

**TRANSFORMATIONAL PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP:
A STUDY OF LEADERS' COMPETENCIES, DISPOSITIONS AND
ACTIONS IN A TURNAROUND CONTEXT**

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my Gooch ancestors, especially my great-great grandfather Isaac Gooch for laying a foundation for me to achieve the American dream being a first generation college student and to my mother Theresa Howell, father Horace D. Howell; my husband Robert; son Khalil and daughter Dominique who are my heart and soul. You have made me the child of God, mother, sister wife and friend I have become and I love all of you madly and unconditionally.

Abstract

The primary purpose of this study was to identify the leadership dispositions, competencies, and practices that were involved in principals' attempts to transform three of Minnesota's designated Focus schools. Also, there was an examination of the ways principals responded to their individual school contexts as they sought to shape their cultural processes and structures to transform them from low performing to high performing. Central themes that emerged through the analysis of data collected and the findings from the data are discussed. These findings include information about school principal dispositions, leadership style and principal actions to address school contexts, especially in the areas of culture and climate. Lastly, the strategies each principal employed and the impact of these strategies are shared, including data about student performance. Overall, the data within these themes reveals that principals' leadership actions were undergirded by their strong moral purpose to change the predictability of achievement based on race and their belief that all children can learn at high levels. The barriers each school faced were complex, but mirrored common characteristics similar to such schools nationally. Each principal utilized similar improvement strategies, yet their leadership styles varied and they also employed unique strategies to address dysfunctional aspects of school culture. Despite the efforts of these principals, the under-achievement of students enrolled in the schools persisted, suggesting that leadership alone cannot turn around a school. It must be coupled with an examination of a school's unique school contexts, implementing strategies to address any negative school characteristics found in the unique school contexts, and having targeted district supports, to turn around a school within a short time frame.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
DEDICATION	II
ABSTRACT	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
PURPOSE, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, SIGNIFICANCE, LIMITATIONS OF STUDY	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
POLICY CONTEXT: MINNESOTA’S SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL	7
STUDY PURPOSE	11
KEY TERMS	14
THEORY OF ACTION	16
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	17
<i>School Culture</i>	17
<i>Principal Skills and Competencies</i>	18
<i>Principal Actions</i>	18
<i>Student Achievement</i>	19
<i>Principal Training, Support and Professional Development</i>	19
ASSUMPTIONS GUIDING THE STUDY	23
MODELS EMPLOYED.....	23
CONCLUSION	26
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	27
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES	28
<i>Building Vision and Setting Direction</i>	28
<i>Instructional Leadership</i>	30
<i>Other findings:</i>	31
LEADERSHIP STYLES	32
LIVED EXPERIENCES	33
TABLE 3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A PRIMER (GOLEMAN, 2001, P. 80)	33
TRANSFORMING THE SCHOOL	35
TABLE 4. JUDSON AND KOTTER MODELS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE	41
BARRIERS TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE.....	43
SUSTAINABILITY.....	47
DISTRICT OFFICE SUPPORT.....	49

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES	49
LEADERSHIP APPROACHES.....	51
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP.....	51
INTEGRATED LEADERSHIP	53
DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP.....	53
LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF TURNAROUND PRINCIPALS	54
TABLE 5. TURNAROUND PRINCIPAL COMPETENCIES.....	56
CRITICAL RACE THEORY.....	59
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	62
DESIGN	62
SAMPLE	64
METHODS	65
DATA COLLECTION PLAN	66
<i>Phase 1: Quantitative Methods</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>OCDQ-RE Dimensions.....</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>OCDQ-RM Dimensions</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Phase 2: Qualitative Methods.....</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Interviews.....</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Documents.....</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>Phase 3: Research-Grounded Survey</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>Benefits of this Research Design</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>Benefits of the Selected Methods</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>Constraints of the Selected Methods</i>	<i>76</i>
ANALYSIS.....	77
LIMITATIONS.....	79
MEASURES TO OVERCOME LIMITATIONS	81
SCHOOL SETTINGS	82
DEMOGRAPHICS	84
CHAPTER 4	85
FINDINGS	85
PRINCIPAL DISPOSITIONS.....	87
STRONG MORAL PURPOSE AND RACIAL EQUITY LENS	87
PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STYLE.....	94
TABLE 10. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE MAGNET ELEMENTARY (43 RESPONDENTS)	103
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	106
SCHOOL CONTEXTS: CULTURE, CLIMATE AND ACHIEVEMENT.....	112
<i>Negative School Culture.....</i>	<i>113</i>
SHARING CHARACTERISTICS OF POOR PERFORMING SCHOOLS	117
<i>Instructional Focus.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>Coordination of the Curriculum.....</i>	<i>120</i>

STAFF MINDSETS	125
LEADERSHIP TEAMS.....	132
DISTRICT SUPPORT	137
PARENT AND COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS.....	140
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA.....	143
CHAPTER 5	149
CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION	149
CONCLUSIONS.....	150
<i>Conclusions Related to Question 1: What values, attitudes and dispositions do principals hold?</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>Conclusions Related to Question 2: How does the culture, climate and the contextual barriers of each school shape the actions of the principals?</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>Conclusions Related to Question 3: What do principals do? What is their work? What are their activities?.....</i>	<i>153</i>
<i>Conclusions Related to Question 4: What are the dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrated by principals to address the culture, climate and student achievement at their respective schools?.....</i>	<i>158</i>
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	162
<i>Ideas for turnaround support.....</i>	<i>163</i>
IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH	167
WORKS CITED	172
APPENDIX A: 2012-2013 MINNESOTA MULTIPLE MEASUREMENT RATING LIST	180
APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SCALE- TEACHER FORM.....	186
APPENDIX C: PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SCALE- SUPERVISOR FORM	192
APPENDIX D: ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE- REVISED ELEMENTARY.....	198
APPENDIX E: ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE- REVISED MIDDLE SCHOOL ...	200
APPENDIX F SUPERVISOR SURVEY QUESTIONS	203
APPENDIX G: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	204
APPENDIX H INDIVIDUAL PRINCIPAL 1ST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	205
APPENDIX I PRINCIPAL 2 ND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	207

List of Tables

TABLE 1. THEORY OF ACTION	17
TABLE 2: SOURCES OF DATA	19
TABLE 3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A PRIMER (GOLEMAN, 2001, P. 80)	33
TABLE 4. JUDSON AND KOTTER MODELS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE	41
TABLE 5. TURNAROUND PRINCIPAL COMPETENCIES	56
TABLE 6. CRITICAL RACE THEORY TENETS	60
TABLE 7. 5ESSENTIALS DOMAIN ELEMENTS	69
TABLE 8. GOLEMAN’S LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE DOMAINS.....	96
TABLE 9. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE- REVISED COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY (5 RESPONDENTS).....	102
TABLE 10. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE MAGNET ELEMENTARY (43 RESPONDENTS)	103
TABLE 11. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE COLLEGEVILLE MIDDLE (21 RESPONDENTS)	104
TABLE 12. SUPERVISOR RESULTS FOR PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SCALE (SCALE OF 5)	109
TABLE 13. TEACHER RESULTS FOR PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SCALE.....	109
TABLE 14. 2012 TO 2014 5ESSENTIALS RESULTS FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP	111
TABLE 15. 5ESSENTIALS 2012 AND 2014 SCHOOL RESULTS FOR TEACHER PRINCIPAL TRUST	111
TABLE 16. 2012 5ESSENTIALS SURVEY RESULTS FOR AMBITIOUS INSTRUCTION	120
TABLE 17. 2012 THE 5ESSENTIALS SURVEY RESULTS FOR PROGRAM COHERENCE	124
TABLE 18. 2011 -2012 5ESSENTIAL RESULTS FOR COLLABORATIVE TEACHERS	128
TABLE 19. MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS RESULTS 2009 – 2014 COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY COMPARISON.....	145
TABLE 20. MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS RESULTS 2009 – 2014 COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY COMPARISON.....	146
TABLE 21. MINNESOTA 2014 MULTIPLE MEASUREMENTS RATING AND FOCUS RATING.....	148
TABLE 22. TURNAROUND PRINCIPAL COMPETENCIES	155
TABLE 23. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL STRATEGIES WITHIN DIMENSIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND IMPACT.....	159

List of Figures

FIGURE 1. PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT RATING SCALE (PIMRS) CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (HALLINGER 2010, P. 276). SEE APPENDIX B FOR SAMPLE.	24
FIGURE 2.A MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE TYPES (LARGE SYSTEMS CHANGE, SEASHORE LOUIS, K.; BROWNE-BOATSWAIN, V.; HARMENING, T. (2010). UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESENTATION APRIL 14, 2010).	39
FIGURE 3.CYCLE OF TURNAROUND ACTIONS (PUBLIC IMPACT, 2006, P. 5).....	56
FIGURE 4. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE SCHOOL RESULTS	102
FIGURE 5. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE- REVISED COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY (5 RESPONDENTS).....	103
FIGURE 6. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE MAGNET ELEMENTARY (43 RESPONDENTS)	104
FIGURE 7. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE COLLEGEVILLE MIDDLE (21 RESPONDENTS)	105

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, SIGNIFICANCE, LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

After teacher instructional competency school leadership is the second most influential factor that impacts student achievement (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Goleman, 2000; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). Important strategies for any school to improve student achievement, especially for turnaround and transformational schools are the delivery of expert instruction in every classroom and leadership that expects and supports this teaching for each child. Providing effective principal leadership at any school can be described, at the very least as complex, but it is even more so when leading a persistently low-performing school.

Evidence collected over the last 30 years suggests that effective school leaders significantly influence student learning and other aspects of school performance (Wahlstrom, Louis, Leithwood & Anderson 2010; Waters, Marzano & McNulty 2003).

In the U.S. Department of Education's (USDOE) *Blueprint for Reform*, a summary of recommendations from the reauthorization of the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act", there was a call for school districts to implement dramatic change to "turn around our lowest performing schools" (USDOE 2010, p. 7). A school "Turnaround" is defined as a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that:

- Produces significant gains in achievement within two years; and
- Readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performance organization.

The 2002 federal "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) Act requires states to administer annual benchmarked proficiency tests in reading and math to students in grades 3-8. Schools failing to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) over a two-year period toward 100 percent proficiency are

deemed in need of improvement and become eligible for additional federal school improvement funding. David and Cuban (2010) assert: Applying the idea of turnaround to schools has seeds in the effective schools and school improvement movement of the 1970s and 1980s that was grounded in the belief that schools with mostly poor and minority students do not have to be unsafe and low performing. Under the right conditions, a hopeless school can become safe, well organized and high performing. (p.88)

A “continued lack of AYP triggers progressively severe sanctions” (Day & Leithwood, 2007, p. 156), and accordingly the USDOE required each state to identify “Challenge Schools” the lowest-performing five percent of schools receiving Title I funds in each state that are not making improvement, based on student academic achievement, student growth, and graduation rates. For these schools, states and districts have been required to implement one of the following four school turnaround models designed to produce significant changes in the operation, governance, staffing, or instructional program of a school:

- *Transformation model:* Replace the principal, strengthen staffing, implement a research-based instructional program, provide extended learning time, and implement new governance and flexibility.
- *Turnaround model:* Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the school staff, implement a research-based instructional program, provide extended learning time, and implement new governance structure.
- *Restart model:* Convert or close and reopen the school under the management of an effective charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization.

- *School closure model*: Close the school and enroll students who attended it in other, higher-performing schools in the district” (USDOE, 2010, p. 12).

For all of these models the principal has to be removed. David and Cuban further assert that there is little evidence that these turnaround strategies will work much better than previous strategies to improve low performing schools (David & Cuban, 2010, p. 89).

In 2011 under the reauthorization of the “Elementary and Secondary Schools Act” Minnesota enacted a new school accountability format titled Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR). MMR is the new accountability reporting system under the MN ESEA Waiver—also known as the NCLB Waiver. It consists of four equally weighted measures to determine school performance: *Proficiency* (similar to former Adequate Yearly Progress), *Student Growth* (state formula), *Achievement Gap Reduction* (growth of disadvantaged groups compared to non-disadvantaged groups), *Focus Proficiency* (excludes white students and all students groups and measure American Indian and children of color) and *Graduation Rate* (the new 4-Year on-time rates). While AYP reporting still exists, the MN ESEA Waiver means that schools and the district are no longer sanctioned for and classified as ‘in need of improvement’, ‘corrective action’, and ‘restructuring’.

Statement of the Problem

Principals are called upon to lead persistently low-performing schools through the turnaround or transformational processes. As previously stated evidence collected over the last 30 years suggests that effective school leaders significantly influence student learning and other aspects of school performance. The turnaround research, as a new area of investigation, includes primarily case studies and correlational studies (Herman & Huberman, 2012, p. 1). According to *A Nation at Risk*, —Nobody can say for certain how the schools of the new century will differ from those of the past century—but there can be little doubt that these schools will require different forms of leadership (Baezo, p. 5).

David and Cuban state “Studies of organizations that have successfully turned schools around are characterized first and foremost by strong leaders who diagnose the particulars of the school they lead” (2010, p.89).

Turnaround in education is a new concept and one not especially well defined. However, the turnaround literature has recently begun to throw into question effective schools' frameworks as good turnaround models, given that turning around failing schools appears more than complex. A U.S. Department of Education report recently stated that more is known about “the characteristics of high performing schools, rather than about the process of transforming low-performing schools.” (2001, p. 6) Research on the process through which previously ineffective schools become effective is less plentiful and more difficult to interpret” (Arsen, Bell, & Plank, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Researchers share that there have been schools that have not prepared students to become contributing members of society and a worthy approach to turning around the lowest-performing schools would acknowledge the context and the realities of these schools (Coby & Murphy, 2007; David & Cuban, 2010).

According to Brady (2003), turnaround efforts to date have been based on five beliefs:

- all schools can succeed;
- some elements are missing and inhibiting school success;
- the intervening body can provide what the school is missing;
- school leadership and professionals lack the necessary skills to achieve success; and to a lesser degree, school administrators and staff lack the will to improve.

Brady goes on to share, “There is no reason to believe that most 'failing' schools have the knowledge or capacity to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, even when faced with state sanctions” (Arsen et al., 2003, p. 3). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education's “initiative to turn around low performing schools is to mobilize resources to improve the quality of school leadership and the teaching force and help low-

performing schools implement coordinated, research-based reforms to improve student achievement” (Coby & Murphy, 2007, p. 634). There is a substantial body of research related to school improvement, including the effective schools research; however, some of that research is not of rigorous design, and it is not clear that promising practices that emerge from that research are applicable to the specific challenge of rapid and dramatic improvements expected of turnaround (Herman & Huberman, 2012, p. 1). Nevertheless, school improvement strategies supported by the research generally include the following:

- Help current staff perform at a higher level through staff development, coaching and leadership development
- Change school schedules or length of school day to provide extra planning time for educators
- Strengthen curriculum and instruction with new supports or consultants
- Establish professional norms for human resource management that creates flexibility for leaders and stability within teams
- Expand school day and/or school year to provide significantly more time for teacher collaboration, instruction
- Create a coherent, whole-school plan designed to meet the needs of high-challenge enrollments (Mass Public Impact, 2011).

An Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) study examined how well prepared principals were to fulfill a variety of roles for schools in the 21st century. This variety of roles included instructional leader, community leader, and visionary leader. First, instructional leaders are focused on strengthening teaching, learning, and professional development. Instructional leaders are data driven in their decision making and are focused on accountability. Second, community leaders are persons who envision the major role that schools play in society. Community leaders are administrators who share leadership between educators and community partners. Community leaders have a close relationship with parents. Third, visionary leaders demonstrate a commitment to the

conviction that all children will learn at high levels. Visionary leaders inspire others with this vision, inside and outside the school building (Baezo, p.9).

Researchers have found that stronger leadership appeared most important in schools with the greatest need (Halinger 2013; Seashore, Leithwood & Wahlstrom, 2010). Regarding leadership in this type of school context, the limited research on turnaround school leadership found that principals who have successfully transformed their schools for better teaching and learning communicate a positive vision that includes consistent, high expectations and ambitions for the success of their students. They collect and analyze data to identify high-priority problems, focus on the core of instruction, monitor student progress and provide appropriate support and intervention in the classroom and outside of the classroom within the school. They attend to having a high quality staff by providing coaching and support to staff through intensive professional development for staff and replace ineffective staff, if necessary. In addition, they cultivate external partnerships with parents, business and community (Herman & Huberman, 2012; Woods, Husbands & Brown, 2013; Public Impact, 2006).

More research about turnaround schools is warranted. The policy and research organization Public Impact (2006) asserts that, School turnaround is possible, but it takes a broader, concerted effort with daring leadership at the helm and persistent, achievable mentor oriented collaboration among staff. That is the stuff of which rapid, bad-to-great turnarounds across sectors are made. (p. 3)

Leaders of turnaround schools may be ill prepared to provide this daring leadership, meaning they may lack the personal dispositions, the professional training or the skills they need to engage in the work effectively to successfully turn around a failing school. McLester (2011) reports, “Superintendents report there is a dearth of principals possessing the necessary strong leadership qualities” to lead such school efforts (p.

