sins upon himself and opened wide heaven's door for all who believe (John 3:16). Mark 10:45 says it plainly, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many." The Holy Spirit through Paul gives encouragement to believers when he states, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant..." (Philippians 2:5-7, emphasis added). WELS principals are trained in the Word of God. Following the example of Christ as found in the Word of God, WELS principals recognize what it means to be a true servant leader. True servant leaders understand that they are servants first. They love people. They understand that power is only a gift given by those whom they serve. Servant leaders follow the example of Christ and look for opportunities to serve. They wash feet.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study used Laub's OLA to measure the six key areas of effective organizational leadership – Display Authenticity, Value People, Develop People, Build Community, Provide Leadership, and Share Leadership – within the Lutheran elementary schools of two WELS districts. For this study, the OLA was used to help school leaders in two WELS districts see how leadership practices and beliefs impact how other leaders function within their respective districts.

The OLA was given to three distinct groups within each district. The three groups and their roles within their district are as follows:

District Leaders – This group consisted of the district president and the district schools coordinator. This was the smallest group in the study, as there is one district president and one district schools coordinator in each district. All four surveys were completed.

Principals – This group consisted of the individuals who serve as the principal in each Lutheran elementary school. There are twenty-one schools (sixteen in NE and five in D-M) that received the OLA. Of those twenty-one surveys sent to principals, twelve were completed.

Teachers – This was the largest group to receive the OLA. This group consisted of educators who are full-time teachers in any grade level for grades K-8. Individuals who teach in preschools that are considered part of the Lutheran elementary school were also asked to complete the OLA. There were seventy-six surveys distributed among this group, fifty-one in NE and twenty-five in D-M. Of those surveys, fifty-nine were completed. Principals who also are full-time teachers were asked to only complete the OLA as the principal of the district school in which they serve.

Perceptions were matched among the teachers, principals, and district leaders regarding authentic and shared leadership, empowerment of teachers, and how well school leaders worked together to carry out the work in their district Lutheran elementary schools.

Another aspect of Laub's work is the Readiness for Change (RFC) factor. By taking the OLA, district leaders, principals, and teachers provide data which indicates the level of preparedness within each district to make changes to become more servant-oriented. The OLA combines the level of servant leadership with the perception match to determine the RFC for each district.

The OLA was given to each district leader, principal and teacher in WELS elementary schools in the Nebraska and Dakota-Montana districts. Surveys were sent electronically, with each individual completing the sixty-six question OLA instrument. For the Nebraska district, a total of sixty-nine surveys were distributed among the seventeen WELS elementary schools. For the Dakota-Montana district, a total of thirty-two surveys were distributed among the five Lutheran elementary schools.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Following the development of the OLA, over 100 face validity tests were conducted to ensure accuracy in scoring. From these tests, there was a consistently high perception of accuracy across the six key areas of servant leadership. The descriptions used in this study are therefore seen as accurate in describing, on average, the various levels of servant leadership as perceived by district leaders, principals, and teachers.

The OLA survey instrument was sent to each teacher, principal and district leader currently working in or with a WELS elementary school within the Nebraska and Dakota-

Montana districts. Table 2 shows the number of surveys distributed and completed in both districts.

DISTRICT	# of Surveys Teachers			Number of Surveys Principals			Number of Surveys District Leaders		
	Given	Responses	Return %	Given	Responses	Return %	Given	Responses	Return %
NE	51	44	86.2	16	10	62.5	2	2	100.0
D-M	25	15	60.0	5	2	40.0	2	2	100.0

Table 2: OLA Survey Distributions and Responses

Overall, there were 101 surveys distributed. There were seventy-five surveys completed, giving a return rate of 74.2% over the two week collection window. After the initial survey was sent, the researcher followed up a week later with an e-mail to the district principals reminding them to ensure they and their teachers completed the survey within the final collection week.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the level of servant leadership present in the WELS Nebraska and Dakota-Montana district Lutheran elementary schools. The OLA was sent to each district leader, principal, and teacher in the Lutheran elementary schools of these two districts. Overall there were seventy-six surveys distributed to teachers, twenty-one given to principals, and four given to district leaders. For the teachers, fifty-nine surveys (77.6%) were completed. For the principals, twelve surveys (57.1%) were completed. For the district leaders, four surveys (100%) were completed.

District leadership consists of the district president and district schools coordinator in each district. The principal group is comprised of the principals from each Lutheran elementary school in each district. The teacher group is comprised of all full-time preschool through eighth grade teachers working in the Lutheran elementary schools in each district. The OLA instrument was used to measure the six key areas of effective organizational leadership – Display Authenticity, Value People, Develop People, Build Community, Provide Leadership, and Share

Leadership – within the Lutheran elementary schools of these districts. The OLA measured these six characteristics of organizational and leadership practice, which are critical to the development of a servant organization.

