Principals play a critical role supporting the student’s academic achievement. Their work has become increasingly challenging over past decades due to demands for increased accountability and a decline in fiscal and human resources. Principals, regardless of size and geographical locations, have had to assume additional work responsibilities, including additional administrative roles, in response. There is a plethora of research documenting the important role principals provide in supporting the academic achievement of students (Chickering and Reisser, 1993; Cotton, 2003; Figlio, 1999; Halinger and Heck, 2011; Leithwood, 1994; and Senge, 2007). Marzano et al.’s. (2005) research, as described in his book, School Leadership That Works, identified 21 principal responsibilities for school leadership that are empirically correlated to increased student achievement. Given the current dilemma of an increasing number of principals having to assume additional leadership responsibilities, coupled with continuing demands placed on school leaders and teachers to increase student achievement, this study seeks to determine whether there are differences, if any, between principals who hold single and multiple administrative roles and their ability to implement Marzano’s second-order change responsibilities.
To conduct this study, 62 principals in a Midwestern area were contacted and asked to participate. A SurveyMonkey instrument was administered to principals and they were asked to indicate their level of agreement with 36 statements related to Marzano et al.’s (2005) second-order principal-leadership responsibilities. The study identified seven directional hypotheses that were closely aligned to Marzano’s second-order change responsibilities. An independent t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the perception of principals in schools with single administrative roles, as compared to principals holding multiple administrative roles, and their capacity to implement Marzano’s second-order change responsibilities.

Findings in this study indicate there was one hypothesis that found a significant difference between the two groups of principals. Principals with multiple administrative roles indicated they had more difficulty in monitoring and evaluating staff, programs, and procedures than their corresponding counterparts. The study concludes with recommendations for further study and suggestions to district administrators, professional organizations and school boards for improving the working conditions of principals in these challenging positions.