41). According to Bonnan and his team (2000), school success and failure depend on the leadership and culture of a school. As such, ineffective leadership is reported as an essential internal cause of failure in schools and is one of the most consistent features of failing schools (Nicolaidou & Ainscow, 2005). Ineffective stewardship is a product of inadequate training to meet the needs of low-income children (Lenz, 2002), a lack of leadership abilities (Ediger, 2004), and "timid leadership" (Lashway, 2004, p. 25).

Turnaround schools often require a different set of actions to result in dramatic student achievement gains (Mass Insight, 2007). The model for changing persistently low-performing schools assumes that general school improvement strategies alone are insufficient to dramatically change the academic results at a chronically low performing school. "Light touch efforts that redirect curriculum or provide leadership coaching may help average-performing schools improve, but they are clearly not sufficient to produce successful turnaround of chronically performing schools" (Mass Insight, 2007, p. 4). It may be helpful in examining the practices and competencies of turnaround principals to distinguish between general leadership strategies and those required of turnaround leaders.

There is a paucity of research about how school reform changes are undertaken by school leaders in their daily work and even less on leading a school through to a successful turnaround (Spillane, et al. 2001; Wahlstrom, et. al, 2010).

Next is a description of how state policy provides a framework for turnaround models.

Policy Context: Minnesota's School Accountability Model

In 2011 under the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act Minnesota enacted a new school accountability system titled Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR). MMR is the new accountability reporting system under the MN ESEA Waiver—also known as the NCLB Waiver. It consists of four equally weighted measures to determine school

performance: *Proficiency* (similar to former Adequate Yearly Progress), *Student Growth* (state formula), *Achievement Gap Reduction* (growth of disadvantaged groups compared to non-disadvantaged groups) and *Graduation Rate* (the new 4-Year on-time rates). Under this new accountability system, schools receiving Title I funds were grouped into categories (*Priority, Focus, Reward* and *Celebration*). *Priority* (bottom 5 percent of all Title 1 schools), and as *Focus* schools (next bottom 10 percent of schools that contribute most to the state achievement gap) were identified as *Continuous Improvement* sites.

In 2012 Minnesota identified new categories in its school performance accountability system. Using the results of the Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) and Focus Rating (FR), Title I schools could fall into five groups.

- **Reward Schools:** These schools are the top 15 percent of Title I schools based on the MMR. They represent the highest-performing schools on the four domains in the MMR. Currently, the reward for these schools mainly comes through public recognition. MDE plans to share practices from these schools with Priority and Focus schools in an effort to replicate best practices across the state. These schools are identified annually.
- **Celebration Eligible:** These are the 25 percent of schools directly below the Reward school cutoff. These schools may apply to be Celebration schools, and MDE selects approximately 10 percent of Title I schools to receive the Celebration school recognition. Celebration Eligible schools are identified annually, and the application process to become a Celebration school occurs annually as well.
- **Continuous Improvement:** These are the bottom 25 percent of Title I schools that have not already been identified as Priority or Focus. Continuous Improvement schools must work with their districts to create and implement improvement plans as well as set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support school improvement efforts. MDE

audits 10 percent of Continuous Improvement schools to ensure fidelity. These schools are identified annually.

- **Focus:** All Minnesota schools receive a Focus Rating (FR) that measures their contribution to the state's achievement gap. The 10 percent of Title I schools with the lowest FR are identified as Focus Schools and must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement interventions aimed at improving the performance of the school's lowest-performing subgroups. Essentially, Focus schools are designated to attack the achievement gap head on. Focus schools are required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support school improvement efforts. These schools are identified every three years.
- **Priority:** These are the 5 percent most persistently low-performing Title I schools based on the MMR. Just less than half of these schools are identified through their participation in the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The remaining schools in this group are the Title I schools with the lowest MMR results. These schools must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement turnaround plans to make drastic improvements for increased student achievement. Priority schools are required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support turnaround efforts, and these schools are also identified every three years (Minnesota Department of Education, 2012).

In 2012 there were approximately 843 Title I schools in Minnesota, and 42 have been identified as *Priority* Schools and 84 as *Focus* Schools. These schools maintain this identification for the 3-year duration of the waiver unless they meet exit criteria. Of the 42 *Priority* Schools, 19 are SIG schools. There are 18 Title I high schools in Minnesota with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent. These schools are identified as either *Priority* or *Focus*. Of the 126 schools that have been identified as either *Priority* or *Focus* Schools, 37 will have been identified based on SIG status or *Graduation Rate* (Minnesota Department

of Education, 2012). Reward Schools: The highest-performing 15 percent of Title I schools in the state. The state named 128 schools in this category.

Initial accountability results under the waiver were announced in May 2012 based on data from the 2009-2010 and 2010-11 school year. 2012 accountability results were announced in August 2012 and these results were based on data from the 2011-12 school year. Subsequently, accountability results are based on the school's previous year's results.

In 2013 the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) designated 25 schools as *Priority*, 74 as *Focus*, 87 as *Continuous Improvement*, 225 as *Celebration Eligible* and 131 are identified as *Reward*. 10 Focus schools have demonstrated great improvement and no longer have the *Focus* designation. 14 Focus schools are also now eligible for the *Celebration* school recognition and one is a *Reward* school. 71 percent of *Focus* schools demonstrated improvement on the *Focus Rating* (FR) from 2012 to 2013 –30 percent of which improved by 20 FR percentage points or more (MDE, 2013).

Minnesota's *Priority* and *Focus* schools serve racially and ethnically diverse student populations with high levels of poverty. The demographic overview of the student populations in all *Priority* and *Focus* schools:

- 84 percent receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- 67.98 percent minority students
- 6.51 percent American Indian
- 16.04 percent Asian/Pacific Islander
- 16.42 percent Hispanic
- 29 percent Black
- 25.68 percent are English language learners
- 14.22 percent receive Special Education services

Each school designated as *Priority*, *Focus* and *Continuous Improvement* are mandated by MDE to follow the PLAN, DO, STUDY, ACT (PDSA) model for implementing and monitoring school

improvement. The PDSA cycle is an acronym for developing a plan to test the change (Plan), carrying out the test (Do), observing and learning from the consequences (Study), and determining what modifications should be made to the test (Act). Each school is required to have School Leadership Implementation Teams responsible for developing the School Action Plan. This is the core planning and implementation team for the school's turnaround efforts. Each school team is required to complete a comprehensive needs analysis that summarizes priority student needs for reading, math and when appropriate graduation interventions as suggested by the school student data.

The Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) is a 0 to 100 percent scale for all schools in the state and includes data on proficiency, growth, achievement gap reduction and graduation rates. The Focus Rating (FR) is a 0 to 100 percent scale for all schools in the state and includes data on proficiency and growth for only students of color, special education students, students in poverty and English learners. (See Appendix A for a list of Minnesota schools MMR and FR for the 2012-2013 school year).

Study Purpose

The purpose of the study is to identify the principal leadership dispositions, competencies, and practices that may have contributed to the transformation of Minnesota's designated "Focus" schools. Secondly, the purpose was to examine principals' leadership in relation to their lived experience and how their dispositions influenced actions taken to transform their schools. This is important to examine because "turnaround leadership must be driven by an explicit commitment to moral purpose, including raising the bar and closing the gap of student learning" (Fullan, 2008, p. 181).

In addition, learning how principals responded to their individual school contexts as they sought to shape their culture's processes and structures is a critical component of effective school leadership. Reviewing the literature about leadership aimed at "second order" or "restructuring changes" can provide a valuable perspective for viewing the

principals' work at their respective schools (Leithwood et al., 1996, p. 748).

This thesis details the complexity of each school's culture and each principal's actions to transform the school. It provides a framework for analyzing the principals' actions and a set of conclusions to inform further study and leadership practices for use in turnaround school contexts.

A field study was conducted by using mixed methods study of interviews, surveys, and a collection and analysis of observational data, student achievement data and school value-added data. Quantitative methods were used to assess each school's culture (climate) and the extent to which principals' instructional leadership and general leadership competencies led to any changes in the school's performance in terms of student academic achievement. Qualitative methods were used to learn about the principals' disposition to this type of school context and to understand the complex processes that underlie the principals' actions.

Research questions investigated included,

- What values, attitudes and dispositions do the principals hold?
- How do the culture, climate, and the contextual barriers of the school shape the actions of the principals?
- What do principals do? What is their work? What are their activities?
- What are the dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrated by principals to address the culture, climate, and student achievement at their respective schools?

It is a commonly held belief that leadership is important for organizational cultural improvements, but Trice and Beyer (1993) report that the issue of how leadership affects culture has received only scattered attention. There is a need to understand the relationship between principal leadership characteristics, school cultures and change management for school improvement and principal recruitment and selection purposes. The beliefs that school personnel hold, the actions the principal implements, and the dynamics of their school's organizational culture will help district leaders become aware of the personnel needs in fully turning

around a school. It is important to use a conceptual framework that features the role of the leader in shaping organizational culture, as well as examining the leadership role of the principal in providing vision, purpose and direction, and looking at the strategies to re-educate staff that the leaders have put in place (Clive & Dimmock, 2005; Coborn, 2003; Stoll, 1999).

The study of how principals led their schools through a process intended to transform their respective schools from low-performing to high-achieving may contribute to the field of educational leadership and administration. It is my hope that the findings will result in knowledge and a set of strategies that will help leaders manage and lead organizational cultural change at turnaround schools and provide information to school district administrators that will help in the recruitment, selection, training and support for leaders of turnaround schools. In addition, the findings may inform the design of principal licensure programs and professional development programs. Additional research will need to be completed to determine if the reform in the turnaround schools will be sustainable—the ultimate goal of reform.

Lastly, the investment in learning more about how to eradicate the under-achievement of students of color and of those who come from poverty is a moral imperative. It is essential that we provide schooling that allows each child to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Children who are well educated better serve themselves, their families and their communities. Nationally and in Minnesota the majority of schools identified as “Priority” and “Focus” are populated by American Indian and children of color, primarily African-American students. For this reason the literature about how racial beliefs impact the instruction and culture of the schools has been referenced as well. This field study aims to shed light on the critical competencies and actions that principals employ to transform persistently low performing schools into high performing ones where children thrive. This research serves as a way to begin to use new

knowledge about the problem of low performing (turnaround) schools and emerging solutions to inform analysis of improving schools.

KEY TERMS

The following key terms and their definitions will be used throughout the thesis.

Competency. A pattern of thinking, feeling, acting, or speaking that causes a person to be successful in a job or role (Public Impact, p. 4). The competency-related definitions and major underlying competency research used here come from the ideas of David McClelland and related research documented in *Competence at Work, Models for Superior Performance*, Spencer and Spencer, 1993 (John Wiley and Sons).

Climate. Formal and informal organization, personalities of participants, and the leadership of the school in present time (Hoy, 1990).

Contingency. Principal leadership actions are based on the context of the school, so no particular style of leadership is appropriate for all schools (Bossert, 1982).

Culture. A pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985). Alternate definition offered by Stolp: The historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions, and myths understood, maybe in varying degrees, by members of the school community (Stolp, 1994).

Emotional Intelligence. The ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively consists of four fundamental capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skill (Goleman, 2000, p. 80).

Focus School. All Minnesota schools receive a Focus Rating (FR) that measures their contribution to the state's achievement gap. The 10 percent of Title I schools with the lowest FR are identified as Focus

Schools and must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement interventions aimed at improving the performance of the school's lowest-performing subgroups. Essentially, Focus schools are designated to attack the achievement gap head on. Focus schools are required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support school improvement efforts. These schools are identified every three years (Minnesota Department of Education, 2012).

Leadership. The function of setting direction and exercising influence (Leithwood, 2010, p. 3).

Integration of Instructional and Transformational. Integrates the transformational influence of the principal in building organizational capacity and the shared instructional leadership that builds individual and collective competence (Marks & Printy, 2003; Hallinger, P. (2010).

Instructional Leadership. Coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction. Phillip Hallinger (2000) identified three dimensions: defining mission, managing instructional program and promoting positive school culture. In 2011 he coined leading for learning as an update to the term instructional leadership. He identified four specific dimensions of leading for learning: values and beliefs, leadership focus, contexts for leadership, and sharing leadership.

Priority School. These are the 5 percent most persistently low-performing Title I schools based on the MMR. Just less than half of these schools are identified through their participation in the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The remaining schools in this group are the Title I schools with the lowest MMR results. These schools must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement turnaround plans to make drastic improvements for increased student achievement. Priority schools are required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support turnaround efforts, and these schools are also identified every three years (Minnesota Department of Education, 2012).

Reward Schools: The highest-performing 15 percent of Title I schools in the state.

School Turnaround. A dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low performing school that produces significant gain in student achievement over two academic years (Mass Insight, 2007).

Transformational Leadership. Shared leadership, distributive leadership, organizational learning in which the principal creates a climate in which teachers and other staff believe and act to reach organizational goals (MacGregor- Burns, 1978; Wahlstrom, Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2010).

Transactional Leadership. An exchange of reward for effort between leaders and followers (Bass, 1990).

THEORY OF ACTION

A theory of action explains the specific changes key players make [in this case principals and school staff] and why they believe these are the ones that will improve teaching and learning to transform the school from a low-achieving to a high performing one. This theory of action undergirds the work: If the principal acts in a certain way, employs strategies then the principal actions will help teachers to provide quality instruction and work with support staff and the principal in such a way, which will help all students to learn at higher levels.

The turnaround school context is different from traditional schools and leadership for such schools require a unique set of competencies fundamentally different from general principal leadership competencies. The researcher assumes the principals' personal dispositions, strengths of instructional leadership and actions based on school contextual factors will lead to the positive student achievement outcomes.

Table 1. Theory of Action

Principals	Teachers and support staff	Students
A principal's practice impacts school culture, teachers' instructional practice and school effectiveness.	A teachers' instruction impacts student learning and support staff's work impacts student learning as well.	As a result of principal and staff actions students learn at high levels.
<i>When principals do XXX, then teachers and staff will be able to do XXX so that students will learn at high levels.</i>		

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching topics for this study explored the culture of the school, principal's dispositions, and values and leadership approaches and actions aligned to individual school context. Over-arching questions answered included the following:

School Culture

1. What are the character, culture, and history of the school?
2. What contextual variables mediate the work and behavior of school principals, in what manner do they respond, and with what consequences? How do or did the contextual barriers shape the actions of the principals?
3. How are schools developing a shared mission and shared meanings among school staff regarding student learning and approaches to learning?
4. How does the character of the school, the culture and history of the school and the contextual barriers shape the actions of the principals?

Principal Leadership Styles and Approaches

1. What values, attitudes and dispositions do the principals hold and how do these shape their work and how do these affect the way they prioritize their efforts?

2. How do principals approach their role of leadership considering the school's culture? To what extent are they adopting distributive leadership?
3. How did principals foster a culture in which staff focused on and reflective about instructional improvement for student results? How did principals use their leadership voice to communicate and reinforce the school's mission and vision and school improvement goals?

Values, Attitudes, Dispositions

1. What personal values do the principals hold? What do they stand for?
2. What is the principal's philosophy regarding teaching and learning?
3. How do principal values and educational philosophy influence events and outcomes in the school?
4. What are the principals' dispositions (patterns of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting) that contribute to early wins or success in their unique educational context?
5. What is the relationship between principals' personal stories (narratives) and competencies and actions that lead to the schools transforming?
6. How do the values, attitudes and dispositions they hold shape their work and how they prioritize their efforts?

Principal Skills and Competencies

1. What are the critical competencies of the principals that begin to transform their schools from failure to excellence or to at least move the school forward in terms of student achievement?
2. What skills and/or methods do they use to influence events and outcomes in the school?

Principal Actions

1. What do principals do to influence events and outcomes in the school?

2. What contextual variables mediate the work and behavior of school principals, in what manner do they respond, and with what consequences? How do or did the contextual barriers currently shape the actions of the principals?
3. What are the successful actions (strategies) implemented by these principals?

Student Achievement

1. Are students learning at high levels as a result of school improvement efforts?

Principal Training, Support and Professional Development

1. What aspects of principals’ training have been helpful in specific aspects of their roles as turnaround leaders? Where did the principals receive the training?
2. What if any district support has been received to support the transformation of the school? What aspects of this support have been helpful in specific aspects of their roles as turnaround leaders?