The OLA measured the perception match among teachers, principals, and district leadership concerning the level of servant leadership present in their district schools. By taking the OLA, participants were able to see how their district and leadership are perceived by those in the organization. The OLA also allowed the researcher to look at the different perceptions that are present between the three surveyed positions (district leaders, principals, and teachers) within each district. The district leaders who took the OLA were the district presidents and district schools coordinators. The principals from the WELS Lutheran elementary schools in both districts also took the OLA. The third group taking the OLA was the full-time K-8 teachers and preschool teachers in each district's Lutheran elementary schools.

The perception match was determined by the closeness of perception among district leaders, principals, and teachers regarding the presence and strength of the six key areas of servant leadership. The OLA showed how each group perceives the level of servant leadership present in their respective district. A low perception match (also known as a perception mismatch) means there is a significant gap between the perception held by the teachers and the perception of the district leaders and principals. The six key areas were used to characterize districts that provide authentic and shared leadership, empowered teachers and a community of people who work effectively together to fulfill the work of educating students in their Lutheran schools.

To keep a distinction between the data of both districts studied, data has been presented for each district individually.

WELS Dakota-Montana District Schools

In the Dakota-Montana District, the six characteristics ranked highest to lowest were as follows: Share Leadership, Value People, Display Authenticity, Develop People, Build Community, and Provide Leadership. The following information provides an understanding of how the Dakota-Montana district schools and leadership are perceived by those within the district (district leaders, principals, and the teachers).

Teachers

The OLA uses a scale of 1-6 to determine the level of servant leadership present in the organization. The scale is as follows:

Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
1	Toxic Servant Leadership
2	Poor Servant Leadership
3	Limited Servant Leadership
4	Moderate Servant Leadership
5	Excellent Servant Leadership
6	Optimal Servant Leadership

Table 3: OLA Servant Leadership Scale Values

The survey was given to twenty-five teachers in the D-M district, and there were fifteen surveys (60%) completed. The following chart shows the average scores from the D-M district teachers.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	4	Moderate
Develop People	4	Moderate
Build Community	3	Limited
Display Authenticity	4	Moderate
Provide Leadership	3	Limited
Share Leadership	4	Moderate

Table 4: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Dakota-Montana District Teachers)

According to the data, D-M teachers generally experience the district as a positively paternalistic (parental-led) organization, where principals and district leaders take on the role of the nurturing parent, while the teachers assume the role of the cared-for child. This is

characterized by a moderate level of trust and trustworthiness along with occasional uncertainty and fear. The data indicated that creativity is encouraged as long as it doesn't move the district schools too far beyond the status quo. Risks can be taken, but failure is sometimes feared. Goals are mostly clear, though the overall direction of district schools is sometimes confused.

Principals

The scale value as seen in Table 3 was also used for principal scores. The survey was given to five principals in the D-M district, and there were two surveys (40%) completed. The following chart shows the average scores from the D-M district principals.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	4	Moderate
Develop People	4	Moderate
Build Community	4	Moderate
Display Authenticity	4	Moderate
Provide Leadership	5	Excellent
Share Leadership	5	Excellent

Table 5: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Dakota-Montana District Principals)

According to the data, D-M principals generally experience the district as a positively paternalistic (parental-led) organization characterized by a moderate level of trust and trustworthiness along with occasional uncertainty and fear. These principals generally take the role of nurturing parent. Scores indicated that principals delegate power for specific tasks and for specific positions within the district. The teachers are then encouraged to share ideas for improving their schools. Survey results indicated that district goals are mostly clear, though the overall direction of district schools is sometimes confused. Principals perceive that a positive level of cooperative work exists, along with some true collaboration.

District Leaders

The survey was given to two district leaders in the D-M district, and there were two surveys (100%) completed. The following chart shows the average scores from the D-M district leaders.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	4	Moderate
Develop People	4	Moderate
Build Community	3	Limited
Display Authenticity	4	Moderate
Provide Leadership	4	Moderate
Share Leadership	4	Moderate

Table 6: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Dakota-Montana District Leaders)

According to the data, D-M leaders generally share the same perception as the teachers regarding servant leadership. District leaders view the D-M district as a positively paternalistic (parental-led) organization characterized by a moderate level of trust and trustworthiness along with occasional uncertainty and fear. Although not significant to the overall results of this study, district leaders hold a slightly higher view of providing leadership, especially in the area communicating clear plans and goals for the district. Survey results indicated that the communication of goals is mostly clear, however, the teachers perceive occasional confusion regarding the overall direction of district schools.

Overall Perception Match

The OLA instrument measures the perception match of the teachers, principals, and district leaders, and provides data on the differing perceptions that may exist among the three groups. For the OLA, the perception match is an important aspect of understanding the way the district schools are viewed by those within each district or organization. From the data gathered

through completed surveys, the researcher was able to see the different ways the district schools are viewed from within.

The perception match was determined by the closeness of perception among D-M district leaders, principals, and teachers regarding the presence and strength of the six key areas of servant leadership. The OLA showed how each group perceives the level of servant leadership present in the D-M district. A low perception match means there is a significant gap between the perception held by the teachers and the perception of the district leaders and principals. The six key areas were used to characterize districts that provide authentic and shared leadership, empowered teachers and a community or people who work effectively together to fulfill the work of educating students in their Lutheran schools.

