# Crisis Leadership: The Experiences of Six Texas Superintendents During The Covid-19 Pandemic

Ismael Gonzalez
Gregory-Portland Independent School District

Gerri M. Maxwell
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

Scott Elliff
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

Bernadine Cervantes
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

**ABSTRACT**

The study sought to qualitatively capture and examine the leadership experiences of six superintendents who led their school districts during the COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of the Boin et al., (2017) Five Critical Tasks of Strategic Crisis Leadership framework centered on sensemaking, decision-making and coordinating, meaning making, accounting, and learning. This phenomenological case study design explored the lived experiences (Clandinin & Connally, 1996) of these Texas superintendents and may contributes to the emerging scholarly literature on leading in times of crisis.

Keywords:  crisis leadership, superintendents, COVID-19

**INTRODUCTION**

Amid growing worldwide concern surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an executive order on March 19, 2020, that required all Texas public school systems to temporarily close their local schools for in-person classroom instruction (Office of the Governor, 2020). Abbott's decisive action concerning Texas schools followed the declaration of a national emergency on March 13, 2020, from the President of the United States of America (U.S.A.), Donald Trump, who resolved to combat the national trend of rising COVID-19 cases (Mizumoto & Chowell, 2020). Two days prior, the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared COVID-19 a "global pandemic," and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus publicly expressed concern and predicted the continued, rapid spread of the disease throughout the world (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). While many world industries were required to cease production and temporarily close during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, governmental agencies —including particularly those located in the State of Texas— were required to continue providing essential services. By that designation public school districts were to remain accessible to ensure the continuity of student instruction, health, and nutrition, with administrators left to balance the degrees of health risk to staff versus the consequences of educational disruption (Lordan, Fitzgerald, & Grosser, 2020).

Public response to the pandemic was reactive, lacking preparation and planning at the highest levels of government, leaving local public leaders such as school superintendents to immediately re-think all school operations (Dzigbede, Gehl, & Willoughby, 2020). According to Kettl (2020), the federal government provided minimal support at the national level, thus creating intergovernmental friction which rendered each individual state void of a clear, unified vision to combat the vast implications of COVID-19. The intent of this study was to provide an understanding of the crucial role public school superintendents played during unprecedented time in history as they worked tirelessly to navigate and interpret rapidly-changing local, state, and national policies during a world-wide crisis while leading their school districts to remain student-focused and service-oriented even in light of growing personal and professional concerns weighing on school staff, parents, and students in their communities.

**ACADEMIC RATIONALE LEADING IN CRISIS**

Gigliotti (2020) asserts that leadership becomes most critical, visible, and desired during a chaotic series of events that enable the leaders of an organization to make problem-solving decisions for the best interest of all stakeholders. Thus, the leadership of a school superintendent is often vital during a public crisis. The emergence of an unprecedented worldwide pandemic coupled with the responsibility to lead their respective school districts left both newly-hired and experienced superintendents confronted with high-risk, career-impacting scenarios in job positions that average a span of only three to five years (O'Conner, 2018).

Disruptive anomalies can occur during crisis events with potential to negatively impact an organization, and the leader must address challenges that require building relationships and communicating with an entire community to collectively make sense of chaotic matters through reflection and impart organizational change, improvement, and renewal (Gigliotti, 2020). In the context of crisis leadership, Nicola et al. (2020) assert that the COVID-19 pandemic caused negative impacts for socioeconomic populations struggling with social mobility, hunger, mental health, access to instructional resources, and many other needs that were attributed to

increasing levels of inequity. School leaders had to respond by expanding and strengthening professional support for teaching and learning during the pandemic (Tran, Choi, & Wang, 2020). Similar to another Coastal Bend crisis, Hurricane Harvey, Hemmer and Elliff (2019) discovered that a continuous immediate response from all aspects of the organization in the midst of simultaneous chaos was required by superintendents' sense-making abilities as they navigated toward resolutions not only for the district, but the entire community as a whole.

The challenges leaders face during the emergence of a crisis include a set of interrelated and extraordinary actions for good governance that influential authors have characterized as the following: (a) detecting crisis early, (b) understanding the situation as experienced by first responders, (c) making decisions to ensure efforts by responders are coordinated, (d) willingly learning from the crisis, (e) being accountable for the actions that were taken during and after the crisis; and (f) communicating with transparency (Boin, Hart, Stern, & Sundelius, 2017; Crowe, 2013; Kitamura, 2019).