Table 2: Sources of Data

Research Question	Source(s)
What are the character, culture and history of the school?	Organizational Climate Description Middle School (OCDQ- RM) Organizational Climate Description Elementary School (OCDQ- RE) 5Essentials Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups
What contextual variables mediate the work and behavior of school principals, in what manner do they respond, and with what consequences? How do or did the contextual barriers shape the actions of the	Organizational Climate Description Middle School (OCDQ- RM) Organizational Climate Description Elementary School (OCDQ- RE) 5Essentials Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups

principals?	School data Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) for Supervisors and Teachers
How are schools developing a shared mission and shared meanings among school staff regarding student learning and approaches to learning?	Organizational Climate Description Middle School (OCDQ- RM) Organizational Climate Description Elementary School (OCDQ- RE) 5Essentials Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups School Improvement Plans
How does the character of the school, the culture and history of the school and the contextual barriers shape the actions of the principals?	OCDQ- RM OCDQ- RE Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups
What values, attitudes and dispositions do principals hold and how do these shape their work and how they prioritize their efforts? How do principals approach their role of leadership considering the school's culture? To what extent are they adopting distributive leadership? How did principals foster a culture in which staff is focused on and reflective about instructional improvement for student results? How did you use her/his leadership voice to communicate and reinforce the school's mission and vision and school improvement	Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale for Supervisors and Teachers (PIMRS) OCDQ- RM OCDQ- RE 5Essentials Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale for Supervisors and Teachers (PIMRS) OCDQ- RM OCDQ- RE 5Essentials Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups

goals?	
What are the actions (strategies) implemented by transformational principals?	School Improvement plans Interviews of principals, teachers and principal supervisor
What contextual variables mediate the work and behavior of school principals, in what manner do they respond, and with what consequences?	5Essentials (OCDE-RE) Principal, Teacher and principal supervisor interviews
What is the principal's theory of change?	Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews
What personal values do the principals hold? What do they stand for? What are the principals' dispositions (patterns of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting) that contribute to early wins or success in their unique educational context? What is the relationship between principals' personal stories (narratives) and competencies and actions that lead to the schools transforming? What values, attitudes and dispositions do they hold and how do these shape their work and how they prioritize their efforts?	5Essentials Principal Interviews Supervisor interviews Leadership team focus groups
What is principal's philosophy regarding teaching and learning?	Principal Interviews Leadership Team interviews Supervisor Interviews
How do principal values and educational philosophy influence events and outcomes in	5Essentials Student achievement data OCRD-RE OCRD-RM

the school?	
What are the principals' dispositions (patterns of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting) that contributed to school change (reform) in their unique educational context?	Principal Interviews Teacher and Principal's Supervisor interviews
What are the critical competencies of the principals that begin to transform their schools from failure to excellence or to at least move the school forward in terms of student achievement?	PIMRS for teachers and supervisors Supervisors Interviews
What skills and/or methods do they use to influence events and outcomes in the school? What are the successful actions (strategies) implemented by the principals?	5Essentials PIMRS
What are the critical competencies of successful transformational principals that enable these principals to transform their schools from failure to excellence?	PIMRS for teachers and supervisors Literature review
What is the relationship between principals' personal stories (narratives) and competencies and actions that led to the schools' reforms?	PIMRS Interviews of principals
How does the principal deal with the staff they have (or have inherited)?	
What aspects of	Principal interview

principals' training have been helpful in specific aspects of their roles as turnaround leaders? What kinds of training did they have to acquire elsewhere?	Supervisor interview
Are students learning at high levels as a result of school improvement efforts?	Student achievement data 5Essentials
What if any district support has been received school to support the transformation of the? What aspects of this support have been helpful in specific aspects of their roles as turnaround leaders?	Principal interview Supervisor interview

Assumptions Guiding the Study

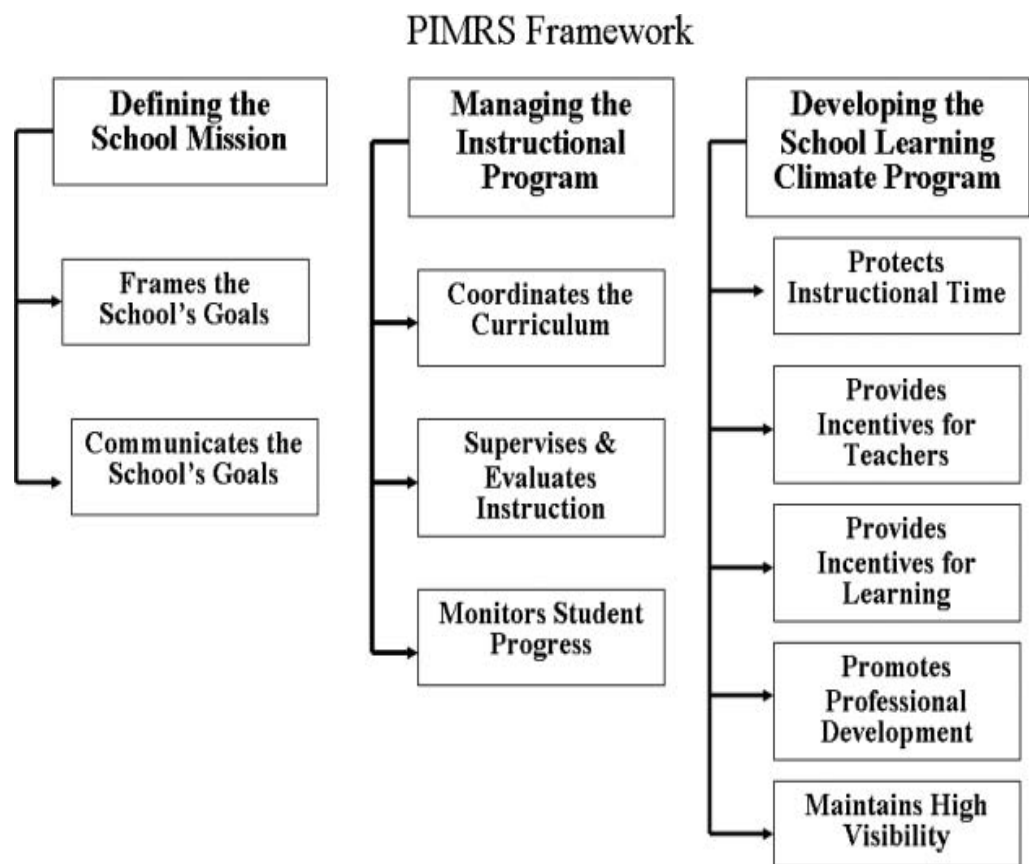
One assumption in this study is that turnaround school contexts in Minnesota are different from those of traditional schools. Turnaround schools require a unique set of competencies fundamentally different from general principal leadership competencies. The researcher assumes the principals' personal dispositions, strengths of instructional leadership and actions based on school contextual factors will lead to the positive student achievement outcomes. Also, there is a set of policy assumptions from the US DOE about what it really takes to turnaround schools, including the belief that one of the School Improvement models will work. What is lacking in these models is a "strong research base" (Manwaring, 2011, p. 13).

Models Employed

A mixed methods approach was used to assess principal's leadership competencies, dispositions and actions, each school's climate

and school stakeholders' perceptions of the principals' leadership practices and dispositions. The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 1982, 1990) provided a framework with three dimensions that served to guide the assessment of principals' instructional leadership in this study: *Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* (Figure 1). Within each dimension are instructional leadership functions.

Figure 1. Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) Conceptual Framework (Hallinger 2010, p. 276). See Appendix B for Sample.



Framing the School's Goals and Communicating the School's Goals comprise the Dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*. This means the principal works with staff to ensure there is a clear school mission that is focused on academic achievement of students. It is crucial

that staff buy-in to the mission. The second dimension *Managing the Instructional Program* incorporates the leadership functions of *Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress*. The principal is expected to see evidence of the goals being addressed at the classroom level, providing instructional support to teachers, there is a review and use data from standardized and criterion referenced assessments and there is coordination of the curriculum across grade levels and among teachers. The third dimension *Developing a Positive School Learning Climate* includes the functions of *Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility; Providing Incentives for Teachers and Providing Incentives for Learning*. This means principals expect a continuous improvement of teaching and learning and there are high expectations for both students and staff.

Hallinger notes that the “PIMRS does not measure an administrator’s effectiveness. Rather it assesses the degree to which a principal is providing instructional leadership in his/her school” (Hallinger, 2013, p. 24).

Another theoretical model that guided this study, particularly the examination of administrator effects on school change, is Pitner’s (1988) antecedent-effects model. In this model, there are “two categories of antecedents: demographic characteristics of the principal and the school context” (Hallinger, 2008, p. 26). In antecedent-effects research the administrator variable stands as both a dependent and an independent variable. As a dependent variable, the administrators’ behavior is subject to the influence of other variables within the school and its environment, such as demographics (e.g., age, experience, gender) or other personal characteristics (e.g., self-efficacy, years of teaching experience, knowledge of instruction (Hallinger, 2010, p. 283). As an independent variable, “the administrator is an agent who acts to influence the actions of teachers, the nature of school organization, and the learning of pupils” (Leithwood, et al, 1996, p. 734). Pitner (1988) uses the antecedent-effects

model to study the principal's instructional leadership as an independent variable and to explore its relationship to one or more dependent variables such as student achievement, teacher satisfaction, school culture (climate), and teachers' instructional practice. For this study the identification of the principals' personal characteristics and instructional leadership and their relationship to the school's context was examined.

CONCLUSION

Transforming the lowest performing schools in our country requires a skilled leader who is able to transform the schools' teaching and organizational practices, processes and procedures to realize the mission of high student achievement. The researcher has been a principal and currently serves as a supervisor of high school principals. She has been an educator for over thirty years and her experience includes working as a classroom teacher, an assistant principal, principal, and an assistant director of curriculum. The researcher believes more research needs to be conducted to examine the leadership necessary to transform these schools and sustain the transformation. The goal of this research was to assess the extent to which principals' instructional leadership and general leadership competencies, dispositions and chosen strategies led to the change in the school's performance. An examination of each school's contextual variables, especially, how culture (climate) mediated the work and behavior of school principals has been completed.

It is the researcher's hope that the findings will result in knowledge and a set of strategies that will help leaders manage and lead organizational cultural change at turnaround schools and provide information to school district administrators that will aid in the recruitment, selection, training and support for leaders of turnaround schools. In addition, the findings may inform the design of principal licensure programs and professional development programs for principals.

The data collected during this study included principal and supervisor interviews, teacher and supervisor surveys (Principal

Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and Organizational Climate Development Questionnaires (OCDQ), leadership team focus groups; observation of leadership team meetings; school improvement plans; district school surveys (5Essentials); school visits and other school artifacts, such as newsletters and classroom and school displays.

Overall, the data within these themes reveals that principals' leadership actions were undergirded by their strong moral purpose to change the predictability of achievement based on race and their belief that all children can learn at high levels. The barriers each school faced were complex, but mirrored common characteristics similar to such schools nationally. Each principal utilized similar improvement strategies, yet their leadership style varied and that they also employed unique strategies to address dysfunctional aspects of school culture. This study's findings indicate that despite their efforts of these principals, the underachievement of students enrolled in the schools persisted suggesting that leadership alone cannot turn around a school.

In the next chapter, I review relevant literature. Following is a chapter on methodology. Then the findings about school principal dispositions, principals' leadership style and principals' strategies are discussed. Lastly a discussion about the findings and conclusions about this study are discussed.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Researchers studying leadership have identified several leadership traits, competencies, behaviors and approaches. Many highlight the role of leadership in impacting student achievement (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Goleman, 2000; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). Leadership can be broadly defined as setting direction and exercising influence (Leithwood, 2010). Successful leadership is defined as knowing the correct actions to take based on the context of the school setting and those actions result in achieving goals. Leithwood sums it up

by saying it is “doing right things right” (Leithwood, 2010, p. 2). Leaders are characterized as strong, goal-oriented, charismatic, cultural change agents. May and Supovitz (2010) categorize the different types of research on leadership in terms of “practices, styles and processes” (May & Supovitz, 2010, p. 334). For this literature review, these categories will be used to organize the literature findings about principal leadership.

Organizational change, especially as it applies to school reform finds that school culture, principal leadership, and collaboration among principal and teacher and district leadership are keys to effective management of change processes (Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Louis & Kruse, 2009, Leithwood & Day, 2007; Marks & Printy, 2003).

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

The practices of school leaders fall under three functions: establishing and communicating the school’s mission and vision, providing leadership and management of the school’s instructional program, and developing school culture that effectively and efficiently supports the work of teaching and learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987, Leithwood & Day, 2007; Hallinger 2011; Wahlstrom et al., 2010).

Building Vision and Setting Direction

Day and Leithwood (2007) report that the defining contribution to an organization of a leader’s relationship is the emergence of a shared direction along with perceptible influence, and eventually, on organizational that the members to move in that direction. Direction and influence are at the core of almost all conceptions of leadership” (Day & Leithwood, 2007, p.2). They report that research findings from the 2001 International Successful School Principal Project, identifies four broad categories of basic leadership practices. They cite Hallinger and Heck (1999) who label three of these categories “purposes”, “people”, and “structures and social systems” Conger and Kanungo (1998) speak about “visioning strategies”, “efficacy-building strategies,” and “context-changing strategies.” Leithwood et al. (2005) describe the leadership categories as being “setting directions”, developing people” and

“redesigning the organization”. Within each of these similar categories of practice are numerous, more specific competencies, orientations, and considerations. A fourth broad category of leadership practices, “managing the instructional program” is characterized as being unique to schools.

One of the central functions of direction-setting leadership practices is motivation. Most theories of motivation (e.g. Bandura, 1986) argue that people are motivated to accomplish personally important goals for themselves. Individuals within the organization “come to include the organizations’ goals among their own”. Three additional practices are identifying and articulating a vision, fostering agreement about work group goals, and demonstrating high performance expectations.

In 1966, Katz and Kahn described three types of organizational leadership behaviors: “(1) the introduction of structural change, or policy formulation, (2) the interpolation of structure, i.e., piecing out the incompleteness of existing formal structure, or improvisation, and (3) the use of structure formally provided to keep the organization in motion and in effective operation, or administration (Blumberg & Greenfield, p. 165). Blumberg and Greenfield, 2000 identified three factors that successful principals share: (1) “desiring and eager to make their schools over in their image, (2) proactive and quick to assume the initiative; and (3) resourceful in being able to structure their roles and the demands on their time in a manner that permitted them to pursue what might be termed their personal objectives as principals”. These factors include holding a vision for the school, taking the initiative, and being resourceful” (Blumberg & Greenfield, 2000, p. 176).

From a class reading by Louis and Kruse (2009) it was reported that studies of how effective principals lead when there is demand for change show that “effective leaders enact six functions:

1. Providing and selling a vision
2. Providing encouragement and recognition
3. Obtaining resources

4. Adapting standard operating procedures
5. Monitoring the improvement effort
6. Handling disturbances (Louis & Kruse, 2009, p. 6).

Instructional Leadership

2003; Ruebling, Stow, Kayona, & Clarke, 2004. Instructional Leadership requires knowledge of subject matter content, knowledge of pedagogy, knowledge of what good instruction looks like, and knowledge of how to lead (ability to determine what is necessary to adjust successfully to particular situation and people and keep the school moving toward its goals. Shared instructional leadership, its essential complement, describes the dynamic collaboration between the principal and teachers on curricular, instructional, and assessment matters to further the core technology of schools—teaching and learning. (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377)

Vander Ark, et al, 2000 identified seven disciplines for strengthening instruction:

1. Urgency for instructional improvement using data
2. Shared vision of good teaching
3. Meetings about the work
4. A shared vision of students results
5. Effective supervision
6. Professional development
7. Diagnostic data with accountable collaboration (p. 27).

Printy and Marks (2003) reconceptualized instructional leadership with a model of shared instructional leadership. They define shared instructional leadership as the “active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment” (Marks and Printy, 2003, p. 371). In several of these models teachers assume responsibility for their professional growth and for instructional improvement and instructional leadership emanates from both the principal and teachers. “Principals contribute importantly to these communities when they

promote teacher reflection and professional growth” (Marks and Printy, 2003, p. 374). Sparks (1994) asserts that “administrators must see themselves as teachers of adults and view the development of others as one of their most important responsibilities” (Sparks, 1994, p.).

Seashore, et al (2011) shares the notion of professional community that has become very popular over the last 5+ years, and has been incorporated into many school and district conversations about how to strengthen instruction. There have been a number of previous studies that tied how teachers worked together to student learning, but this study added substantially to that research because of the large and representative sample. In addition, it was the first to tie principal actions to how teachers work together.

Establishing that professional community – how teachers actually collaborate – is important, however, the question remains:

What do principals do to promote or reinforce professional community?

1. affects working relationships and, indirectly, student achievement.

(Instructional Leadership)

2....is shared, fostering stronger teacher working relationships. *(Shared Leadership)*

It does not belong to teachers alone. Rather it is a joint responsibility of principals or other administrators and teachers.

Other findings:

Principal leadership that “matters” occurs more often in elementary schools

Principal expectations and accountability in the following areas matter most:

1. Standards and targets
2. Appraisals aligned with standards
3. Meaningful feedback loops
4. Minimizing one-shot, high stakes procedures
5. Clear results/fair outcomes
6. The typical school has a new principal every 3.2 years

7. Principal turnover is negatively related to student achievement
8. Leadership matters more in high poverty schools
9. Effective leadership three-legged stool: 1. Efficacy 2. Expectations and accountability (see above) 3. Engagement”.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

Good principal leadership has been frequently associated with improved student learning (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Goleman, 2000; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). However, according to Murphy (1994), the specific aspects of principal leadership that promoted these developments is less clear. Some have found that a highly facilitative principal leadership style, with the principal as follower” or leading from the center” promotes better restructuring. Other studies have indicated, however, that a more directive leadership style may be helpful (Murphy, 1989; Louis, 1991).

Daniel Goleman (2000) reported that there are “six distinct leadership styles, each springing from different components of emotional intelligence” (p. 78). Leaders must master more than one of the following styles - coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching (Goleman, 2007). He says that coercive leaders demand immediate compliance. Authoritative leaders mobilize people toward a vision. Affiliative leaders create emotional bonds and harmony. Democratic leaders build consensus through participation. Pacesetter leaders expect excellence and self-direction. And coaching leaders develop people for the future. He further reports that leaders with the best results do not rely on only one style and they must switch among them as situations dictate. The traits of flexibility and emotional intelligence (Table 3) help the leader assess the situation and effectively work with different stakeholder personalities and these traits can be learned.