Table 7 details the perception match among the district leaders, principals, and teachers.

	Toxic Level 1	Poor Level 2	Limited Level 3	Moderate Level 4	Excellent Level 5	Optimal Level 6
Value People				Leaders Principals Teachers		
Develop People				Leaders Principals Teachers		
Build Community			Leaders Teachers	Principals		
Display Authenticity				Leaders Principals Teachers		
Provide Leadership			Teachers	Leaders	Principals	
Share Leadership				Leaders Teachers	Principals	

Table 7: Perception Match in Six Key Areas (Dakota-Montana District)

In this district, the district leaders and teachers had nearly the same perception of current servant leadership. This suggests a very high level of awareness and open communication. The principals viewed three areas (Build Community, Provide Leadership, and Share Leadership) slightly higher than the district leaders and teachers.

According to the data, there is a high perception match among the D-M teachers, principals, and district leaders. The data suggests a strong ability for district leaders, principals, and teachers to continue improving in the six key areas of servant leadership within the district.

The largest discrepancy showed itself in the Provide Leadership area, namely between teachers and principals. The teacher average score was 3.8, which is on the high end of Limited (Level 3). The principal score was 5.0, which is the beginning of Excellent (Level 5). Although the data shows a difference from Level 3 to Level 5, the discrepancy or mismatch was not significant.

Job Satisfaction

On the OLA, there were six factors (questions 56, 58, 60, 62, 64 and 66) used to assess the level of job satisfaction. The questions from the OLA that specifically addressed job satisfaction are as follows:

- I am working at a high level of productivity. {question 56}
- I feel good about my contribution to the organization (district). {question 58}
- My job is important to the success of the organization (district). {question 60}
- I enjoy working in this organization (district). {question 62}
- I am able to be creative in my job. {question 64}
- I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job. {question 66}

Teachers

Table 8 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the fifteen teachers in the D-M district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	4	Moderate
58	4	Moderate
60	4	Moderate
62	4	Moderate
64	5	Excellent
66	5	Excellent

Table 8: Job Satisfaction Teacher Results (Dakota-Montana District)

Principals

Table 9 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the two principals in the D-M district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	3	Moderate
58	5	Excellent
60	4	Moderate
62	5	Excellent
64	5	Excellent
66	5	Excellent

Table 9: Job Satisfaction Principal Results (Dakota-Montana District)

District Leaders

Table 10 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the two district leaders in the D-M district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	2	Poor
58	3	Limited
60	2	Poor
62	3	Limited
64	4	Moderate
66	3	Limited

Table 10: Job Satisfaction District Leader Results (Dakota-Montana District)

The teachers in the D-M district generally believed they personally are making a contribution to the district and that their jobs are important to its success. They believe they are able to use their best gifts and abilities in their job while being creative in their work. They enjoy the work they do and believe they personally are working at a high level of productivity. Principals' view of job satisfaction scored slightly higher than that of the teachers, yet both were scored in the "good" range. District leaders scored job satisfaction slightly lower than the principals and teachers, citing that this area needs a little improvement. Overall, the job satisfaction rating among leaders, principals, and teachers in the D-M district was rated as "good" or within the average of all organizations that have taken Laub's OLA.

WELS Nebraska District Schools

In the Nebraska district, the six characteristics ranked highest to lowest were Share Leadership, Display Authenticity, Value People, Build Community, Develop People, and Provide Leadership. The information that follows provides an understanding of how the Nebraska district schools and leadership are perceived by those within the district (district leaders, principals, and the teachers).

Teachers

Using the same scale found in Table 2, the researcher compared the average score of the district teachers to the average score of all organizations that completed the OLA. The survey was given to fifty-one teachers in the NE district, and there were forty-four surveys (86.2%) completed. Table 11 on the next page shows the average scores from the NE district teachers.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	5	Excellent
Develop People	5	Excellent
Build Community	5	Excellent
Display Authenticity	5	Excellent
Provide Leadership	5	Excellent
Share Leadership	5	Excellent

Table 11: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Nebraska District Teachers)

According to the data, NE teachers generally experience the district as a servant-oriented organization characterized by authenticity, the valuing of people, the building of community, and the providing and sharing of positive leadership. Results also indicated that people in this district’s schools are trusted and are trustworthy. They are motivated to serve the interests of each other before their own self-interest and are open to learning from each other. District leaders, principals and teachers view each other as partners working in a spirit of collaboration.