## PERSONAL RATIONALE LEADING IN CRISIS

As the Assistant Superintendent for Business, Finance, and Support Services at Wild Horse Desert ISD in South Texas —a district with a student enrollment total of roughly 10,000, and an economically disadvantaged population of approximately 60%— the lead researcher oversaw operations including Finance, Budget, Payroll, Purchasing, Risk Management, Maintenance, Construction, Transportation, Child Nutrition, and Technology. In his role in Wild Horse Desert ISD the lead researcher had been afforded many "insider" opportunities to not only observe but also to interact closely and frequently with decision-making parties, often seeking to get "inside the head and hearts" of the leadership within this district (see Brannick & Coghlan, 2007, on the value of insider research). He spent hours each week with his leadership team, collectively devoted to developing problem-solving solutions for the best interest of students in the district. He also met with teachers, principals, administrators, athletic and fine arts directors, as well as many other key personnel to review campus improvement plans conduct needs assessments, determine essential needs for curriculum, and resolve new and emerging issues daily. Over the course of his eight-year career in public education, the lead researcher has been privileged to contribute to the implementation of new organizational systems focused on cost efficient and effective operations. The pandemic experience was unique, and required new methods, practices, and the strategic application of limited resources to address needs never before witnessed in my or my colleagues' lifetimes, nor others who serve in public education.

Reflecting on his personal experience during the pandemic, the lead researcher noted that the primary goal for his organization was to ensure the safety and well-being of each student and staff member. Nonetheless, in order to receive necessary funding from the state government so that the organization could function, the district was required to continue providing instruction either physically or remotely. With lack of time to prepare and no available local plan to follow, obstacles were many including the generally predominant lack of technology resources at school and home, and no Internet connection at home for many students/staff. Wild Horse Desert ISD is located in an area of Texas that was identified as a "hotspot" for the virus, with daily rising cases and hospitalizations. While experiencing personal heartache as discouraging health reports were regularly received, the lead researcher was responsible for overseeing the continuation of finalizing and earning approval of an annual district budget amid an overwhelming amount of public uncertainty. Major mitigation purchases were prioritized, including elevating school

facility processes to frequently disinfect and sanitize all surfaces, providing daily curbside meals to our students, and staying connected with instructional technology needs for our teachers in order to provide curriculum. The degree of success attainable for school districts also hinged on our ability to stay engaged with all stakeholders at a distance, so communication and interaction via electronic means was vital to operations.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Conducting 'business as usual' is very difficult if the building seems to be on fire. But in an increasingly fast-moving world, waiting for the fire to breakout is a dubious strategy" (cited in Weiss, 2002, p.28). Having the ability to effectively lead an organization is one major attribute superintendents strive to attain as the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of public school systems. In times of crisis, superintendents find themselves working through challenges that impact not only students and staff of the public school system, but the entire community as a whole. Feeling safe during a crisis event is challenging and stressful in the face of ambiguous and varied adversity.

During the scholarly literature review process, the researcher identified a crisis leadership and management framework that is foregrounded in this study as it focuses on managing socially and politically indecisive environments. That framework is the Boin et al. (2017) theoretical lens which is comprised of Five Critical Tasks of Strategic Crisis Leadership (CTSCL) and defined in terms of the following; (a) sense-making, (b) decision-making and coordinating; (c) meaning-making, (d) accounting; and, (e) learning. The CTSCL framework was developed with the intent of providing public leaders a functional perspective dependent on responding to a crisis phenomenon and the implementation of post-crisis initiatives (Boin et al., 2017). Sense-making is described as having the ability to detect an emerging crisis in time to take effective measures, thus understanding the complexities it may bring to the organization (Boin et al., 2017). Decision-making and coordinating relies on a leader to coherently make critical decisions through the use of horizontal and vertical collaboration in the midst of a crisis (Boin et al., 2017). Boin et al. (2017) asserts that meaning-making enables a leader to articulate a situation at hand that is defined as a crisis phenomenon by describing what is at stake, what are its causes, and what can be done unitedly to mitigate disruption. Accounting, which is the fourth strategic task, is having the strength to publicly explain measures that were initiated to prevent and manage the crisis thus including a justification that assures transparency and crisis-induced accountability (Boin et al., 2017). The final strategic crisis leadership task empowers learning to become a vital component of the journey, in which findings are discovered, strengths and weaknesses are outlined, and fostering innovative reforms result in an opportunity to improve public leadership when dealing with a crisis (Boin et al., 2017).