The leadership style of the principal has a measurable effect on climate (Goleman, 2000). Climate as defined by McClelland is composed of six factors that influence an organization’s environment. They are *flexibility*- how free employees feel to innovate unencumbered by red tape;

their sense of *responsibility* to the organization; the level of *standards* that people set; the sense of accuracy about performance feedback and aptness of *rewards*; the *clarity* people have about mission and values; and finally the level of *commitment* to a common purpose (Goleman, 2000, p. 81). Blumberg and Greenfield, 2000 offer the following personal qualities of principals who successfully lead: goal clarity/goal oriented, personally secure, tolerance for ambiguity, testing the limits, sensitivity to power dynamics; analytical in approach; origins, not pawns; and people oriented and in charge (Blumberg & Greenfield, 2000, p. 17).

LIVED EXPERIENCES

The limited research on turnaround schools is primarily case study analysis— with a focus on a single leader (Institute of Education Sciences 2013). These leaders are characterized as a “mythic hero—a charismatic individual” (American Institutes for Research, 2010). What dispositions do these “mythic heroes possess? In an interview with 10 principal participants in the University of Virginia’s Turnaround Specialist Program, Burbach and Butler found that principals had a “heartfelt desire to help raise the achievement of low-achieving children thereby enhancing their chances of success in life, an affective sensitivity to the unique challenges faced by underachieving children, and an authentic history from their own schooling, teaching in high-poverty areas or success in community-based programs with children from low-income families” (Burbach & Butler, 2011, p. 2).

Table 3. Emotional Intelligence: A Primer (Goleman, 2001, p. 80)

Emotional intelligence - the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively consists of four fundamental capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skill. Each capability, in turn, is composed of specific sets of competencies. Below is a list of the capabilities and their corresponding traits.				
Emotional Self		Management	Social Awareness	Social Skills
<i>Emotional self-awareness</i>	<i>Self-control</i> : the ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses under		<i>Empathy</i> : skill at sensing other people’s emotions, understanding (their	<i>Visionary leadership</i> : the ability to take charge and inspire

<p>ess: ability to read and M Underst and r your p emotio ns as h well as y recogni ze their impact (on work 2 perfor 0 mance, relatio 0 ships, 2 and the like.) Accura te Self- assess C ment: a a realisti c l evaluat ion of your S strengt hs and limitati f ons. O Self- confide r nce: a strong and a positiv e sense of self- r worth. e</p>	<p>control. <i>Trustworthiness:</i> a consistent display of honesty and integrity. <i>Conscientiousness:</i> the ability to manage yourself and your responsibilities. <i>Adaptability:</i> skill of adjusting to changing situations and overcoming obstacles. <i>Achievement orientation:</i> the drive to meet an internal standard of excellence.</p>	<p>perspective), and taking an active interest in their concerns. <i>Organizational awareness:</i> the ability to read the currents of organizational life, build decision networks, and navigate politics. <i>Service orientation:</i> the ability to recognize and meet customers' needs. A readiness to seize opportunities</p>	<p>with a compelling vision. <i>Influence:</i> the ability to wield a range of persuasive tactics. Developing others: the propensity to bolster the abilities of others through feedback and guidance. <i>Communication:</i> skill at listening and at sending clear, convincing, and well-tuned messages. <i>Change catalyst:</i> proficiency in initiating new ideas and leading people in a new direction. <i>Conflict management:</i> the ability to de- escalate disagreements and orchestrate resolutions. <i>Building bonds:</i> proficiency at cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships. <i>Teamwork and collaboration:</i> competent at promoting cooperation and building teams</p>
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-culturing of the educational administration profession. He uses three metaphors to describe re-culturing: moral steward, educator, and

community builder” (p. 186). He argues that leaders must marry science with their values. He states, “Persons wishing to affect society as school leaders must be directed by a powerful portfolio of beliefs and values anchored in issues such as justice, community, and schools that function for all children and youth” (p. 186).

Moral stewardship means seeing the moral—and building an ethical school (Starratt, 1991) while meeting the “moral imperative to provide real learning opportunities to the whole of the student population” (Murphy 2002, p. 187). This proposal seeks to analyze the effective understanding of each turnaround principal in turnaround success.

Schmidt-Davis and Bottoms (2012) report that in the ‘bottom-quartile of schools, 60 percent of teachers have minimal or no trust in colleagues, and 51 percent have minimal or no trust in their principal (2012, p. 4). In addition they report that the individual traits most desired in turnaround principals include courage, emotional intelligence, a sense of hope, intelligence and knowledge of curriculum and instruction and advocacy and empathy (2012, p. 14).

TRANSFORMING THE SCHOOL

Capacity building consists of developments schools must learn and employ new knowledge, skills and strategies, staff must have a shared sense of personal responsibility for student performance coupled with turnaround leadership and external and district commitment and support in terms of time, money and access to expertise to transform the school” (Fullan, 2008 & Mintrop, 2003). In a study, Fullan found these “skills and talents in short supply across the studied schools” (Fullan, 2008, p. 176).

Minneapolis Superintendent Bernadeia Johnson frequently reminded her principals and central office administrators that “culture eats strategy for lunch” (Johnson, 2011). Research indicates that school cultures can be a barrier to reform and action plans to transform schools. Efforts to reform schools have bumped up against the competing goals of education (Oakes, Quartz, Ryan & Lipton, 2000). The authors assumed that there is an “ongoing struggle for goodness in schools and children’s’

lives” (Oakes, Quartz, Ryan & Lipton, 2000, p. 568). The purpose of American public schooling is to educate for the good of all, however, our policies and practices support self-interests, unequal accumulation of resources, and value competition.

Dimmock and Walker (2005) report that reform is cultural and dependent on relationships, histories and opportunities and that researchers found that vision, cultural norms, and politics shaped reform (Oakes, Quartz, Ryan & Lipton, 2000). The authors also report that Trice and Beyer (1993) report that,

Although there is general recognition that leadership is important for organizational cultures, the issue of how leadership affects culture has received only scattered attention. There is a need to understand the dynamic relationship between school cultures and change management to ensure improvement through a process of re-culturing, defined as the process of developing new values, beliefs and norms. (2005, p.52)

Stoll (1999) says, First understanding the schools culture, is a prerequisite for any external change agent. Secondly, the leadership role of the principal will be vital in providing vision, purpose and direction. Thirdly, re-culturing, or normative re-education strategies will then need to be put in place. Re-culturing includes pupil and community cultures as well. (p. 52)

Leithwood and Day (2007) found the success of principals in overcoming contextual barriers varied considerably. What was constant was the fundamental belief in the centrality of learning. They identified five key themes of similarity emerged across schools and countries:

1. Sustaining passionate commitment and personal accountability
2. Maintaining moral purpose and managing tensions and dilemmas
3. Being other centered and focused on learning and development
4. Making emotional and rational investment
5. Emphasizing the personal and the functional. (p. 171)

School culture arguably holds the key to effective management of change and school improvement. Sparks (2009) states, “Context trumps

both content and process— a school’s cultures and structures will either enable or disable the application of new knowledge and skills” (p. 52). There is general agreement that leadership matters in shaping culture (Khademian, 2002, Peterson & Deal, 1998). However, authors disagree about how leaders shape organizational culture and to what extent (Khademian, 2002). This is vital because if leaders do not understand their school’s culture, then the culture will manage them.

The work of Edgar Schein informs this study in understanding the varied school cultures of the turnaround schools. Schein (1985) defined culture as a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (1985, p. 9). Foundational to Schein’s theory of organizational culture is that the essence of leadership is a “dynamic process of cultural creation and management.” Schein said that the only task of a leader is to manage an institution’s culture (Clive and Dimmock, 2005). A leader imposes their values and assumptions and they lead through environmental changes through the organization’s evolution. Organizational culture is invisible, yet powerful. In order to understand how things should work, we need to ask if our assumptions fit through cultural analysis to examine unwritten rules.

Additionally, Schein (2004) talked about “identifying patterns/integration: unifying cultural logic– these influence the culture and are the major dominant, overarching themes that help you to understand the culture” (p. 15). Evidence of norms and traditions the school’s culture may include artifacts, espoused beliefs and values and underlying assumptions as described as follows by Schein (2004):

- Artifacts: seen, heard and feel-visible structures and processes.
“climate” (surface level)

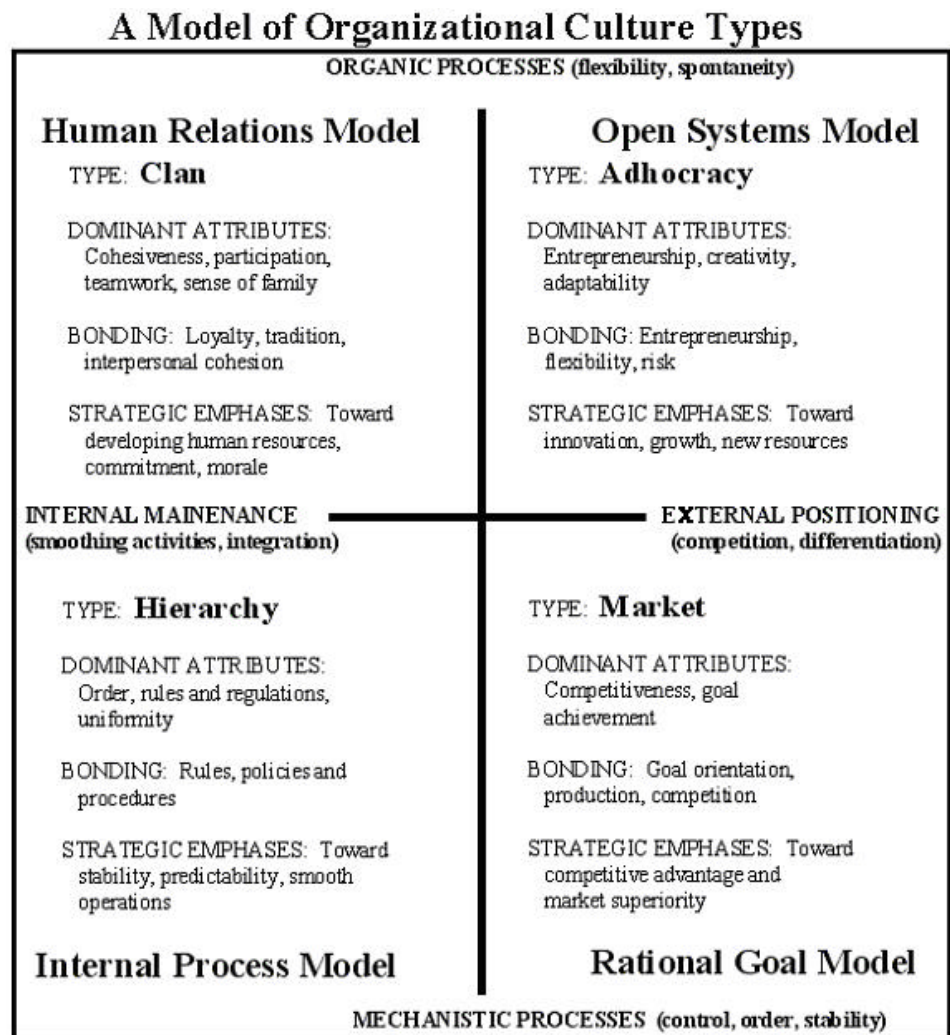
- Espoused beliefs and values: Strategies, goals, philosophies; process/adapted/action to ground
- Underlying assumptions: Unconscious, taken for granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings (life force behind real decisions/actual values) (p.25).

Peterson and Deal (1998) define culture as the “norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges” (p. 28). They identify three ways leadership shapes culture. Leaders do so by “reading culture’s history and current condition, uncovering and articulating core values, and fashioning a positive context by reinforcing positive elements and modifying those elements that are negative or dysfunctional” (p. 30).

Schein, Peterson, Deal and others assert that culture can be manipulated and controlled. Angus (1996) proposes an alternate view of organizational culture, one that administrators cannot control or manage. He asserts that “culture is shifting and contested, and is continually being constructed and reconstructed” (Leithwood, et al, 1996, p. 968). Angus (1996) reports that “administrators are typically expected to become symbolic managers of schools and their cultures” (Leithwood, et al, 1996, p. 967).

There are numerous frameworks for viewing and analyzing school culture and reshaping or changing to achieve the goals of reform—High student achievement. Trice and Beyer’s (1993) characteristics of culture and Clive and Dimmock’s (2005) six dimensions of organizational culture are possible frameworks for analyzing school cultures and for comparing the principals’ responses to shaping the cultures. In, the organizational cultures types based on the Human Relations (HR), Open Systems (OS), Hierarchy and Market models are described. The HR and OS models have applicability to educational organizations. The Human Relations model views organizational members as having a common stake in how the organizational goals are realized. The Open Systems model members are inspired to do what is necessary to achieve organizational goals.

Figure 2.A Model of Organizational Culture Types
 (Large Systems Change, Seashore Louis, K.; Browne-Boatswain, V.;
 Harming, T. (2010). University of Minnesota Presentation April 14,
 2010).



SOURCE: Adapted from Cameron and Freeman (1991); Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983);
 Deshpande, Farley and Webster (1993); Denison and Spreitzer (1991).

A possible theory related to the HR and OS models is a theoretical model of school culture and its connection to student motivation and learning explored by Maehr & Midgley (1996). The underlying principle of their model is that school should be focused on children and their learning. The student is the ultimate client and product in the educational process. Priorities must be set and judgments made in terms of how

children will be influenced. School culture is likely to significantly shape the individual definitions of schooling and the goal students come to hold. Maehr and Midgley (1996) report that students' perceptions of the goals stressed by their schools were related to measures of student motivation, which in turn related to indices of school achievement (e.g., standardized scores in reading, math, and science). Also, students from lower SES backgrounds were most likely to be influenced by school culture. Students who were least likely to be affected by school culture were upper class and white. This has implications for low-performing schools in that school culture may be most important for those who have the least support and the most to lose from a bad school experience. School cultures define the purpose and meaning of schooling for students and thereby shape the kind of learners they will become. The manifestation of the school's culture exists in everyday policies and practices.

Another way to appraise organizational culture, that is to use the Four Frames of Leadership identified in Bolman and Deal's *Reframing Organizations*. These frames are structural, human resource frame, political, and symbolic. Structural frame is defined as how a school divides the work and how the work is coordinated. The Human Resources frame **is** defined as the characteristics of the people who work for a school. The task of the school is to arrange organizational conditions so people can achieve their goals best by directing their efforts towards organizational rewards. The Political frame **is** defined by political pressures driving the school rather than the common good. Coalitions are exercising power bases that try to get others to do what they want and keep people under control. Lastly, the Symbolic frame is defined as the school's culture. It is the shared values, beliefs, practices; and artifacts that define for members who they are and how they do things.

Two additional change models that may be useful to view the work of successful turnaround principals are those proposed by Judson (1991) and Kotter (Table 4). The Judson (1991) model of implementing a change is comprised of five phases and within each phase; it discusses predictable

reactions to change and methods for minimizing resistance to change agent efforts. Among the different methods Judson (1991) discusses for overcoming resistance are alternative media, reward programs, and bargaining and persuasion (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999 p. 301). The first step in Kotter's model, creating a sense of urgency is applicable to work with schools that must implement a dramatic change as in the case of persistently poor performing schools.

Table 4. Judson and Kotter Models for Organizational Change

Author	Stages
Judson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyzing and planning the change • communicating the change • gaining acceptance of new behaviors • changing from the status quo to a desired state • consolidating and institutionalizing the new state
Kotter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a sense of urgency by relating external environmental realities to real and potential crisis and opportunities facing an organization • forming a powerful coalition of individuals who embrace the need for change and who can rally others to support the effort • creating a vision to accomplish the desired end-result • communicating the vision through numerous communication channels • empowering others to act on the vision by changing structures, systems, policies, and procedures in ways that will facilitate implementation • planning for and creating short-term wins by publicizing success, thereby building momentum for continued change • consolidating improvements and changing other structures, systems, procedures, and policies that aren't consistent with the vision; (h) institutionalizing the new approaches by publicizing the connection between the change effort and organizational success (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999 p. 301).

An additional way to view change comes from Jaffe, Scott, and Tobe (1994) who describe their four-stage model of change:

- (1) denial occurs as employees refuse to believe that a change is necessary or that it will be implemented;
- (2) resistance as evidenced by individuals withholding participation, attempting to postpone implementation, and endeavoring to convince decision makers that the proposed change is

inappropriate; (3) exploration is marked by experimentation with new behaviors as a test of their effectiveness in achieving promised results; (4) commitment takes place as change target members embrace a proposed change (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999 p. 303).

