The Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership presents

Ways of Leading: A Phenomenological Study of Women Superintendents

Friday, March 16, 2018  1:00-2:00 p.m.
Hillyer Hall Room 252

Dissertation Defense by
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A gendered narrative that excludes the experiences, perspectives, and voices of women superintendents has dominated research regarding leadership development, leadership theory, and the school superintendency. The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to provide women superintendents an opportunity to share their lived experiences of leadership development and leading as superintendent. The researcher used a qualitative, phenomenological design to develop the methodology for this study. Baxter Magolda’s (2001) theory of self-authorship served as the conceptual framework for this study to examine the leadership development and the leadership experiences of women superintendents. Baxter Magola’s theory of self-authorship comprises four phases of development for young adults through early career experiences: 1) following formulas; 2) crossroads; 3) becoming author of one’s life; and 4) internal foundation. The participants in this study included ten women superintendents. Participants engaged in individual, open-ended interviews about their leadership development and leadership experiences as superintendents. The findings of this study revealed that women’s experiences of leadership development and leading as superintendents are complex and value-driven. The women in this study shared a multifaceted approach to leadership grounded in their values and beliefs about instructional leadership, relational leadership, and collaborative leadership.

Kristina J. Martineau is an assistant superintendent for Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Schools. Prior to this role, Mrs. Martineau was a high school principal at Valley Regional High School in Region 4 and a high school English teacher at Fairfield Warde High School. Mrs. Martineau holds a Master of Arts in English from University of Newcastle upon Tyne in England, a Master of Arts in Teaching and a 6th Year Professional Certificate in Educational Leadership from Sacred Heart University in Connecticut. Her undergraduate studies include a Bachelor of Arts in English and Philosophy from Loyola University in Maryland.