## PERSPECTIVE AND PURPOSE

From continuing academic instruction to ensuring a safe and conducive environment for teaching and learning, superintendents were put to the test during the COVID-19 pandemic that required leadership in a time of crisis. It became evident that school systems were vital to the environment and economy on a macro level, while school superintendents and their administrative teams on a micro level needed to be focused on the priority of providing a safe and conducive environment for teaching and learning in their respective school districts.

Additionally, other concerns such as equity, lost instructional time, a lack of technology resources, and the impact on academic gaps have been simultaneously foregrounded.

The study sought to qualitatively capture and examine the leadership experiences of six superintendents who have navigated, and led their school districts during the COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of the Boin et al. (2017) Five Critical Tasks of Strategic Crisis Leadership framework centered on sense-making, decision-making and coordinating, meaning-making, accounting, and learning. This phenomenological case study design demonstrates how lived experiences (Clandinin & Connally, 1996) contributes to the emerging scholarly literature on leading in times of crisis.

## METHODOLOGY

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilized as the research methodology which is mainly concerned with a thorough exploration of lived experiences, thus making sense of that particular experience through the utilization of asking broad questions that are descriptive and reflective for the study (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). Interviews sought a sense-making approach of lived experiences through an analytical process called the hermeneutics circle which is designed to enhance overall understanding of the phenomenon through interpretation (Patton, 2015). Marshall and Rossman (2016) define interpretation as bringing meaning and coherence to the themes, patterns, and categories, thus developing connections to raw data. The author selected six participants who were employed in a K-12 public school system as a superintendent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual interviews were requested, conducted and were comprised of a series of questions focused on leaders' lived experience related to COVID-19. Interview participants' critical consciousness helped to identify the deficiencies and barriers through reflection and action, or "praxis" (Friere, 2000).

## FINDINGS

Knowledge of these six participants' experiences were explored via Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which sought to provide a thorough exploration of their lived experiences through the utilization of asking broad questions that were descriptive yet required reflection to address the focus of the study (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). By using his own insider knowledge, the researcher was able to connect with the participants on common ground having served a school district during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well (Patton, 2015). The summary table below is followed by a brief narrative profile of each superintendent seeking to provide a sense of their humanity as evidenced in their own words and experiences leading through this pandemic.

**Table I. District/Superintendent Descriptive Information**

| District | Enrollment | Superintendent | Gender | Ethnicity | Total Years' Superintendent | Total Years' Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prime ISD | 10,250 | Dr. Casey Ricardo | F | Hispanic | 8 | 37 |
| Rocky ISD | 18,150 | Dr. Diana Chavez | F | Hispanic | 8 | 34 |
| Desert ISD | 2,152 | Dr. Ellen Rios | F | Hispanic | 2 | 31 |
| Spurs ISD | 4,551 | Dr. Flora Serna | F | Hispanic | 9 | 29 |
| Eagle ISD | 55,129 | Dr. Gabriel Mendez | M | Hispanic | 8 | 26 |
| Port ISD | 3,115 | Dr. Henry Rodriguez | M | Hispanic | 7 | 25 |

**Participant Profiles**

As noted in Table I, all of the participants were Hispanic superintendents. Four were female and two were male. These leaders were currently employed geographically throughout all of Texas. These profiles share only some of the additional background on each participant; however, more significantly, these words of the participants will long resonate with the researcher, contributing wisdom and insight to the researcher's own future leadership roles.

*Dr. Casey Ricardo*

Dr. Ricardo has been the superintendent for 3 years at Prime ISD, located in a suburban area in south Texas with 95% of the student population being Hispanic and 65% being economically disadvantaged. Dr. Ricardo recognized that her experience as a long-time educator and leader was a key factor to informing her sense-making and decision-making abilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*I think you have to do steady as we go, I think you have to hold your composure. This is where everything you know about yourself, everything that you have inside you as a leader, every characteristic, this is where it all comes to the forefront, it comes to fruition and it comes to play altogether at one time.*

*Dr. Diana Chavez*

Dr. Chavez has served public education for 34 years in various positions working with all types of populations within a school. From starting her career as a classroom teacher, Dr. Chavez then became a diagnostician, special education director, federal programs director, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. Dr. Chavez has been the superintendent for four years at Rocky ISD, located in a suburban area in east Texas, with 52% of the student population White, 30% Hispanic and 24% economically disadvantaged. Aside from working in education, she shared her love for her family and spoke about her children and husband who she believes keeps her motivated to do what she does on a daily basis.