Hallinger and Heck (2011) found how leadership contributes to schools' capacity to improve and increase student learning. They identified four frameworks for viewing leaders' actions. A direct effects model is one in which leadership is conceptualized as the primary driver for changes in student learning. A mediated effects model is one in which leadership drives growth in student learning by shaping and strengthening the school's capacity for improvement. A reversed mediated effects model in which the school's results – i.e., changes in student learning outcomes – drives changes in school improvement capacity and leadership. A reciprocal effects model is one in which leadership and school improvement capacity are conceptualized as a mutual influence process that contributes to growth in student learning. (p. 96)

Hallinger and Heck (2011) use the conceptual model of collaborative leadership as their frame for determining the leader's action to demonstrate school improvement. They suggest that collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions that are directed towards school improvement and shared among the principal, teachers, administrators and others. In the context of this study, collaborative leadership entailed the use of governance structures and organizational processes that empowered staff and students, encouraged broad participation in decision making, and fostered shared accountability for student learning. (p. 97)

Hallinger and Heck (2011) define school improvement capacity as “school conditions that support teaching and learning, enable the professional learning of the staff, and provide a means for implementing strategic actions aimed at continuous school improvement” (p. 97). Hallinger and Heck concluded that, First, change in collaborative leadership was positively related to change in school capacity. Second,

change in school improvement capacity positively affected growth in math. Finally, we found a small, positive indirect relationship between changes in collaborative leadership and growth in student learning in reading and math. (p.104)

In addition, they found “leadership and school improvement capacity were part of a mutually-reinforcing relationship in which growth in one led to positive change in the other” (p. 104). Also, school improvement leadership is highly contextualized and they must be responsive both to the ‘initial state’ of the school’s academic capacity and learning outcomes, and to changes in these conditions as they develop (or decline) over time” (2011, p. 106). They emphasized the fact that these results not only reinforce but also extend findings from prior cross-sectional studies of principal effects (2011, p. 102).

The TALPS study conducted by Herman and Huberman (2008) identified promising strategies for turning around chronically low-performing schools. Successful schools appeared more focused on the core of instruction, instructional focus, targeted instruction, and learning time. In specific, TA schools appeared more likely to report an instructional focus for the principal, use of tiered interventions and tutoring, and extended learning time opportunities (Herman & Huberman, 2012, p. 3). The study found that (1) accountability pressures and support from the district combined with (2) strong instructional leadership, (3) strategic staffing (i.e., strategic recruitment, assignment, and “counseling out” of ineffective staff), (4) intensive professional development, and (5) data use focused on identifying and assisting struggling students are key components of a school’s turnaround process (Herman & Huberman, 2012, p. 4). In addition, the researchers found the schools had to address external supports and pressures, such as a change in superintendents.

Barriers to Organizational Change

Persistently low-performing schools may have cultures characterized by low staff morale, isolation, and fear about taking risks due to being under the microscopic lens of district administration, School

Board and external stakeholders. The American Institute for Research (2010) reports that in these schools “the majority of students are performing below grade level; there is poor instructional focus, low faculty morale, and weak partnerships with parents, families and the community” (p. 2). The authors state the following:

The difficulties of motivating and sustaining learning in challenging contexts can often seem insurmountable to principals and teachers alike. Racial stereotyping, inflexible structures, and pedagogical arrangements, a mutual distrust between administrators and teachers, and an energy sapping undercurrent of misbehavior and even violence by students, all contributing to the creation of defeatist cultures in many of these sites. (2010, p. 3)

The literature indicates that there are enough examples of failing schools being transformed into effective schools “to prove that it can be done...there are no quick fixes for the low-performing schools” (Wolk, 1998, pp.6-7) & Coby & Murphy, 2007, p. 634-635).

However, barriers include negative characteristics of low performing schools listed below:

- most often located in urban and rural areas
- serve a disproportionate number of minority students, primarily African American (65 percent to 95 percent)
- at least 50 percent of students qualify for free or reduced price meals
- low quality of teaching includes limited skills and knowledge, inexperience, poor collegiate preparation and teaching out of specialty
- new teachers are more likely to be assigned to low-performing schools
- high rates of teacher turnover with upward rates of 75 percent to 80 percent
- inadequate resources and failing schools
- low expectations of students; and
- educators do not assume responsibility for students' low achievement and failure (Meyers & Murphy, 2007).

In addition, failing schools lack internal accountability and maintain minimal expectations about the quality of instruction impacting students' performance. Meyers and Murphy (2007) report that Nicolaidou and Ainscow, 2005 found it is not “unusual for adults to blame the victim by assigning responsibility for low student performance to families and communities;” furthermore, they “project their frustration, failure and tedium on to students, while remaining complacent” (p. 640). “Teachers often feel demoralized by the fact that they lack the skills and tools to help these students learn” (Housman & Martinez, 2001, p. 6). Coby & Murphy (2007) found that “many failing schools develop a reputation and a history of poor student performance that induce a "low community opinion of the school" (p. 643).

Typical school barriers include those that are characteristic of loosely-coupled systems. The educational system is bottom heavy because the closer we get to the bottom of the pyramid, the closer we get to the factors that have the greatest effect on the program's success or failure. The system is loosely coupled because the ability of one level to control the behavior of another is weak and largely negative.

External factors, such as collective bargaining agreement hiring and assignment to school procedures may impact a school's successful turnaround. The School Turnaround Group reports that critical elements for turnaround such as school-level autonomy are “crippled by traditional collective bargaining agreements which restrict school-based human capital decisions, restrict school based autonomy, reward seniority over performance, and waste time and resources” (Weinberg, 2011, p. 6).

In addition to the barriers posed in traditional schools, persistently low-performing schools are characterized by low staff morale, staff defensiveness and reactionary mindset and compliance mode.

Hallinger and Murphy (2013) assert that principals cannot attend to the work that needs to be accomplished to create improvement because of being distracted by tasks that “fall into the category of *important but not urgent* activities” (p. 10).

These tasks are connected to the retention of highly competent staff and include six components of recruiting, retaining and supporting top talent in the turnaround environment that include:

- A team approach. Teams of teachers take on the turnaround challenge together. The teams may be handpicked by the principal or part of a broader district corps formed to tackle the turnaround challenge.
- Strong leaders. Teachers work in partnership with an effective leadership team with whom they share a vision for school improvement. Rather than relying on one superhero principal, skill sets of teacher teams, staff and the principal are strategically combined to create the necessary leadership capacity.
- Empowerment. Teachers have the authority to take action to meet the needs of their students through increased freedom/flexibility, longer accountability time horizons, formal teacher-leader positions, and strengthened linkages between teacher teams and relatively small groups of students.
- Additional training and support. Teachers receive support and training specific to the turnaround environment, including support from school-based coaches and mentor teachers. They have additional time for collaboration; meetings with coaches and mentor teachers; data-analysis tools and support; and the opportunity to attend summer institutes and complete additional course work.
- Prestige. Turnaround positions are viewed as desirable opportunities to do the most challenging work in the district.
- Compensation. Teachers receive additional compensation for teaching in a more challenging school and for additional work hours and responsibilities. (Ferris 2012, p. 3)

Central to the implementation of each component are changes to school designs— the way people, time and money at the school are organized. (Ferris 2012, p. 3) A team of expert teachers, when empowered to support their peers through meaningful leadership roles on teams, can

build immediate and sustainable instructional capacity throughout the school (Ferris 2012, p. 4).

Ultimately, solving the human-capital challenge in turnaround schools means making sure every student attending a turnaround school has a highly effective teacher responsible for his or her instruction (Ferris 2012, p. 5).

Sustainability

Another goal of school turnaround reform is to create sustainable change so a critical action for principals of turnaround schools is to create lasting change versus incremental change. NCLB is an external factor prompting actions by states that receive Title I funding. The federal government is prompting reform through mandates through NCLB. Course readings illuminate key understandings about organizational change, especially when the reform is initiated by an external entity. Seashore - Louis (1994) addresses the role of external forces, such as the federal government writing, “An alternative vision of schooling imposed from the outside rarely results in real change unless compliance with external constraints is coupled with a shift in interpretive perspective” (p.14). When compliance occurs without learning, the changed behaviors may disappear as soon as the pressure or other external stimulus subsides (Seashore-Louis 1994, p. 14). Weick’s and Quinn’s (1999) description of continuous change is one that is evolving and incremental can be applied to the process schools may undergo during a turnaround. They write, “The distinctive quality of continuous change is the idea that small continuous adjustments, created simultaneously across units, can cumulate and create substantial change” (Weick & Quinn 1999, p. 371).

Cynthia Coburn provides a framework for determining if reform in persistently low-performing schools will be sustainable. She describes four interrelated dimensions that are needed for lasting change. They are depth, sustainability, spread and a shift in reform ownership (Coburn, 2003). Depth means the many efforts, grants and strategies for change often just scratch the surface. Coburn (2003) suggests that by “deep

change” that we go beyond the surface structures or procedures (such as just changing the materials we use, how we organize the work or changing the activities) to changing beliefs about how students learn, our expectations, and how we teach (p.4). According to Coburn one must attend to sustainability issue, that is the reform may be adopted without being implemented or can be implemented superficially only to fall in disuse. To address this issue a component of this study will look at the intended, versus the enacted, versus the attained turnaround actions as described below.

- Intended - What did the principal intend to happen?
- Implemented - What actually happened?
- Attained – How did the staff change as a result of the principal’s actions (beliefs, knowledge, behavior)?

Coburn (2003) goes on to say that “We often have to try to sustain in the midst of competing priorities, changing demands, turnover of staff, and loss of funding” (p. 6). Coburn suggests that sustainability is central to bringing a reform/change to scale. Marks and Nance (2007) mention this issue also. They say that “single-loop” learning is superficial solutions rather than addressing underlying norms and processes that lead to robust organizational learning” (Marks & Nance 2007, p. 9).

Regarding spread, Coburn suggests that we must think not just about expanding reform outward to more and more schools, but also within the school or district. Schools are more likely to sustain and deepen a reform/change over time when school and district policies are compatible or aligned with the reform. This is aligned to the finding that “leaders in education—including state officials, superintendents and district staff, principals, school board members, teachers and community members enacting various leadership roles—provide direction for, and exercise influence over, policy and practice” (Wahlstrom, et al., 2010, p. 5).

A shift in reform ownership is the final dimension that involves lasting change. It is moving from the “external” reform controlled by the reformer, to internal, controlled by the district. The knowledge and

authority for reform can't continuously lie outside of the school and must transition to an internally and supported practice that becomes self-generative. Many of us would refer to this as "buy in" (Coburn 2003, p. 7). Khademian also discusses the idea of commitments to the culture. "It is through commitments that participants understand what they are doing and why they are doing it" (Khademian 2002, p. 5).

Seashore-Louis (1994) states that "Effective change focuses on the ambiguity of practice and knowledge, the need for doing and discussing as the means to learning, the importance of interpretation in the context of the school's history, and not segregating information or people in ways that impede decentralized sharing. The researchers go on to say, "Above all, there is a need to ground thinking about change in a clear value system" (p.16). Leaders should focus on the vision and working patiently as changes evolve. Also, "allowing the people to make the vision theirs and to get there in different ways" (Seashore-Louis 1994, p. 4).

District Office Support

The limited research on turnaround school leadership found that principals who have successfully transformed their schools for better teaching and learning have support from district supervisors and departments focused on these areas of change:

1. Creating strong learning-focused partnerships with principals that help principals grow as instructional leaders,
2. Providing schools with high-quality, relevant services that directly support improved instruction, and
3. Leading the change process by teaching and learning, together with staff throughout the system, what the new work is and how to engage in it.

Professional Learning Communities

Professional learning communities are a way to organize the work of school staff to allow them to become engaged and invested within a school. A professional community characterized by Louis & Kruse (2009)

is one in which “a strong school culture is based on shared norms and values, shared dialogue, public practice, and collaboration” (p. 8). Bryk, et al. found that “there is extensive evidence now that schools organized as communities promote greater teacher commitment and more student engagement in school work (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1997). “One of the most powerful ways to improve teaching effectiveness is to give teachers time to work together with expert peers using data to monitor student progress and adjust instruction” (Ferris 2012, p. 2).

Trust among the members of the school community is the foundation for a professional learning community and a strong principal plays a pivotal role in the success of these communities (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1999; Louis & Kruse, 2009). Low trust can be a characteristic of turnaround schools. Louis and Kruse state that “Trust is low in schools that feel beleaguered by public pronouncements that they are failing—not a message that is designed to create positive collaboration” (Louis & Kruse, 2009, p. 9). “Interpersonal skills of principals and their ability to build a climate of trust and open exchange of ideas are both critical to engaging teachers and others in an ongoing dialogue about the possibilities of good practice” (Blumberg & Greenfield, 2000, p. 231). Trust has been identified as foundational for any cultural shift designed around any change movement (Kruse & Louis, 2009).

Critical to the function of professional learning community is the presence of a robust teacher professionalism component as it promotes more challenging academic work for all students (Lieberman; 1988; Darling-Hammond; 1987; Rowan; 1994). Bryk, Camburn and Louis, (1999) define characteristics of optimal adult professional development stating there are

Three core practices characterize adult behavior in a school-based professional community: reflective dialogue among teachers about instructional practices and student learning; a deprivatization of practice where teachers observe each others’ practice and joint problem solving is

modal; and peer collaboration where teachers engage in actual shared work. (1997, p.3)

An effective professional learning community in place may be one of the critical components of the turnaround leader's success and deserves a close review when trying to illuminate the practices of successful leaders.

Leaders must be engaged in work that involves teachers in meaningful ways through learning communities. These learning communities must be focused on high student learning, data-driven and collaborative processes and procedures to achieve the desired student achievement results.

LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

Transformational Leadership

As a response to mandates from NCLB for persistently poor performing schools to restructure, scholars looked to transformational leadership for leading in this unique school setting. The term transformational leadership was first coined by J.V. Downton (1973) in *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in a Revolutionary Process*. James MacGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the concept of transformational leadership in his book *Leadership*. He described it not as a set of specific behaviors, but rather an ongoing process by which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20). Burns was influenced by Abraham Maslow's Theory of Human Needs. This theory recognizes that people have a range of needs, and the extent to which they will perform effectively in the workplace will be affected by the extent to which these needs are satisfied. The transformational leader ties the mission of the organization to the feelings and values of individuals in the organization so that they move to act in ways to meet the organization's goals.

In their 2003 School Restructuring Study, Marks and Printy studied 24 elementary, middle, and high schools that made substantial

progress in their reform efforts. They found that “transformational leadership emerged as the model needed by principals to lead schools through reform. Transformational leadership provides intellectual direction and aims at innovating within the organization, while empowering and supporting teachers as partners in decision making.”(Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 371). Murphy (1990) noted that principals in effective schools demonstrated instructional leadership both directly and indirectly. These principals emphasized four sets of activities with implications for instruction: (a) developing the school mission and goals; (b) coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (c) promoting a climate for learning; and (d) creating a supportive work environment” (Marks and Printy, 2003, p. 373).

The concept of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993) emphasizes that transformational leaders exhibit at least one of these leadership factors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Leithwood and colleagues (Leithwood,1994,1995; Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi & Steinbach,1993; Leithwood et al.,1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Leithwood, Jantzi,& Fernandez,1994; Leithwood, Jantzi,& Steinbach,1999) identified nine functions of transformational leadership clustering in three areas—those that are (a) mission centered (developing a widely shared vision for the school, building consensus about school goals and priorities),(b) performance centered (holding high performance expectations, providing individualized support, supplying intellectual stimulation), and (c) culture centered (modeling organizational values, strengthening productive school culture, building collaborative cultures, and creating structures for participation in school decisions” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 375). Marks and Printy (2003) assert that “it is necessary for reform-oriented school improvement and it is insufficient to achieve high-quality teaching and learning.” (p. 376) What does a turnaround leader need that a leader of an already-successful school might not? A

driving motivation to achieve, persistence in the face of obstacles and inspiring self-confidence, for starters-, can lead to actions — such as calculated risk taking, ambitious goal setting and detailed planning — that are crucial to school turnaround success. Administrators need principals who display these patterns of thinking, feeling, acting and speaking — the competencies that cause a leader to succeed (Steiner & Keeschull-Barett, 2012, p. 27). That means vetting their practical skills, such as giving teachers actionable feedback, addressing school-wide behavior issues and providing effective parent communication. But it also means assessing their competencies: Are they exhibiting the drive for results and the nuanced impact and influence behaviors that distinguish turnaround leaders? (p. 27).

Integrated Leadership

In their study, Marks & Printy (2003) found that transformational leadership coupled with shared instruction leadership was important to school reform success. They found that where “integrated leadership was normative; teachers provided evidence of high quality pedagogy and students performed at high levels on authentic measure of achievement” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 392).

Distributed Leadership

A distributed leadership model requires principals to exhibit specific behaviors to implement change successfully. “Distributed leadership” initiatives are characterized by groups of teachers becoming more formal leaders and undertaking tasks they would not do traditionally, including some work that would be perceived as administrative” (Mayreowitz, Murphy, Louis & Smylie 2007, p. 70).

“Principals need to know how to develop, support, and manage these new forms of leadership” (Mayreowitz, Murphy, Louis & Smylie 2007, p.182). Conclusions from the literature demonstrate how the stability in the principal’s office can influence the development and implementation of distributed leadership, primarily through building

supportive structures and climate, increasing trust and engaging in productive micro-politics (Mayreowitz, Murphy, Louis & Smylie 2007 p. 93).