Principals

The survey was given to sixteen principals in the NE district, and there were ten surveys (62.5%) completed. The following chart shows the average scores from the NE district principals.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	5	Excellent
Develop People	4	Moderate
Build Community	4	Moderate
Display Authenticity	4	Moderate
Provide Leadership	4	Moderate
Share Leadership	5	Excellent

Table 12: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Nebraska District Principals)

According to the data, NE principals generally experience the district as a servant-oriented organization characterized by authenticity, the valuing of people, the building of community, and the providing and sharing of positive leadership. Results suggest these

characteristics are evident throughout much of the NE district. People are trusted and are trustworthy. Data shows they are motivated to serve the interests of each other before their own self-interest and are open to learning from each other. NE district principals view their teachers and each other as partners working in a spirit of collaboration. Principals see the need to improve in communicating a clear vision for the future of their district schools, as well as providing more support and resources to help teachers reach their goals.

District Leaders

The survey was given to two district leaders in the NE district, and there were two surveys (100%) completed. The following chart shows the average scores from the D-M district leaders.

Key Area	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	5	Excellent
Develop People	4	Moderate
Build Community	5	Excellent
Display Authenticity	5	Excellent
Provide Leadership	4	Moderate
Share Leadership	5	Excellent

Table 13: Average Scores in Six Key Areas (Nebraska District Leaders)

According to the data, NE district leaders generally experience the district as a servant-oriented organization characterized by authenticity, the valuing of people, the building of community, and the providing and sharing of positive leadership. In regards to sharing leadership, NE district leaders value a person’s work more than the person’s title. In regards to building community, the data suggests district leaders work alongside teachers and principals instead of separate from them. People are trusted and are trustworthy. They are motivated to serve the interests of each other before their own self-interest and are open to learning from each

other. District leaders, principals and teachers view each other as partners working in a spirit of collaboration.

Overall Perception Match

As it was with the D-M district, the OLA instrument measured the perception match of the teachers, principals, and district leaders of the NE district, and provided data on the differing perceptions that exist among the three groups taking the survey. From the data gathered through completed surveys, the NE district was able to see the different ways their district schools are viewed from within.

The perception match was determined by the closeness of perception among NE district leaders, principals, and teachers regarding the presence and strength of the six key areas of servant leadership. The OLA showed how each group perceives the level of servant leadership present in the NE district. A low perception match means there is a significant gap between the perception held by the teachers and the perception of the district leaders and principals. The six key areas were used to characterize districts that provide authentic and shared leadership, empowered teachers and a community or people who work effectively together to fulfill the work of educating students in their Lutheran schools.

Table 14 on the next page details the perception match among the district leaders, principals, and teachers.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN DAKOTA-MONTANA AND NEBRASKA WELS SCHOOLS

	Toxic Level 1	Poor Level 2	Limited Level 3	Moderate Level 4	Excellent Level 5	Optimal Level 6
Value People					Leaders Principals Teachers	
Develop People				Leaders Principals	Teachers	
Build Community				Principals	Leaders Teachers	
Display Authenticity				Principals	Leaders Teachers	
Provide Leadership				Leaders Principals	Teachers	
Share Leadership					Leaders Principals Teachers	

Table 14: Perception Match in Six Key Areas (Nebraska District)

In this district, the district leaders and teachers had nearly the same perception of current servant leadership. Survey results suggest a very high level of awareness and open communication. The principals viewed two areas (Build Community and Display Authenticity) slightly lower than the district leaders and teachers.

According to the data, there is a high perception match among the NE teachers, principals, and district leaders. All three groups possess a high level of energy for pursuing change, which suggests a strong ability to continue improving in the six key areas of servant leadership within the district.

Job Satisfaction

On the OLA, there were six factors (questions 56, 58, 60, 62, 64 and 66) used to assess the level of job satisfaction. The questions from the OLA that specifically addressed job satisfaction are as follows:

- I am working at a high level of productivity. {question 56}
- I feel good about my contribution to the organization (district). {question 58}
- My job is important to the success of the organization (district). {question 60}
- I enjoy working in this organization (district). {question 62}
- I am able to be creative in my job. {question 64}
- I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job. {question 66}

Teachers

Table 15 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the forty-four teachers in the NE district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	5	Excellent
58	5	Excellent
60	5	Excellent
62	5	Excellent
64	6	Optimal
66	5	Excellent

Table 15: Job Satisfaction Teacher Results (Nebraska District)

Principals

Table 16 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the ten principals in the NE district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	4	Moderate
58	4	Moderate
60	5	Excellent
62	5	Excellent
64	5	Excellent
66	5	Excellent

Table 16: Job Satisfaction Principal Results (Nebraska District)

District Leaders

Table 17 shows the average score on the job satisfaction questions for the two district leaders in the NE district who completed the OLA.