*I lead a school-district that believes in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and I will tell you that I think equity has to play in every decision that you make if you're really going to be for all kids.*

### Dr. Ellen Rios

Dr. Rios has served education for 31 years. Her passion for education has been one of many experiences that have shaped her to become a superintendent of schools in 2019. The idea of having to navigate through a pandemic was not something that Dr. Rios anticipated; however, she shared that she was confident as a veteran educator and that her experiences had helped her navigate through the crisis phenomenon. Dr. Rios has been the superintendent for two years at Desert ISD, located in a rural area in west Texas with 99% of the student population being Hispanic and 90% being economically disadvantaged. It is important to note that Dr. Rios illustrated her leadership approach as one being focused on ensuring that equity is at the forefront of each decision.

### Dr. Flora Serna

Dr. Serna has been a superintendent for the last nine years of her 29-year experience at Spurs ISD. During the interview, Dr. Serna shared that she has had the opportunity to serve throughout the entire state of Texas as a teacher, principal, director, and assistant superintendent prior to becoming a superintendent. In addition, she recalled working in rural, urban, and suburban districts in which several were faced with high poverty challenges. At Spurs ISD, a suburban area in central Texas, she shared that 78% of the population comes from an economically disadvantaged household and 70% of the student population are Hispanic. She shared

> Certainly, as we were trying to navigate how to return to school, you've got to navigate a lot of different emotions and you can't waiver on decisions that you know are in the best interest of the kids and families and your community. And I think you've got to be able to have that level of confidence.

### Dr. Gabriel Mendez

Dr. Mendez has served in education for 26 years. At the beginning of the interview, he shared the passion he has always had in educating and preparing future generations for adulthood. Dr. Mendez has been the superintendent for four years at Eagle ISD, located in a suburban area in north Texas which serves a student population that is 51% Hispanic and 25% White, with approximately 65% of those students being economically disadvantaged. Sense-making and decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic was something that Dr. Mendez reflected on during the interview, during which he expressed how hard decision-making was when employees from his own school district were losing their lives to this horrific disease.

### Dr. Henry Rodriguez

Dr. Rodriguez has worked in public education for 25 years. He started his career as a bilingual teacher, then becoming a school principal, director of curriculum and instruction, assistant superintendent and superintendent. During the interview, Dr. Rodriguez shared that his primary mission is to turnaround schools that are failing academically. Dr. Rodriguez has been the superintendent for 3 years at Port ISD, located in a rural area in south Texas serving a student

population that is 97% Hispanic and 90% economically disadvantaged. The concerns he highlighted when it comes to leading during the COVID-19 pandemic were driven by "not taking a step back" and taking advantage of the opportunities to improve the education system holistically.

> I *think the most important characteristic of a school superintendent during any time of crisis is that you got to be able to show your audience, which in this case are your customers or the stakeholders that you have a "level of control" when making an important decision that has an impact on our organization.*

In the next section, the Boin et al. (2017) CTSCL framework is examined in terms of informing themes across the participant data, seeking alignment where it occurred, and noting emergent data and the accompanying themes as well.

## Boin Crisis Leadership Framework Themes

Participant data was analyzed, using the Boin, et al., (2017) framework and the articulated research questions as a guide, yet leaving space for emergent data and themes from all the information gathered. The five critical crisis leadership task areas proffered by Boin et al. (2017) include sense-making, decision-making and coordinating, meaning-making, accounting, and learning (Boin et al., 2017). Ultimately, five research questions for the study were intentionally aligned, inasmuch as possible, to this CTSCL framework in order to have a starting point to not only guide the research process, but to inform initial data analysis efforts. To this end, the researcher was able to gather, digest, categorize, and theme the highly dynamic and sometimes ambiguous participant data accordingly as displayed in the chart below.