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF TURNAROUND PRINCIPALS

Regarding leadership in this type of school context the limited research on turnaround school leadership found that principals who have successfully transformed their schools for better teaching and learning communicate a positive vision that includes consistent, high expectations and ambitions for the success of their students. They collect and analyze data to identify high-priority problems, focus on the core of instruction, monitor student progress and provide appropriate support and intervention in the classroom and outside of the classroom within the school. They attend to having a high quality staff by providing coaching and support to staff through intensive professional development and replace ineffective staff, if necessary. In addition, they cultivate external partnerships with parents, business and community (Herman & Huberman, 2012; Woods, Husbands & Brown, 2013; Public Impact, 2006).

Researchers Woods, Husbands and Brown (2013) identified the quality of leadership as one of the key factors driving the transformation of one of London's turnaround schools from the worse performing to among the best performing schools in the world. They "isolated seven key themes" which underpinned the transformation of the school. The themes are as follows:

- Ambitious leadership at all levels
- Very effective school improvement
- High quality teaching and learning
- High levels of funding
- External, integrated services
- Community development and partnerships
- Resilient approach to external government and politics

In addition, Woods, Husbands and Brown identified a set of characteristics shared by successful turnaround principals. They have the following:

- Consistent, high expectations and ambitions for the success of their students
- Constant demonstration that risk factors need not be a barrier to student achievement
- A relentless focus on improving teaching and learning coupled with effective professional development for all staff
- Expertise of assessment and monitoring student progress and providing appropriate support and intervention
- Highly inclusive of all students
- Develop individual students by providing learning opportunities in the classroom and outside of the classroom within the school
- Forge a range of partnerships with parents, business and community
- Comprehensive in self-evaluation and data analysis focused on clear for school improvement based on data and evidence based practices (Woods, Husbands & Brown, 2013, p. 19).

A study conducted by Public Impact (2007) identified the following steps as leading toward turnaround success across educational, business, and philanthropic sectors. They report that school leaders for turnarounds must stay focused on accomplishing the following actions:

- **Identify and focus on a few early wins with big payoffs**, and use that early success to gain momentum. While these “wins” are limited in scope, they are high-priority, not peripheral, elements of organization performance.
- **Break organization norms or rules** to deploy new tactics needed for early wins. Failed rules and routines are discarded when they inhibit success.
- **Act quickly in a fast cycle** of trying new tactics, measuring results, discarding failed tactics and doing more of what works (Figure 3).

Time is the enemy when the status quo is failure (Public Impact, 2008, p. 5).

Figure 3. Cycle of Turnaround Actions (Public Impact, 2006, p. 5)



Through a distributed leadership model principals and teachers engage in three ongoing phases—analysis and problem-solving, driving for results and measuring and reporting all the while, the principal influences people inside and outside of the school. During the Analysis and Problem Solving phase, the principal and school staff collect and analyze data to identify high-priority problems that can be fixed quickly, develop an action plan based on data, take action to drive for results, and monitor and report on the results of the action plan strategies being implemented. Table 5 outlines the competencies of successful turnaround principals as identified by Public Impact.

Table 5. Turnaround Principal Competencies

Competencies	Description
Concentrating on big, fast	Turnaround leaders concentrate on a few changes to achieve early, visible wins. They do this to achieve success

payoffs in the first year	in an important area, motivate others for further change, and reduce resistance by those who oppose change.
Implement Practices Even if Require Deviation	Turnaround leaders deviate from organization norms or rules when needed to achieve early wins. In a failing organization, existing practices often contribute to failure. This shows that changes can lead to success.
Require All Staff to Change	When turnaround leaders implement an action plan, change is mandatory, not optional.
Make Necessary Staff Replacements	Successful turnaround leaders typically do not replace all or most staff but often replace some senior leaders. After initial turnaround success, staff that does not make needed changes either leaves or are removed by the leader.
Focus on Successful Tactics; Halt Others	Successful turnaround leaders quickly discard tactics that do not work and spend more money and time on tactics that work. This pruning and growing process focuses limited resources where they will best improve results.
Do Not Tout Progress as Ultimate Success	Turnaround leaders are not satisfied with partial success. They report progress, but keep the organization focused on high goals. When a goal is met, they are likely to raise the bar. Merely better is not good enough.
<i>Influencing Inside and Outside the Organization</i>	
Communicate a Positive Vision	Turnaround leaders motivate others to contribute their discretionary effort by communicating a clear picture of success and its benefits.
Help Staff Personally Feel Problems	Turnaround leaders use various tactics to help staff empathize with – or “put themselves in the shoes of” – those whom they serve. This helps staff feel the problems that the status quo is causing and feel motivated to change.
Gain Support of Key Influencers	Turnaround leaders gain support of trusted influencers among staff and community and then work through these people to influence others.
Silence Critics with Speedy Success	Early, visible wins are used not just for success in their own right, but to make it harder for others to oppose further change. This reduces leader time spent addressing “politics” and increases time spent managing for results.
<i>Measuring, Reporting (and Improving)</i>	
Measure and Report Progress Frequently	Turnaround leaders set up systems to measure and report interim results often. This enables the rapid discard of failed tactics and increase of successful tactics essential for fast results.
Require Decision Makers to Share Data and Problem Solve	Turnaround leaders share key staff results visibly, to highlight those who do not change and reward those who do and succeed. This shifts meetings from blaming and excuses to problem solving.

Source. Turnaround Principal Competencies (Public Impact, 2006, p. 6-9).

Much more research is warranted to determine if these competencies are generalizable to other turnaround school principals serving various student populations and in diverse settings.

Leadership Processes/Strategies of Successful Turnaround Leadership

Duke (2010) reports Darden defines turnaround as “a pattern of low achievement, as measured by student performance on standardized tests of literacy and mathematics, had to be reversed. The increase had to be sustained for at least two years at the point where data was collected on the school” (2010, p.4). Eight dimensions were identified:

1. Leadership changes
2. School policy
3. Program changes
4. Changes in organizational processes and procedures
5. Personnel and staffing changes
6. Change in classroom practices
7. Changes in parental and community involvement
8. Changes in school facilities (2010, p. 5)

Duke further states that all eight of these changes must “blend together to produce a coherent whole” (p.25). Improved performance is a product of multiple factors listed below.

Leadership exercises were clustered under four headings: 1) mission and focus, 2) leadership style, 3) re-culturing, and 4) distributed leadership (2010, p. 7). “Principals were credited with developing highly focused missions to guide improvement efforts (2010, p. 7). Leadership style appears to be variable across school turnaround settings” (2010, p.8). Staff members acknowledged that “all children were capable of learning what they needed to learn to succeed in school” (2010, p. 9). A high value was placed on team work, data-driven decision-making and shared responsibility for student learning” (2010, p. 9). “Lead teachers and team leaders played key roles in planning, implementing, and coordinating

turnaround efforts” (2010, p. 10). Teachers were involved in making important school-level decisions and where a new principal took over the experience and insight of veteran teachers were especially important. (2010, p. 10)

There was some change in the amount of learning time either by extending the daily schedule, school year or becoming community centers by having options extended beyond the school day. There was the creation of formal programs, such as school-wide behavior programs or math and literacy common curriculum.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

At schools across the nation, on standardized tests and other student achievement assessments, American Indian students and students of color underachieve compared to their white peers. The predictability of students’ achievement based on a student’s race, ethnicity, home language, personal characteristics or culture is being examined as a dimension that contributes to the achievement gap. Researchers assert that it is imperative to explore the role of race in examining the educational experiences of these students (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004 & Singleton, 2012). Educators are using Critical Race Theory (CRT), a conceptual framework for examining the dimension of race in education within educational research and schools (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). In the Twin Cities Brooklyn Center Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools and Saint Paul Schools have adopted equity policies and use CRT as the organizing framework for staff professional development about equity. The Pacific Education Group(PEG) (2013) defines equity in education as “raising the achievement of all students while narrowing the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students, and ensuring the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories”. The PEG Courageous Conversations about Race (CCAR) protocol includes using the following:

Four Agreements

1. Stay engaged

2. Speak your truth
3. Experience discomfort
4. Expect and accept non-closure

Six Conditions

1. Focus on personal, local and immediate
2. Isolate race
3. Normalize social construction & multiple perspectives
4. Monitor agreements, conditions and establish parameters
5. Use a "working definition" for race
6. Examine the presence and role of "Whiteness"

Compass

The compass was created to help us understand how we each process and engage with information about race. It is a way to understand one another's opinions and beliefs. According to the compass, there are four ways that people deal with race: Emotional, Intellectual, Moral and Social (Singleton & Linton, 2006. pp.58-65).

DeCuir & Dixson, 2004 report that CRT “specifically involves the following tenets: (a) counterstorytelling(Matsuda), (b) the permanence of racism (Bell, 1992, 1995; Lawrence, 1995), (c) Whiteness as property (Harris,1995), (d) interest convergence (Bell,1980), and (e) the critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1988)(p.2).

Table 6. Critical Race Theory Tenets

Counter- Storytelling	A method of sharing a story that aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted views or myths, especially ones held by the majority. It is a strategy and means of exposing and critiquing dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes.
The Permanence of Racism	The notion that racism is a permanent component of American life. Racism in the USA is pervasive and operates like the air we breathe; it is ubiquitous and omnipresent.
Whiteness as Property	Due to the history of race and racism in the United States and the role that the U.S. jurisprudence has played, whiteness can be considered a property interest in three ways – 1. The right to possess 2.

	The right to use 3. The right to disposition.
Interest Convergence	Civil rights gains for people of color should be interpreted with measure enthusiasm because the first civil rights have been enjoyed by White forever because they were basic tenets of U.S. democracy.
Critique of Liberalism	Three basic notions that have been embraced by liberal legal ideology. The notion of colorblindness, the neutrality of the law, and incremental change.

Minneapolis Public Schools and St. Paul Public Schools provide examples of how critical race theory translates into policy. Minneapolis Public Schools Equity and Diversity Policy states,

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the elimination of bias, particularly racism and cultural bias, as factors affecting student achievement and learning experiences, and to promote learning and work environments that welcome, respect and value diversity. (Minneapolis Public Schools, 2014)

St. Paul Public Schools’ Racial Equity policy states the following: Students deserve respectful learning environments in which their racial and ethnic diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. This policy confronts the institutional racism that results in predictably lower academic achievement for students of color than for their white peers. Eliminating our district’s institutional racism will increase achievement, including on-time graduation, for *all* students, while narrowing the gaps between the highest- and lowest-performing students. SPPS acknowledges that complex societal and historical factors contribute to the inequity within our school district. Nonetheless, rather than perpetuating the resulting disparities, SPPS must address and overcome this inequity and institutional racism, providing all students with the support and opportunity to succeed. (St. Public Schools, 2013)

Courageous Conversations (Singleton & Linton, 2006) is the utilization of the *Four Agreements*, *Six Conditions* and *Compass* in order to engage, sustain and deepen internalized, intra-racial and inter-racial dialogue about race, racial identity and institutional racism and is an essential foundation for examining schooling and improving student achievement. Researchers assert that since poor performing schools are mostly populated by American Indian and children of color that leaders must look at the impact race has on the disparities in education.

The limited research on turnaround schools indicates that successful school transformation is characterized by strong school leadership. The utilization or lack thereof of the multifaceted dimensions of leadership and tools and/or strategies has been highlighted in the literature examined for this research of turnaround schools.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

DESIGN

An integrated mixed-method design was used to complete this field study of principals assigned to three Minnesota designated Focus schools. This case study of three principals drew on both quantitative and qualitative data to investigate the research questions on factors that positively contributed to the turnaround journey of the schools. Hallinger (2013) states that “It is possible to gather data on the principals’ instructional leadership practice through a variety of means including direct observation, interviews, and questionnaires (p.73).

Hallinger (2013) furthermore advises to obtain the perceptions of multiple audiences in order to produce an accurate instructional leadership behavior profile (2013, p.73). In addition, he suggests that archival information such as school goal statements, faculty meeting agendas, principal newsletters, and teacher evaluation reports should be used to complete the picture of principal leadership behavior and to check the accuracy of perceptions collected through use of the PIMRS (2013, p. 75).

The quantitative component of the study is based upon student achievement data collected from the Minnesota Department of Education website, state and district data on student demographics; district surveys and the results of surveys given to all staff members, principal supervisors and school leadership team members during the spring of 2013. The qualitative component of the study is based upon structured interviews and focus groups of school leadership team and individual leadership team members, as well as interviews of principals and the principals' supervisors. In addition, numerous documents were collected and analyzed. The documents were often related to leadership planning meetings and communication from the principal to staff. An integrative approach is one where the "integration of findings and inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or program of inquiry are used" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 142). Quantitative methods were used to assess each school's climate and the extent to which the principal's instructional leadership and general leadership competencies led to the change in the school's performance in terms of student achievement as measured by indicators used for NCLB adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in reading and mathematics are state tests used to measure (AYP). Reading and math tests are given in grades 3-8, 10 and 11. Tests results are aggregated by sub-groups of students which include the following categories: gender, special education, English Language Learners, free and reduced lunch eligible, and ethnicity. Participation rates of students enrolled is factored into AYP.

Qualitative methods were used to learn about the principals' disposition to the turnaround school context and to understand the complex processes that underlie the principals' actions.

A sequential mixed methods design is one in which "the conclusions based on the results of the first strand lead to the formulation of design components for the next strand. The final inferences are based

on the results of both strands of the study” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 153).

This research project used a sequential mixed methods design in which the research begins with a quantitative data gathering phase using established instruments and institutional data, then moves into a qualitative data gathering phase using interviews with questions developed based on the quantitative data to further explore the quantitative findings, and then finally moves to an analytical phase using data collected from the previous phases. The research’s case study design selected schools from the original group of 19 schools (also representative of elementary and secondary) with this sample (*Focus*) schools coming from different school districts.

SAMPLE

The principals studied were those whose schools were identified as *Focus* schools in Minnesota. The sample included three school principals, representing the different grade configurations, elementary and secondary. Each school was located in districts with a strong expectation for principal accountability for student achievement. To determine if the school was making a transformation, the school turnaround definition was applied. A school turnaround is defined as a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that

- Produced significant gains in achievement within two years; and
- Readied the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performance organization.

Additional criteria for determining schools’ successful reform were developed by the researcher using other indicators that designate the school as one on the path to becoming a high-performing school.

The study sample was drawn from three schools in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and included schools of different sizes and demographic compositions. To ensure the confidentiality of the data collected for this study, the participating schools and associated principals are referred to

using the following pseudonyms in the text and the accompanying appendices:

1. Alice Evans (pseudonym), principal of Community Elementary School (CES), an integrated second-ring suburban community that serves a student population comprised almost exclusively of students of color and low-income students that is known for its community holistic approach to meeting children's academic, social, emotional and physical health needs as it is for its enrichment activities to support children and their families.
2. Nancy Paul (pseudonym), principal of Magnet Elementary School (MES), a large urban magnet college preparatory school serving a mostly socioeconomically and racially homogeneous group of students that is known for its service learning programs.
3. Ana Fitzgerald (pseudonym), principal of Collegeville Middle School (CMS), a large urban school serving a socioeconomically and racially diverse group of students that is known for its intercultural learning experiences that foster inquiry and cooperative learning.

METHODS

From March 2013 through December 2014 the researcher conducted individual and focus group interviews and participant observations at the schools. Also, I obtained data related to school demography, standardized testing, attendance, and documents related to the history, programmatic features of the school and external evaluations.

Most of the spring was devoted to interviewing principals, principal supervisors and instructional leadership team members. These interviews elicited their perspectives about principal leadership, the culture of the school, student learning problems, teacher problems of practice and actions to address barriers and/or problems of practice. In the fall, I recorded informal and formal dimensions of the school that captured the culture of the schools, including faculty meetings and professional development.

DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Phase 1: Quantitative Methods

Quantitative data were gathered through published surveys and institutional data and also through the following instruments. For the 5Essentials for Community School in 2011 there were 90.2 percent of students who responded and 95.4 percent of teachers responded and in 2013 there were 98.8 percent of students who responded and 83.3 percent of teachers who responded. For Magnet School in 2012 there were 86.9 percent of teachers and paraprofessionals who responded and in 2014 there were 75.9 percent who responded. For Collegeville School in 2012 there were 0 percent of students who responded and 65 percent of teachers and paraprofessionals who responded and in 2014 there were 54.2 percent of students who responded and 65 percent of teachers and paraprofessionals.

(5Essentials (University of Chicago, Urban Leadership Institute, 2011, 2013).