Question Number	Scale Value	Level of Servant Leadership
56	4	Moderate
58	5	Excellent
60	5	Excellent
62	5	Excellent
64	5	Excellent
66	5	Excellent

Table 17: Job Satisfaction District Leader Results (Nebraska District)

Using the six factors to assess the level of job satisfaction, the teachers in the NE district generally believed that they personally are making a significant contribution to the district and that their jobs are very important to its success. Survey results suggest these teachers are able to consistently use their best gifts and abilities in their job while being highly creative in their work. They enjoy the work they do and believe that they personally are working at a very high level of productivity. District leaders and principals had a slightly higher view of job satisfaction than the teachers. Overall, the job satisfaction rating among leaders, principals, and teachers in the D-M district was rated as “very good” or above the average of all organizations that have taken Laub’s OLA.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In his book, *Good to Great*, Jim Collins (2001) notes servant leaders carried with them the undue burden of being considered weak. Collins and his team of researchers determined that servant leaders are quite the opposite! Servant leaders are often looked at as being selfless, that is putting the needs of the organization above their own. In fact, Collins gave servant leaders the

name “Level 5” to signify leaders who are humble, empowering others within the organization to be successful in their work, which ultimately affects the success of the organization. These leaders know how to be good role models for their workers; they know how to inspire and motivate those within the organization; they do what they can to connect team members, their organization, and themselves to a shared vision; and they have a level of concern for each individual member of the team. The focus of servant leadership is on the followers, not self-interest. Servant leaders value those who make up their organization. For them, people come first.

The focus of this study was to analyze the level of servant leadership present in the WELS Nebraska and Dakota-Montana district Lutheran elementary schools, by utilizing Laub’s OLA as the instrument.

Summary Narrative

Dakota-Montana District

From the results of the OLA instrument, the data shows that the D-M district displays a Moderate level (Level 4) of servant leadership. As a district in the Moderate range, the D-M district has teachers, principals, and district leaders who experience the organization as a positively paternalistic organization. There is a moderate level of trust and trustworthiness among the workers.

To determine the D-M district’s highest and lowest scoring key areas, the teacher scores were tallied and compared to the average scores of all organizations who have taken the OLA. There were fifteen teachers out of twenty-five (60%) who completed the survey for this district. Table 18 shows the average teacher scores in the six key areas of servant leadership.

Key Area	Average Score	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	4.5	Moderate (Level 4)
Develop People	4.1	Moderate (Level 4)
Build Community	3.9	Limited (Level 3)
Display Authenticity	4.3	Moderate (Level 4)
Provide Leadership	3.7	Limited (Level 3)
Share Leadership	4.9	Moderate (Level 4)

Table 18: Average Scores in Key Areas – Teachers (Dakota-Montana District)
 (Key: An average score between 4.0-4.9 depicts Level 4, while a score between 5.0-5.9 depicts Level 5.)

The highest scoring key areas for this district were Share Leadership and Value People.

For the teachers, there were three questions on the OLA that scored the highest that contributed to the Share Leadership score. Those questions were as follows:

- Leaders in this organization (district) are humble – they do not promote themselves.
 {question 48}
- Leaders in this organization (district) do not seek after special status or “perks” of leadership. {question 53}
- Leaders in this organization do not demand special recognition for being leaders.
 {question 39}

Questions 48 and 53 scored in the Optimal level (Level 6). Question 39 scored in the Excellent level (Level 5).

There were two questions that scored high in the Value People area. Those questions were as follows:

- I am respected by those *above* me in the organization (district). {question 63}
- Leaders in this organization (district) put the needs of the workers ahead of their own needs. {question 54}

Both of these questions scored in the Excellent level (Level 5).

By scoring high in the Share Leadership area, the D-M district demonstrates a commitment to creating a shared vision, as well as sharing decision-making power, status, and privilege at all levels within the district schools. Pairing Share Leadership with high scores in the Value People area, this district shows that leaders, principals, and teachers listen receptively to each other, serving the needs of others and trusting in people.

The lowest key areas were Build Community and Provide Leadership. There was one question that stood out from the others in regards to Build Community.

- People in this organization (district) attempt to work with others more than working on their own. {question 13}

The average score from the teachers on this question was 2.8, which falls into the Poor level (Level 2) of servant leadership. From the results of this question, teachers often view themselves as isolated individuals and not part of a larger team.

There were two questions that scored low in the Provide Leadership area. Those questions were as follows:

- People in this organization (district) know where the organization is headed in the future. {question 5}

- People in this organization (district) are held accountable for reaching work goals.

{question 14}

Both of these questions, paired with question 13, provide information showing that teachers in the D-M district are not certain of the goals for their schools, and they tend to work in isolation from other teachers and principals. Teachers do not believe they are being held accountable for reaching their goals.

With Build Community and Provide Leadership as their lowest scoring areas, the teacher scores indicate that they are looking for more direction from the leadership. This includes working to build stronger relationships, working collaboratively, valuing individual differences, envisioning the future, taking initiative, and clarifying goals.

Nebraska District

From the results of the OLA instrument, the data shows that the NE district displays an Excellent level (Level 5) of servant leadership. As a district in the Excellent range, the NE district has teachers, principals, and district leaders who experience the district as a servant-oriented organization. There is a high level of authenticity where people are valued and community is developed. People in this district are trusted and are trustworthy.

To determine the NE district's highest and lowest scoring key areas, the teacher scores were tallied and compared to the average scores of all organizations who have taken the OLA. There were forty-four teachers out of fifty-one (86%) who completed the survey for this district. Table 19 shows the average teacher scores in the six key areas of servant leadership.