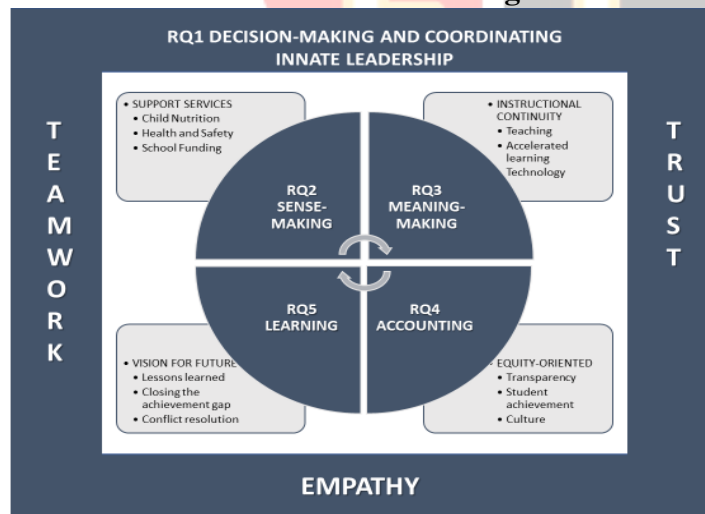**Figure 1. CTSCL Framework Based on Findings**



Figure 1 represents the researcher's framework based on the CTSCL framework as well as research question alignment, in order to depict a topical thematic organization of the data. The five areas included: (a) decision-making in the context of innate leadership; (b) sense-making in the context of support services; (c) meaning-making in the context of instructional continuity; (d) accounting in the context of equity-oriented; and, (d) learning in the context of vision for future education.

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Key findings for the study were grounded in the Boin et al. (2017) CTSCL framework. While the COVID-19 pandemic was unique, that framework held true and served as an essential guidepost for this study. The researcher's data analysis from six superintendent interviews captivated rich qualitative data that will be integral in preparing for and understanding influential circumstances that may arise during a crisis phenomenon. The critical task of decision-making and coordinating was determined to be an overarching undertaking for these leaders who navigated as superintendents of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the context of innate leadership skills that were attributed to the decision-making and coordinating approach that superintendents exhibited, the sub-themes of teamwork, trust, and empathy all played a vital role in leadership amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this study, decision-making and coordinating in the context of the Boin et al. (2017) framework was discovered as the overarching critical task that was essential across all aspects of school-district leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was evident that innate leadership skills exemplifying this critical task were inadvertently expressed in some way, shape, or form by the six superintendents that participated in this study. Teamwork was one essential component that was described as a critical element of decision-making and coordinating in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and one that set the tone for leaders in public education. The researcher concluded from each superintendent interviewed that teamwork was effective across the board not only when local participation was occurring, but also when state and federal collaboration was introduced. Working together to ensure that students and staff had the ability to continue providing a safe and conducive environment for learning was the ultimate objective for the school superintendents that were interviewed.

The ability to convey trust in every aspect of leading during these unprecedented times was another key component that was highlighted through the lens of decision-making and coordinating. As these leaders made decisions that they felt were necessary, it was vital to gain trust from stakeholders that were seeking guidance. Gaining the trust predominantly from school boards of trustees which serve as elected governing bodies for each school district, was shared as critical by each superintendent. It was imperative that these superintendents felt empowered to make major decisions in light of the challenging situations that were evolving, and having the authority to make decisions without any type of micromanagement from the school board of trustees was a critical finding in this study.

Decision-making and coordinating had become a non-stop action that these superintendents expressed was inevitable. The COVID-19 pandemic was the first global pandemic that struck since the year 1921. Crisis management plans specifically for leading during a pandemic were not in place, panic was imminent, and educational leaders around the world were trying to make sense of how to proceed with an academic program. The researcher identified that every participant exhibited empathy in their decision-making and coordinating efforts. Empathy is the third sub-theme identified by the researcher as a key component to decision-making and coordinating in the context of innate leadership. Leading by example in a calm, empathic manner was an approach that was identified in the data. Despite having to make tough decisions in light of this pandemic, these transformative leaders who were interviewed expressed their approach of putting themselves in another individual's situation prior to making a decision that would impact any facet of the school district.

Based on the researcher's findings, it was evident that the decision-making and coordinating critical task outweighed the four other tasks in this overwhelming crisis phenomenon that was new to this generation of school leaders. Nonetheless, it is imperative to point out the critical effectiveness of other tasks in the Boin et al. (2017) CTSCL which were significant based on the participant data in the study.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Some pandemic-related research is beginning to emerge given the various ways in which the crisis has widened existing socioeconomic disparities and how these inequities affect learning and educational outcomes. Future research, particularly from a superintendent leadership perspective, should continue to explore how to lead in the context of decision-making and coordinating during a crisis phenomenon, nevertheless the incorporation of sense-making, meaning-making, accounting, and learning abilities highlighted in Figure 1 (Boin et al., 2017). Also, the review and revision of school-districts' crisis management plans is recommended to maximize effectiveness and efficiency during a crisis. Based on this study, it was noted that these types of plans did not fulfil their overall expectations when it came to leading during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pandemic-specific measures are much needed within these plans, including lessons learned about how to lead during any crisis in order to be prepared for a similar event in the future.