Developed by the University of Chicago the tool measures the 5 Essentials of *Effective Leaders*, *Collaborative Teachers*, *Supportive Environment*, *Ambitious Instruction*, and *Involved Families* are organizational and climate components the University of Chicago believes are necessary for school improvement. Each school's culture was assessed before the turnaround phase and during implementation of strategies designed to turn the school around. The researcher used data from both the 5 Essentials and Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire to determine findings about each school's culture and climate. Each school administered the 5Essentials survey. 5Essentials has three components: Essentials, Measures and Questions. The five domains for Essentials are *Effective Leaders* (Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success), *Collaborative Teachers* (Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth), *Involved Families* (The entire staff builds strong external relationships); *Supportive Environment* (The school is safe, demanding and supportive) and *Ambitious Instruction* (Classes are challenging and engaging). The specific elements of each domain are

included in Table 23. University of Chicago (2014) describes the elements for each measure in the following ways:

1. Measures of Effective Leadership
 - i. In schools with strong Teacher Influence, teachers have influence in a broad range of decisions regarding school policies and practices.
 - ii. In schools with strong Principal Instructional Leadership, the principal is an active and skilled instructional leader who sets high standards for teaching and student learning.
 - iii. In schools with strong Program Coherence school programs are coordinated and consistent with its goals for student learning.
 - iv. In schools with strong Teacher-Principal Trust, teachers and principals share a high level of mutual trust and respect.
2. Measure of Collaborative Teachers- In schools with strong Collaborative Teachers,
 - i. In schools with strong Quality Professional Development, all teachers collaborate to promote professional growth.
 - ii. In schools with strong Collective Responsibility, teachers share a strong sense of responsibility for student development, school improvement, and professional growth.
 - iii. In schools with strong School Commitment, teachers are deeply committed to the school.
 - iv. In schools with strong Teacher-Teacher Trust, teachers are supportive and respectful of one another, personally and professionally.
3. Measure of Involved Families - In schools with Involved Families, the entire staff builds strong external relationships.
 - i. In schools with strong Outreach to Parents, the school creates a welcoming and communicative environment for all parents.
 - ii. In schools with strong Parent Involvement, Parents are active participants in their child's schooling.

- iii. In schools with strong Teacher-Parent Trust, teachers view parents as partners in improving student learning.
- 4. Measure of Supportive Environment - In schools with a Supportive Environment, the school is safe, demanding and supportive.
 - i. In schools with strong Peer Support for Academic Work, students demonstrate behaviors that lead to academic achievement.
 - ii. In schools with strong Academic Personalism, teachers connect with students in the classroom and support them in achieving academic goals.
 - iii. In schools with strong Academic Press, teachers expect students to do their best and to meet academic demands.
 - iv. In schools with strong Safety, students feel safe both in and around the school building, and while they travel to and from home.
 - v. In schools with strong Student-Teacher Trust, students and teachers share a high level of mutual trust and respect.
- 5. Measures of Ambitious Instruction - In schools with Ambitious Instruction, classes are challenging and engaging. The instruction is clear, well-structured, and encourages students to build and apply knowledge.
 - i. In schools with strong Course Clarity, students are provided clear learning goals and instruction that supports achievement.
 - ii. In schools with strong English Instruction, students interact with course materials and one another to build and apply critical reading and writing skills.
 - iii. In schools with strong Math Instruction, students interact with course material and one another to build and apply knowledge in their math classes.
 - iv. In schools with strong Quality of Student Discussion, students participate in classroom discussions that build their critical thinking skills.

Table 7. 5Essentials Domain Elements

Effective Leaders	Collaborative Teachers	Involved Families	Supportive Environment	Ambitious Instruction
-Teacher influence -Principal Instructional Leadership -Program Coherence -Teacher Principal Trust	-Collective responsibility -Quality professional development -School commitment -Teacher – teacher trust	- Outreach to parents -Parent involvement in school -Teacher –parent trust	-Peer support for academic work -Academic personalism -Academic press -Safety -Student – teacher trust	-Course clarity -English instruction -Math instruction -Quality of student discussion

For every school the 5Essentials describes how organized the school is for improvement. A well organized score will have an average score that is three to five for each domain. Schools with negative scores are considered as not being well organized. According to the developers of the 5Essentials reports “schools with strong results are 10 times more likely to improve and 30 times less likely to stagnate”. It does not matter in which three domains the school results are strong. Students in grades 6-12 are surveyed if enrolled in a school. Teachers respond to Effective Leadership, Collaborative Teachers and Involved Families. Ambitious Instruction questions are answered mostly by students, except for one section. One fifth of the 5Essentials is about principal leadership. The remainder is about the school. A threshold of 50 responses is needed to generate a score.

The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS; Hallinger, 1982, 1990). PIMRS is an instrument that was used to assess principals’ instructional leadership and create a profile of each principal’s leadership competencies. It is important to note that the PIMRS does not measure an administrator’s effectiveness. Rather, it assesses the degree to which a principal is providing instructional leadership in his/her school. (Hallinger, 2013, p. 24).

The validity and reliability evidence for the PIMRS was established and replicated in several studies about school leadership. The

instrument has been used extensively over 25 years (Hallinger, 2008, p. 24). The PIMRS uses a framework with three dimensions: *Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* (See Figure 1, Appendix B). Within each dimension are instructional leadership functions. The Principal Instructional Management Scale (PIMRS) was administered at each of the selected schools, and then the information from the results was used to create questions for a survey of the Leadership Team. There were eight teacher respondents for Community Elementary, 26 teacher respondents for Magnet Elementary School and 25 teacher responses for Collegeville Middle School. Magnet School staff completed their spring 2013 using paper surveys. Online survey was available via Survey Monkey and the survey window was open from November –December 2013 for Community staff and for Collegeville staff from May-June 2013.

Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Elementary and Middle School(OCDQ-RE, M; Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991). An instrument to assess elementary school culture and climate that was used is the OCDQ-RE (Appendix E), which assesses climate on six dimensions: Supportive Behavior, Directive Behavior, Restrictive Behavior, Collegial Behavior, Intimate Behavior, and Disengaged Behavior. Because context is critical to a school's success in terms of quality instructional program, educational practices, and learning for children, each school's culture was assessed before the turnaround phase and during implementation of strategies designed to turn the school around. There were five respondents for Community Elementary, 43 for Magnet Elementary School and 21 for Collegeville Middle School. Magnet School staff completed their spring 2013 using paper surveys. Online survey was available via Survey Monkey and the survey window was open from November –December 2013 for Community staff and for Collegeville staff from May-June 2013.

To assess each school's climate the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised for Elementary and Middle School

(Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991) were administered to school staff. The OCDQ-RE (Appendix A), is an instrument to assess elementary school climate on six dimensions: *Supportive Principal Behavior, Directive Principal Behavior, Restrictive Principal Behavior, Collegial Teacher Behavior; Intimate Teacher Behavior and Disengaged Teacher Behavior*. The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Middle School (OCDQ-RM) assesses middle schools on the same dimensions, except for Intimate Behavior. Instead it assesses Committed Teacher Behavior. The average for schools is 500. In addition, the questionnaire provided information for “openness” indices and these are interpreted the same way as the subtest scores, that is, the mean of the "average" school is 500. For the OCDQ-RE, The three subtests of the OCDQ-RE that define principal openness are supportive, directive, and restrictive. The collegial, intimate, and disengaged subtests define the degree of openness in teacher behavior.

The definitions for the dimensions for restrictive principal behavior and collegial and disengaged teacher behavior are the same. Supportive and directive principal behavior and committed teacher behavior are different and are described below.

OCDQ-RE Dimensions

Supportive principal behavior reflects a basic concern for teachers. The principal listens and is open to teacher suggestions. Praise is given genuinely and frequently, and criticism is handled constructively. The competence of the faculty is respected, and the principal exhibits both a personal and professional interest in teachers.

Directive principal behavior is rigid, close supervision. The principal maintains constant monitoring and control over all teacher and school activities, down to the smallest detail.

Restrictive principal behavior is behavior that hinders rather than facilitates teacher work. The principal burdens teachers with paper work, committee requirements, routine duties, and other demands that interfere with their teaching responsibilities.

Collegial teacher behavior supports open and professional interactions among teachers. Teachers are proud of their school, enjoy working with their colleagues, and are enthusiastic, accepting, and mutually respectful of their colleagues.

Intimate teacher behavior is cohesive and strong social relations among teachers. Teachers know each other well, are close personal friends, socialize together regularly, and provide strong social support for each other.

Disengaged teacher behavior signifies a lack of meaning and focus to professional activities. Teachers are simply putting in time in non-productive group efforts; they have no common goals. In fact, their behavior is often negative and critical of their colleagues and the school.

OCDQ-RM Dimensions

Supportive principal behavior is directed toward both the social needs and task achievement of faculty. The principal is helpful, genuinely concerned with teachers, and attempts to motivate by using constructive criticism and by setting an example through hard work.

Directive principal behavior is rigid domineering behavior. The principal maintains close and constant monitoring over virtually all aspects of teacher behavior in the school.

Committed teacher behavior is behavior is directed toward helping students to develop both socially and intellectually. Teachers work extra hard to insure student success in school.

The standardized mean scores for score are interpreted according to the following descriptions:

If the score is 200, it is lower than 99 percent of the schools.

If the score is 300, it is lower than 97 percent of the schools.

If the score is 400, it is lower than 84 percent of the schools.

If the score is 500, it is average.

If the score is 600, it is higher than 84 percent of the schools.

If the score is 700, it is higher than 97 percent of the schools.

If the score is 800, it is higher than 99 percent of the schools.

The openness indices are interpreted the same way as the subtest scores, that is, the mean of the "average" school is 500. Thus, a score of 650 on

teacher openness represents a highly open faculty. The numbers have been changed into categories ranging from high to low by using the following conversion table:

Above 600 VERY HIGH
551-600 HIGH
525-550 ABOVE AVERAGE
511-524 SLIGHTLY ABOVE AVERAGE
490-510 AVERAGE
476-489 SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE
450-475 BELOW AVERAGE
400-449 LOW

Below 400 VERY LOW

Institutional data. Additionally, student achievement data such as the Adequate Yearly Progress assessments was used to measure school performance.

Phase 2: Qualitative Methods

Interviews, school observations, and a review of existing documents were used to learn about the principals' dispositions within these turnaround school contexts and to understand the complex processes that underlay the principals' actions.

Interviews

The researcher conducted 10 formal interviews with questions developed based on the review of existing documents, school observations and key research questions and two informal interviews to add to information about the impact of strategies the principals employed. Interviews lasted between 60-90 minutes with each school principal. During the interviewing process, principals were asked about the status of student learning at the school, challenges to achieving student learning and achievement goals, approaches to addresses the barriers, and the actions they employed to begin the transformation of the school. The interviews were used to identify dispositions and contextual factors influential in the

actions taken by the principal to reform the school and the impact of the strategies. Interviews with principals, a small random selection of teachers (Leadership teams) and supervisors were used to determine how and why the principal used their competencies, dispositions in response to each school's unique culture.

School observations

School observations at each of the turnaround schools were conducted. The principal's interactions formally and informally with teachers, staff members, and other stakeholders in the school community were observed during walkthroughs of the school and leadership team meetings. Between 6-10 visits were made to each school site. The purpose was to observe daily operation of the schools and to view hallway displays. These visits occurred in spring 2013, fall and spring 2014.

Documents

Existing documents, such as 5Essential surveys for each school and school improvement plans, were used to assess culture from staff members' perspectives, student achievement data and goals and strategies to address student achievement before the turnaround strategies were implemented.

Phase 3: Research-Grounded Survey.

A research grounded survey for each school's leadership team and each principal's supervisor was developed using the review of existing documents (Appendices F and G). Follow-up interviews with principals, a small random selection of teachers (school's leadership team) and principal's supervisor were used to determine how and why the principal used their competencies, dispositions in response to each school's unique culture.

Benefits of this Research Design

Benefits of this sequential mixed methods research design included:

1. Findings from one data-gathering method can be used to develop the next method.

2. Complementary- the PIMRS was elaborated through the principal interview and teacher and supervisor surveys.
3. Combined depth (qualitative) and breadth (quantitative).

Benefits of the Selected Methods

The data-gathering methods used in this study (interviews, surveys, observations, and review of existing documents) were fairly inexpensive and were implemented by one researcher.

The PIMRS instrument was particularly beneficial because it allowed for sampling of larger groups and had the following additional benefits:

- Convenient for respondents
- Anonymity is possible
- Take little time (less than interview)
- Not intrusive
- Removes interviewer bias
- Provide direct & first-hand information
- Observer is not dependent on others
- Flexible, adaptive to specific situations

Interviews were beneficial for the following reasons:

- More personal and interactive
- Allow for clarification, probing, depth
- Allow people to use their own words
- Yield a high response rate (King, 2010, p 8).

Questionnaires represent a commonly used means of generating perceptual data. Although questionnaires rely on the staff perceptions rather than observed behavior, numerous studies have found that they can provide reliable, valid data on managerial behavior (Hallinger, 2013. P. 73).

In addition, reading and analyzing existing documents were used because this method is inexpensive, does not require time with human subjects, and the documents are primary sources.

Constraints of the Selected Methods

There were constraints for the methods used. They included the low response rates for PIMRS and OCDQ from Community Elementary School even though the researcher attempted to have staff complete during a dedicated staff meeting time. However, contractual bargaining agreement required staff to approve using staff meeting time to complete surveys. Therefore, the principal suggested sending an invitation to staff to complete an online survey. Another constraint was that there was incomplete data for the PIMRS survey given at the Colledgeville staff meeting because some of the survey pages were missing for some surveys. Any conclusions drawn from the data was drawn by having triangulation among data sources. Additional constraints were that this was the first time the researcher administered the PIMRS and OCDQ, analysis of the data assumed the leadership team members and the principal's supervisor worked closely with the principal in order to provide information about the principal's actions to turnaround the school and during interviews the respondents may have been reluctant to make direct statements concerning the practices of their supervisor. Lastly, during the last few months of data collection the researcher began to work as a supervisor in the same district where the research was conducted. Therefore the respondents may have had concerns over confidentiality that may have inhibited the validity of responses.

Counter measures were implemented such as receiving professional development from a professional researcher, practicing interviewing with the principals first before observing and interviewing leadership teams. This allowed the researcher to test the questions and using participant input to revise subsequent interviews. This was crucial because Fitzpatrick (2011) asserts that "pilot data, especially from particular politically active individuals, may be useful because the investigator gets a sense of their perspective and survey items that they encourage or discourage. Also, he states that "their perspectives can tell something about their values and the kind of information they need or find credible" (Fitzpatrick, 2011, p. 74).

ANALYSIS

A five-step process was used to analyze the data from interviews, the PIMRS and the OCQD-RE.

1. Emergent themes from the data were analyzed by coding responses aligned to research questions.
2. Themes were coded according to general principal dispositions, leadership competencies and turnaround competencies and characteristics of poor performing school nationally that were found in the schools studied.
3. Sub-categories were identified identical to general and turnaround competencies, principal strategies and additional characteristics of poor performing schools; and critical supports for turnaround schools.
4. This information was used to develop the final principal interview questions.
5. The data from the principal interviews and the individual PIMRS principal profiles were developed to design the final interview questions for principals and principal's supervisor.

The results of the PIMRS were analyzed in the following ways:

- Percentages of principals who scored statistically high for each of the dimensions: *Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Culture* was computed.
- Principal profiles according to school demographics (enrollment, grade level configuration, urban, rural or suburban) were compared.
- The elementary and middle schools' climate survey results were analyzed by categorizing questions and responses by dispositions and actions taken in relation to each school's unique climate profile (contextual variables):
 - Each category was given a different code.
 - Codes were matched to responses.

- Analysis of the results informed the development of the final principal and principal’s supervisor open-ended interviews.
- 5Essentials data were analyzed by answering the following questions: “What essential reflects the strongest score overall? What essential reflects Weakest? What measure scores are the highest and lowest for the strongest essential? What measure scores are for the weakest essential? Then the researcher identified themes that emerge across schools, such as strengths and weaknesses and provided an explanation about what the data meant.
- The analysis of the results of surveys was used to create the final principal and principal supervisor interviews. The principal interview was open-ended in order to give principals an opportunity to state their experiences as turnaround leaders in their own words. Each interview was recorded.
- To determine if a school is making adequate yearly progress (AYP) in terms of student achievement the Minnesota Department of Education uses a multiple measures system. The department computes two different ratings and determine designations and recognition for Title I schools - Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) that includes proficiency, growth, achievement gap reduction and graduation rates. The *Focus Rating* (FR) is based upon *Focused Proficiency* and *Achievement Gap Reduction*. Proficiency targets are based on reducing the number of non-proficient students in each subgroup by 50 percent by 2017.
- Growth Considers student-level growth from year-to-year
- Achievement Gap Reduction Focus increasing growth in subgroups to catch up and close the gaps
- Graduation rate target is 90 percent for all students and every subgroup (MDE, 2013).

The focused rating indicates how well a school is closing the achievement gap. “*Focused Proficiency* only looks at achievement of

traditionally lower-performing groups. Proficiency targets are based on reducing the number of non-proficient students in each subgroup by 50 percent by 2017. *Achievement Gap Reduction* focuses on increasing growth in subgroups to catch up and close the gaps” (MDE, 2013).

The Minnesota Department of Education expects schools to show growth over time as evidence that they had improved. Specifically, schools had to have “minimum growth, defined as at least 0.2 standard deviations, during the turnaround. Schools also had to demonstrate minimum performance for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch, African American students, and Hispanic students during the turnaround period. In addition to the minimum growth, to ensure that schools did not just demonstrate individual growth but also grew compared to other schools in the state, schools had to end up in at least the middle third of school performance”.

MDE’s definition of growth includes “schools that educated a similar population of students over time, so growth cannot be attributed to a large change in student population or size”. In addition MDE filtered out schools that had a decrease in the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced- price lunch, African American students, Hispanic students, and/ English Learners greater than 15 percentage points between Year 1 and Year 7. Also, schools with a decrease in enrollment greater than 20 percent during the same period were filtered out. Schools were selected only if their scores did not decline more than 0.1 standard deviations between the two years studied. Also, their student subgroup performance could not decline more than 0.2 standard deviations during this same period” (MDE, 2013).