Key Area	Average Score	Level of Servant Leadership
Value People	5.6	Excellent (Level 5)
Develop People	5.4	Excellent (Level 5)
Build Community	5.5	Excellent (Level 5)
Display Authenticity	5.8	Excellent (Level 5)
Provide Leadership	5.2	Excellent (Level 5)
Share Leadership	5.9	Excellent (Level 5)

Table 19: Average Scores in Key Areas – Teachers (Nebraska District)
 (Key: An average score between 4.0-4.9 depicts Level 4, while a score between 5.0-5.9 depicts Level 5.)

The highest scoring key areas for this district were Share Leadership and Display Authenticity. For the teachers, there were three questions on the OLA that scored the highest which contributed to the Share Leadership score. Those questions were as follows:

- Leaders in this organization do not demand special recognition for being leaders.
 {question 39}
- Leaders in this organization (district) seek to influence others out of a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position. {question 41}
- Leaders in this organization (district) are humble – they do not promote themselves.
 {question 48}

All three of the above questions scored in the Optimal level (Level 6).

There was one question in particular that scored high in the Display Authenticity area. That question was as follows:

- People in this organization (district) demonstrate high integrity and honesty. {question 10}

This question also scored in the Optimal level (Level 6).

By scoring high in the Share Leadership area, the NE district (like the D-M) district demonstrates a commitment to creating a shared vision, as well as decision-making power, status, and privilege at all levels within the district schools. Pairing that with high scores in Display Authenticity, servant leadership is seen by a high level of integrity and trust, openness and accountability, and willingness to learn from others.

The lowest key areas were Provide Leadership and Develop People. It is important to note that although these are the lowest scores for this district, the average score in each of these areas actually falls in the Moderate (Level 4) range of servant leadership. Of the six lowest scoring questions on the OLA, three were under Provide Leadership. Those questions were as follows:

- People in this organization (district) are held accountable for reaching work goals.
{question 14}
- People in this organization (district) know where this organization (district) is headed in the future. {question 5}
- Leaders in this organization (district) encourage people to take risks even if they may fail.
{question 36}

There were two questions that scored low under Develop People. Those questions were as follows:

- People in this organization (district) view conflict as an opportunity to grow. {question 20}
- Leaders in this organization (district) provide mentor relationships in order to help people grow professionally. {question 50}

With Develop People and Provide Leadership scoring the lowest on the survey, the NE teachers are also looking for a little more direction from the leadership. The teachers would like more opportunities for learning and modeling appropriate behavior, as well as more opportunities for building up others through encouragement.

Job Satisfaction

On the OLA instrument, there were six factors used to determine job satisfaction by position (district leaders, principals, and teachers). Those six factors were as follows:

- I am working at a high level of productivity. {question 56}
- I feel good about my contribution to the organization (district). {question 58}
- My job is important to the success of the organization (district). {question 60}
- I enjoy working in this organization (district). {question 62}
- I am able to be creative in my job. {question 64}
- I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job. {question 66}

Dakota-Montana District

In regards to job satisfaction, the teachers in the D-M district reported that they believe they personally are contributing to the district and that their jobs are important to the district's success. They do feel that they are able to use their best gifts and abilities in their jobs while being creative in the work. They enjoy the work they do and believe that they personally are working at a high level of productivity. On Laub's scale, the teachers and principals fall into the "Good" range, while the district leaders fall slightly under that in the "Needs Improvement" range. Data indicates that the difference in scores did not show a significant discrepancy to the overall job satisfaction results for this district.

Nebraska District

In regards to job satisfaction, the teachers in the NE district reported that they believe they personally are making a significant contribution in their district and that their jobs are very important to the district's success. Teachers feel they are able to consistently use their best gifts and abilities in their job while being highly creative in their work. These teachers enjoy the work they do and believe that they are personally working at a very high level of productivity. On Laub's scale, the district leaders and teachers fall into the "Very Good" range, while the principals are securely positioned in the "Good" range. The slight variation in results did not negatively impact the overall rating for job satisfaction in this district.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Greenleaf (1977) spoke of servant leadership's tremendous impact on organizational performance, mainly due to trusting relationships being cultivated. Greenleaf firmly believed that leaders who put the needs of their followers first were more likely of having a high performing organization with a culture built on trust. In these organizations, there is a good relationship between values, performance, trust, leadership, and organizational culture.

WELS schools are centered on the foundation of God's Word, in which there is much to learn about The Servant Leader, Jesus Christ. There is no better picture of a servant heart than that of our Savior, Jesus. Jesus' own life and teachings epitomizes what a true servant leader is. Consider the many miracles he performed during his life on earth. Each time, he showed his power by serving the needs of others. His motivation was his love for mankind. His entire life was a life of service. He, as the true servant leader, empowered his followers to carry on the all-

important task of making disciples. Jesus showed in his words and actions what servant leadership is all about.