Furthermore, professional development for educators and all stakeholders to continuously improve instructional delivery, particularly using instructional technology and other resources, is essential. The ultimate goal should include the provision of instructional continuity regardless of any type of crisis, if possible. In addition, professional development that is focused on non-traditional approaches such as leading from the heart, providing community and other emotional support, and ensuring that transparency is at the forefront is imperative.

Leaders should have time to reflect, in advance, on future approaches to systemic curriculum alignment rather than being bombarded with new policies and requirements to improve academic programs while in the midst of crisis situation. Finally, chronic absenteeism and disengagement of students and families during the pandemic only heightened the need for schools to address student engagement and strategies to enhance that engagement even during non-crisis periods. Perhaps most critical of all is the need to study the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning, how to recover the learning loss that occurred, and what might be ways to ensure that a similar crisis can be mitigated in the future by better preparation and planning.

**REFERENCES**

Boin, A., Hart, P. '., Stern, E., & Sundelius, B. (2017). *The politics of crisis management: Public leadership under pressure* (Second ed.). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1996). Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes: Teacher stories—stories of teachers—school stories—stories of schools1. *Educational Researcher, 25*(3), 24-30. doi:10.3102/0013189X025003024

Crowe, A. S. (2013). *Leadership in the open: A new paradigm in emergency management.* Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Cucinotta, D., & Vanelli, M. (2020). WHO Declares COVID-19 a Pandemic. *Acta bio-medica: Atenei Parmensis*, *91*(1), 157–160. https://doi.org/10.23750/abm.v91i1.9397

Dzigbede, K. D., Gehl, S. B., & Willoughby, K. (2020). Disaster resiliency of U.S. local governments: Insights to Strengthen local response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Public Administration Review, 80*(4), 634-643. doi:10.1111/puar.13249

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th ed.). New York, NY: Bloomsbury.

Gigliotti, R. A. (2019). *Crisis leadership in higher education: Theory and practice*. Rutgers University Press.

Hemmer, L., & Elliff, D. S. (2019). Leaders in action: The experiences of seven Texas superintendents before, during, and after hurricane Harvey. *Educational Management, Administration & Leadership, 48*(6), 174114321987307-985. doi:10.1177/1741143219873073

Kettl, D. F. (2020). States divided: The implications of American federalism for COVID-19. *Public Administration Review, 80*(4), 595-602. doi:10.1111/puar.13243

Kitamura, D. W. (2019). *Crisis Leadership and Management of School Superintendents during the 2017–2018 California Wildfires* (Doctoral dissertation, Brandman University).

Lordan, R., Fitzgerald, G. A., & Grosser, T. (2020). Reopening schools during COVID-19. *Science (American Association for the Advancement of Science), 369*(6508), 1146-1146. doi:10.1126/science.abe5765

Mizumoto, K., & Chowell, G. (2020). Estimating risk for death from coronavirus disease, china, january-february 2020. *Emerging Infectious Diseases, 26*(6), 1251-1256. doi:10.3201/eid2606.200233

Nicola, M., Alsafi, Z., Sohrabi, C., Kerwand, A., Al-Jabir, A., Iosifidis, C., Aghae, M., & Aghaf, R. (2020). The socio-economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19): A review. *International Journal of Surgery, 78*, 185–193.

O'Connor, J. (2018). The impact of job satisfaction on the turnover intent of executive level central office administrators in Texas public school districts: A quantitative study of work- related constructs. *Education Sciences, 8*(2), 69. doi:10.3390/educsci8020069

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: integrating theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Smith, J. A., & Shinebourne, P. (2012). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. (pp. 73-82).

Tran, N. A., Choi, D., & Wang, J. (2020). Reflecting on the current challenges amid a pandemic. *Journal of School Leadership, 30*(4), 295-296. doi:10.1177/1052684620923510

Weiss, R. (2002). Crisis leadership. *Training and Development Journal*, *56*(3), 28–33.