In this study, servant leadership was analyzed within the context of Lutheran elementary schools in two WELS districts. In both the Dakota-Montana district and the Nebraska district, there is room for improving the level of servant leadership present in their schools. The overall perception match of servant leadership present was higher in the Dakota-Montana district, and the actual level of servant leadership rated higher in the Nebraska district. The overall OLA scores from the two districts show that both districts have a level of servant leadership perceived and present to be able to work toward increased servant leadership. Laub calls this the Readiness-for-Change (RFC) factor. In both districts, the RFC factor was “Good,” meaning the district leaders, principals, and teachers possess a high level of energy for pursuing change. This suggests a strong ability to continue improving in the six key aspects of servant leadership (Share Leadership, Value People, Display Authenticity, Develop People, Build Community, and Provide Leadership). The RFC Chart in Appendix 2 shows the level at which the Lutheran elementary schools of the NE and D-M districts demonstrate a readiness to move their districts toward becoming completely servant-minded organizations.

What this means for both districts is that to maintain RFC, each district should continue to build awareness and open communication among district leaders, principals, and teachers. They can do this by sharing the results of the study and facilitating open discussion around them toward agreed upon improvement.

Final Thoughts

WELS schools are a vital part of each operating congregation's ministry. These schools are also a large part of each district's ministry. The schools that make up each district are also part of a larger ministry, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. As a part of the synod, these schools "walk together" in their mission and vision of providing a quality Christian education to children in their congregations and communities.

Organizations that place the good of those led over the self-interest of others are servant organizations. Servant leadership promotes valuing and developing people, builds community, practices authenticity, provides and shares leadership for the common good of each individual, the entire organization, and those who are served by the organization. The purpose of this study was to analyze the level of servant leadership present in the WELS Nebraska and Dakota-Montana district Lutheran elementary schools. By completing the OLA, the district leaders, principals, and teachers in the WELS schools in the two districts studied provided key insights into the level of servant leadership perceived and present.

WELS principals, teachers and district leaders are not just leaders. God calls each one of them to be servant leaders. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians wrote, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). Servant leaders willingly serve others, using the love of Christ as their motivation for serving.

Laub's OLA was designed to help organizations predict and diagnose leadership perceptions and practice. This study focused on assessing the Lutheran elementary schools that make up two larger districts or organizations. The OLA can certainly be used by individual

schools as well. For WELS schools to become more servant oriented, achieving the optimal level of servant leadership, the OLA could be administered. Doing so allows the schools to assess themselves based on a valid and reliable instrument. Schools would see more clearly their strengths and weaknesses and have a starting point to address them. The results of the OLA provide an objective glance into how each school is perceived by teachers and principals within individual schools. The key for any organization taking the OLA is to have an open and honest dialogue on the results, which allows ministry teams to work together to promote a culture based on trust and teamwork.

In order for WELS schools to truly be servant-oriented organizations, the leaders need to make certain that their teachers know that their voices are heard and their opinions are important. Servant leaders empower their ministry teams to actively participate toward a shared vision for the school.

At the very heart of the ministry of WELS schools is servant leadership. True servant leaders know that they are servants first. They serve their Savior, Jesus. They serve their Savior by serving others. Principals and teachers in WELS schools should strive to be servant leaders. Their actions display a commitment to the school's mission, vision, values, and policies. Servant leaders listen, show compassion, strengthen the weak, admit misjudgments, and forgive others. Working together, WELS principals and teachers can share ideas, plan, and make decisions that are in line with the school's mission. The common good of the school's ministry must always be ahead of personal gain. When this is done, a true servant organization will arise.

The WELS schools that comprise the Nebraska and Dakota-Montana districts are examples of organizations working toward becoming servant-oriented. They are well on the way toward building a shared action plan. The district leaders, principals, and teachers in each school

of these two districts now have the tools they need to begin dialogue about servant leadership in their settings. By completing the OLA and following these three steps, these schools can now work toward achieving the optimal level of servant leadership.

- 1) Build a shared awareness through an open discussion of the OLA results.
- 2) Build readiness for change (RFC) by increasing open communication leading to an increased level of trust.
- 3) Work together to develop the six key areas of servant leadership (Share Leadership, Display Authenticity, Value People, Build Community, Develop People, and Provide Leadership).

Robert Greenleaf, in talking about promoting servant leadership stated, “And we can teach others. Each of us who is willing to learn can teach. *We can have great schools* if we will help inspired and skillful institution builders to evolve as their leaders!” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 244). WELS schools are “great schools.” Built on the foundation of God’s Word, WELS schools promote servant leadership. WELS school leaders are encouraged to be devoted to their calling – the calling to serve the Lord and their fellowman. That is following the example of our Savior. That is servant leadership.

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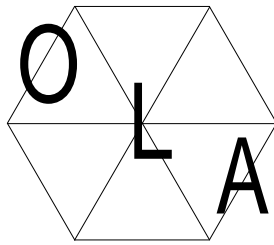
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Appendix One – Laub’s Organizational Leadership Assessment Instrument



Organizational Leadership

General Instructions

The purpose of this instrument is to allow organizations to discover how their leadership practices and beliefs impact the different ways people function within the organization. This instrument is designed to be taken by people at all levels of the organization including workers, managers and top leadership. As you respond to the different statements, please answer as to what you believe is generally true about your organization or work unit. Please respond with your own personal feelings and beliefs and not those of others, or those that others would want you to have. Respond as to how things *are* ... not as they could be, or should be.

Feel free to use the full spectrum of answers (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). You will find that some of the statements will be easy to respond to while others may require more thought. If you are uncertain, you may want to answer with your first, intuitive response. Please be honest and candid. The response we seek is the one that most closely represents your feelings or beliefs about the statement that is being considered. There are three different sections to this instrument. Carefully read the brief instructions that are given prior to each section. Your involvement in this assessment is anonymous and confidential.

Before completing the assessment it is important to fill in the name of the organization or organizational unit being assessed. If you are assessing an organizational unit (department, team or work unit) rather than the entire organization you will respond to all of the statements in light of that work unit.

IMPORTANT please complete the following

Write in the name of the organization or organizational unit (department, team or work unit) you are assessing with this instrument.

Organization (or Organizational Unit) **Name:** _____

Indicate **your present role/position** in the organization or work unit. Please **circle one**.

1 = Top Leadership (district leaders)

2 = Management (elementary school principals)

3 = Workforce (elementary school teachers)

Please provide your response to each statement by placing an **X** in one of the five boxes

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Section 1

In this section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to **the entire organization** (or organizational unit) including workers, managers/supervisors and top leadership.

In general, people within this organization

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Trust each other					
2 Are clear on the key goals of the organization					
3 Are non-judgmental – they keep an open mind					
4 Respect each other					
5 Know where this organization is headed in the future					
6 Maintain high ethical standards					
7 Work well together in teams					
8 Value differences in culture, race & ethnicity					
9 Are caring & compassionate towards each other					
10 Demonstrate high integrity & honesty					
11 Are trustworthy					
12 Relate well to each other					
13 Attempt to work with others more than working on their own					
14 Are held accountable for reaching work goals					
15 Are aware of the needs of others					
16 Allow for individuality of style and expression					
17 Are encouraged by supervisors to share in making <i>important decisions</i>					
18 Work to maintain positive working relationships					

SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN DAKOTA-MONTANA AND NEBRASKA WELS SCHOOLS

19	Accept people as they are					
20	View conflict as an opportunity to learn & grow					
21	Know how to get along with people					

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Section 2

In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to the **leadership** of the organization (or organizational unit) including managers/supervisors and top leadership

Managers/Supervisors and Top Leadership in this Organization		1	2	3	4	5
22	Communicate a clear vision of the future of the organization					
23	Are open to learning from those who are <i>below</i> them in the organization					
24	Allow workers to help determine where this organization is headed					
25	Work alongside the workers instead of separate from them					
26	Use persuasion to influence others instead of coercion or force					
27	Don't hesitate to provide the leadership that is needed					
28	Promote open communication and sharing of information					
29	Give workers the power to make <i>important</i> decisions					
30	Provide the support and resources needed to help workers meet their goals					
31	Create an environment that encourages learning					
32	Are open to receiving criticism & challenge from others					
33	Say what they mean, and mean what they say					
34	Encourage each person to exercise leadership					
35	Admit personal limitations & mistakes					
36	Encourage people to take risks even if they may fail					
37	Practice the same behavior they expect from others					
38	Facilitate the building of community & team					
39	Do not demand special recognition for being leaders					

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40	Lead by example by modeling appropriate behavior					
41	Seek to influence others from a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position					
42	Provide opportunities for all workers to develop to their full potential					
43	Honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others					
44	Use their power and authority to benefit the workers					
45	Take appropriate action when it is needed					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Managers/Supervisors and Top Leadership in this Organization

		1	2	3	4	5
46	Build people up through encouragement and affirmation					
47	Encourage workers to work <i>together</i> rather than competing against each other					
48	Are humble – they do not promote themselves					
49	Communicate clear plans & goals for the organization					
50	Provide mentor relationships in order to help people grow professionally					
51	Are accountable & responsible to others					
52	Are receptive listeners					
53	Do not seek after special status or the “perks” of leadership					
54	Put the needs of the workers ahead of their own					

Section 3

In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it is true about **you personally** and **your role** in the organization (or organizational unit).

In viewing my own role ...

		1	2	3	4	5
55	I feel appreciated by my supervisor for what I contribute					
56	I am working at a high level of productivity					

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57	I am listened to by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
58	I feel good about my contribution to the organization					
59	I receive encouragement and affirmation from those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
60	My job is important to the success of this organization					
61	I trust the leadership of this organization					
62	I enjoy working in this organization					
63	I am respected by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
64	I am able to be creative in my job					
65	In this organization, a person's <i>work</i> is valued more than their <i>title</i>					
66	I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job					

Appendix Two: Readiness for Change Chart (both districts)

Readiness for Change (RFC)