LIMITATIONS

Limitations of this research study included the following:

- The study was limited to principals of schools in the state of Minnesota. Results of the study are directly applicable only in that context. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other schools in different states.

- External factors that may bear on the effectiveness of a principal (e.g. change of school's grade level configuration). Any analysis had to account for these factors.
- Data collected from the instruments is correlational, rather than causal.
- The researcher has been a principal and currently serves as a supervisor of high school principals, therefore subjectivity may have impacted analysis of the findings. To provide depth of understanding about relevant literature and the application to this study the researcher consulted with colleagues with doctorate degrees. Also, the sample schools included ones from the district where the researcher is currently employed. The researcher consulted with a lead evaluator of the 5Essentials to ensure accurate understanding of the data for district where the researcher is employed.
- Shared leadership is a characteristic of an effective school. This may pose a problem in tying students and school success solely to the principal when instructional leadership and accountability for student achievement results are shared by others in the school.
- Data gathering through PIMRS may have been limited because the principal segment will be a self-report instrument.
- Success indicators for NCLB were limited to student's test scores and student growth.
- Both the PIMRS and OCD-RE have been validated for use in elementary schools. Hallinger and Heck (1996) report that "exploring the relationship between principal leadership and school effectiveness at the high school level also poses greater conceptual and methodological challenges" (Leithwood, et al., 1996, p. 750).
- For PIMRS, OCQD-RE and OCQD-RM The researcher's interpretation of results may be inaccurate.

Measures to Overcome Limitations

The following steps were taken to overcome limitations of this proposal:

1. Expanded review of successful turnarounds to include data from other states – The research findings from other turnaround schools were compared to this study’s findings for the purpose of identifying themes, misalignment in results, or inconsistencies in findings.
2. Viewed subjectivity as having both limitations and assets. Peshkin (1988) recommends that researchers be “aware of their subjectivity and its possible impact on their work” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 20). He defines subjectivity as “the quality of an investigator that affects the results of observational investigation” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). Subjectivity is viewed as a limitation because it has the implication of “skewing, shaping, blocking and misconstruing what transpires from the outset of a research project to its culmination in a written statement” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). It is an asset “for it is the basis of researchers’ making a distinction contribution, one that results from the unique configuration of their personal qualities joined to the data they have collected” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18). Peshkin suggests that researchers can capture positive and negative feelings during collection and/or analysis of data by keeping notes, a way to record “sensations as experiencing them, a matter of personal taste, as is so much of fieldwork procedure” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18). Notes were taken during school visits and during interviews. Photographs of artifacts were taken.
3. Developed an alternative definition to the limited NCLB definition of “successful turnaround” to form conclusions. An alternative definition would include value-added data and other indicators of the school success in terms of changed trajectory toward turning the school around from a persistently low-performing school. These indicators may be results described in school improvement plans, supervisor or

other district staff perspectives; district surveys and value-added students' achievement data.

SCHOOL SETTINGS

This study examined principal leadership at three schools: Community Elementary School (CES [a pseudonym]), Magnet Elementary School (MES [a pseudonym]) and Collegeville Middle School (CMS [a pseudonym]). Community Elementary School (CES [a pseudonym]), is an integrated suburban community school located in Minnesota that is known for its community holistic approach to meeting children's academic, social, emotional and physical health needs as it is for its enrichment activities to support children and their families. Magnet Elementary School (MES [a pseudonym]), is a large urban magnet college preparatory school located in Minnesota that is known for its service learning programs. Collegeville Middle School (CMS [a pseudonym]), is a large urban school known for its intercultural learning experiences that foster inquiry and cooperative learning.

Community Elementary School is located in a Midwest first-ring suburb with a population of 7,600 and the school was established in the 1950's. The school serves over 1100 students in grades Kindergarten to 6th grade. Preschool aged children receive services through Early Childhood Family Education. Twenty percent of the students are open-enrolled from the neighboring large metropolitan city. The school is a completely renovated building with additions made in the 1990's. Community Elementary School has a diverse student population of students: 2.7 percent of the students are American Indian, 13.5 percent of the students are Asian/Pacific Islander, 20.7 percent of the students are Hispanic, 42.9 percent of the students are Black and 20.2 percent of the students are White. Of these students 27.6 percent are English Learners, 14.6 percent receive special education services and 76.3 percent of students are eligible for free and/or reduced prices meals. The enrollment of Community School included 45 percent of students who are open

enrolled meaning they were not residents of the city where the school is located.

Collegeville Middle School is located in a Midwest city with a population of 288,448. A member of the school's leadership team reports that the "school has a very long history of ups and downs". At the beginning of the study it was a junior high school serving 479 seventh and eighth grade students. For the 2013-2014 school year sixth grade was added. There are 34 staff members (21 females and 13 males). The school was built in 1932 and is located in a primarily white neighborhood. The school has a diverse student population: 2 percent of the students are American Indian, 23 percent of the students are Asian/Pacific Islander, 10 percent of the students are Hispanic, 40 percent of the students are Black and 25 percent of the students are White. Of these students 14 percent are English Learners, 16 percent receive special education services and 75 percent of students are eligible for free and/or reduced prices meals.

The school uses the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB-MYP), a French Immersion program and is a certified Advancement Via individual Determination (AVID) site. IB-MYP is based on the fundamental concepts of Intercultural Awareness, Holistic education and Communication to give learners a broad, worldview education. It helps students participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. Learning how to learn and how to evaluate information critically is as important as learning facts. AVID provides help in building skills in the areas of organization, time management, note taking and test taking. The teaching of these skills in all classrooms is used to enrich students' study habits. Immersion students attend classes taught in the target language of French.

Magnet Elementary School is located in a Midwest City with a population of 288,448. It is a magnet school serving 650 pre-Kindergarten through grade five students. There are 52 professional staff members (33 females and 19 males). The school is located in a primarily African-American neighborhood. The school has a student population of

predominantly African American students: 2 percent of the students are American Indian, 11 percent of the students are Asian/Pacific Islander, 6 percent of the students are Hispanic, 77 percent of the students are Black and 4 percent of the students are White. Of these students 14 percent are English Learners, 19 percent receive special education services and 94 percent of students are eligible for free and/or reduced prices meals. The school is staffed by 140 staff members of which 100 are licensed teachers.

Demographics

The three schools studied share similar demographics found in the literature. Poor performing schools are most often located in urban and rural areas, serve a disproportionate number of minority students, primarily African American (65 percent to 95 percent), at least 50 percent of students qualify for free or reduced price meals; low quality of teaching includes limited skills and knowledge, inexperience, poor collegiate preparation and teaching out of specialty; new teachers are more likely to be assigned to low-performing schools; high rates of teacher turnover with upward rates of 75 percent to 80 percent; low expectations of students and educators do not assume responsibility for students' low achievement and failure" (Meyers & Murphy, 2007).

Two of the schools studied were located in urban areas, two of the schools served a disproportionate number of minority students with one school having almost all African American students and all three schools had at least 50 percent of students who qualified for free or reduced priced meals. In 2014 Magnet Elementary School's student population was 81 percent black, 7 percent Asian, 7 percent Hispanic and 2 percent American Indian and 3 percent White. This is in contrast to the ethnic make-up of the staff. 80 percent of teachers are white and 15 percent Black. All staff percentages are 73 percent White and 22 percent Black. These demographics are similar to percentages since 2012. In 2014 Collegeville's student population was 44 percent Black, 29 percent White, 19 percent Asian, 7 percent Hispanic and 1 percent American Indian. 84 percent of teachers were white, 7 percent black, 5 percent American

Indian and 5 percent Asian. All staff is 78 percent white, 11 percent black, 6 percent Hispanic, 4 percent American Indian and 1 percent Asian. In 2014 Community Elementary School's student population of students included: 1.1 percent American Indian, 16.7 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 23.1 percent Hispanic, 45.2 percent Black and 13.9 percent White. Of these students 29.0 percent were English Learners, 10.3 percent received special education services and 80 percent of students were eligible for free and/or reduced prices meals. Since the beginning of the study American Indian and students of color have increased in numbers as well as the number of students receiving free and reduced prices meals. In addition, more ELL students had enrolled. The majority of staff was white.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The lofty goal of closing the achievement gap system-wide has been elusive for many districts and schools. This is despite the efforts of talented and committed educators and policymakers, parents with strong educational aspirations for their children and hefty school resourcing manifested in extra time, people and money.

This research illuminates the journey of three schools with persistent poor student performance and their plan to transform into high achieving schools by emphasizing innovative principal leadership. The principals profiled in this case study led schools designated as 'Focus' schools by the Minnesota Department of Education. After the identified "Priority" school that are the bottom 10 percent Title I of schools, Minnesota designates "Focus" schools that are the next bottom 10 percent of schools that contribute most to the state achievement gap based on the school's students' performance on standardized test scores in reading and mathematics. These schools were identified as Continuous Improvement sites meaning they need to put plans in place to improve the academic achievement of students.

The primary purpose of the study was to identify the principal leadership dispositions, competencies, and practices that were involved in

their attempts to transform three of Minnesota's designated Focus schools. In addition, there was an examination of the ways principals responded to their individual school contexts as they sought to shape their cultural processes and structures to transform them from low performing to high performing.

In this chapter I review the central themes that emerged through the analysis of principal and supervisor interviews, teacher and supervisor surveys (Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and Organizational Climate Development Questionnaires (OCDQ), leadership team focus groups; observation of leadership team meetings; school improvement plans; district school surveys (5Essentials); school visits and other school artifacts, such as newsletters and classroom and school displays. Next, the findings are discussed according to the themes. First, school principal dispositions, principal leadership style and principal strategies are discussed and secondly, school contexts, especially culture and climate. Discussion about each school's culture will include characteristics of persistently low performing schools present in the schools studied as identified by the American Institutes for Research (2010). Lastly, the strategies each principal employed and the impact of these strategies are shared, including data about student performance.

Overall, the data within these themes reveals that principals' leadership actions were undergirded by their strong moral purpose to change the predictability of achievement based on race and their belief that all children can learn at high levels. The barriers each school faced were complex, but mirrored common characteristics similar to such schools nationally. Each principal utilized similar improvement strategies, yet their leadership style varied and that they also employed unique strategies to address dysfunctional aspects of school culture.

Despite their efforts of these principals, the under-achievement of students enrolled in the schools persisted suggesting that leadership alone cannot turn around a school. It must be coupled with an examination of a school's unique school contexts, implementing strategies to address any

negative school characteristics found in the unique school contexts, and having targeted district supports, to turn around a school within a short time frame.

PRINCIPAL DISPOSITIONS

I begin with the discussion about findings first sharing the three principal's dispositions, values, and leadership style and stakeholder perspectives about their instructional leadership.

Strong Moral Purpose and Racial Equity Lens

All three principals studied identified personal values and mindsets to serve children whose achievement is below grade level and who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. To effectively educate the children they served, all three principals' leadership was guided by a strong moral purpose and racial equity lens meaning determining how racial beliefs influence staff actions and how the learning impacts students based on their racial identities. Principals were explicit about their moral compasses and being racial equity leaders.

Principal Evans, of Community Elementary School had a dominant moral purpose focused around equity of access and opportunity. During an interview Principal Evans shared, My biggest voice has been, "Everyone can succeed, how to make our practice and data public, integrating the language of learning throughout the school and talking about race and culture. We need to prepare kids for life, to be independent thinkers and be prepared for the 21st century. Students come from different homes. [I want students to be] open minded, communicators, think for themselves and socially aware in this world. They have hope that they can be anything they can be. Find the mentor who believes in them who knows, I don't have to be nice I expect more from you. We need to be pushing kids and bring parents to the table that

are farther away from education and hold our practice accountable to kids. Teaching has to be about fun, being fair and firm, and experiential. (I compare it to an) Orchestra- sometime I am a conductor and sometimes the kids are playing. (Spring 2013)

Evidence to support how Principal Evans modeled her philosophy comes from a 2013 district evaluation, different from the 5Essentials that was completed by staff. The majority of respondents reported that Principal Evans “models values, beliefs and attitudes that inspire all students and staff to higher levels of performance”.

Similarly, Principal Paul of Magnet Elementary School held beliefs centered on making students lives better. In a June 2013 interview Principal Paul simply stated her purpose is “Saving lives”. She messaged to staff that students are our my children and we need to work together. In addition, she told staff to ask “What kind of school would you want for your child?”.

During an interview Principal Fitzgerald of Collegeville shared her purpose for being an educator and leading a difficult school: (I have a) very high bar for instruction and professionalism required to run this place like a business. Mastery is the most important. We have to look at ourselves, look at the data and fix it. Re-teach it in different ways.” We have conversations about our student body. The children we have here this (education) is their way into a world they can have ownership over. Think of a fireman, police officer. This is a big responsibility. (I want) kids that are able to read and write when they leave here. (I) look at them as if they are my own. It is about taking ownership. (Spring 2013)

Principal Fitzgerald’s stated purpose was supported by statements from a member of her school’s leadership team and one of her teachers. The leadership team member shared the following:

Finding solutions are part of her principal's disposition. She is a get it done type of person who doesn't wait for anything. She sees an opportunity for improvement and runs with it. Our principal has the attitude that each day is a new day with possibilities. Each day we enter with gusto and learn from our experiences. We are a collective team that works together. (Summer 2013)

A Collegeville teacher remarked that Principal Fitzgerald "seems to approach decision making through her own vision and the opinion of other professionals whose opinion she trusts. The bottom line is always what is best for the students". Fitzgerald's moral purpose was clearly student learning as a driving force.

In addition to each principal bringing a strong moral purpose to their work, each brought a strong racial equity lens to the work. Principals were equally explicit about being racial equity leaders. All three principals used Courageous Conversations about Race (CCAR) protocol, as detailed in Chapter 2, developed by Pacific Education Group (PEG) to inform their actions as principals, review data and help staff understand personal racial beliefs and the ways those beliefs impact students. The PEG CCAR about race included using the agreements, conditions and compass.

For Principal Paul and Principal Fitzgerald their racial equity work was part of district-wide equity work. Principal Evans' previous district used a district-wide equity framework for leadership development and she used it in her new district even though it was not a strategy used in her district.

There were many different ways each principal utilized racial equity related tools and strategies. Principal Fitzgerald shared her racial autobiography, a tool for individuals to document how race has impacted his/her life with staff and to reflect on her racial beliefs. Also, her staff shared 14-16 racial autobiographies between six-seven pages. She reported "Teachers loved listening to their peers" as they shared their lived

experiences. Her staff used the *Courageous Conversations* protocol including the *Four Agreements* and the *Six Conditions*. Also, staff used a racial lens to discuss data.

Similarly, Magnet School Principal Paul used CCAR activities that would help staff be “comfortable with talking about race” and allow them to having open dialogue about their “own shortfalls”. Also, Nancy Paul shared the Courageous Conversation tool helped her look at practices contributing to disparities. In an interview, she shared the following: We had practices such as if a student owed a library fine from another school the student could not check out a book. So, kids who read below grade level do not have access to books. Also students were given cold lunch for misbehavior when 98 percent of students receive free or reduced priced meals. A parent welcome sign on front entrance door stated that if you drop off your child early you are responsible for their safety. (Spring 2014)

The practice of not allowing children to check out books when they owe fines and communicating that children will not be supervised before school begins to parents who may work more than one job and may not be able to afford quality before school care are examples of the school staff not responding in a caring way to their families who are eligible for no cost or subsidized school meals.

In addition to staff activities, principal Paul sought to have the school building reflect diversity in the community spaces, such as the library reflect diversity of thought. In the school’s library inspirational quotes were posted:

“It takes courage to blow up and turn out to be who you really are.” ee cummings

“Let the wild rumpus begin.” Maurice Sendak

“It is important to remember that we all have magic inside us.”

J.K. Rowling

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you.” Maya Angelou

“A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks he becomes.” Gandhi.

There was a pictorial display of white women, black men, women of color, white men. Other displays included banners that gave information about transition and behavioral prompts to students, such as “Show 5; eyes on speaker”.

Collegetown Middle School established an “Equity Team” that reviewed the number of failing grades for no credit received in classes and found that the students receiving no credit were disproportionately non-white population. They decided that their next steps were to figure out how to make lessons culturally relevant and to implement strategies to reduce the number of students failing classes.

At a leadership team meeting staff members asked, “Can African-American parent involvement day be an all parent involvement day and have one grade level lunch that day?”. The committee wanted to not target only African American parents. One of the tenets of critical race theory is to “isolate race” yet the committee did not want to hold a day specifically targeting parents of black children, the group not achieving at the school. Interestingly, at the same meeting, Leadership Team teachers shared “Maybe we should reach out to Karen community and students from a local high school”. These two examples illustrate the dilemma posed when children of color, in this case black children are not achieving and staff and/or community does not act in explicit ways to interrupt the racial predictability of achievement. Addressing institutional racism in poor performing schools is important because “...racial stereotyping, inflexible structures, and pedagogical arrangements, a mutual distrust between administrators and teachers, and an energy sapping undercurrent of

misbehavior and even violence by students, all contribute to the creation of defeatist cultures in many of these sites” (American Institutes of Research, 2010, p. 3).

It is also important for the principals’ leadership actions to be framed through a racial equity lens because the achievement gap between black and white students is aptly illuminated in these three schools. The achievement gap in standardized test performance is most evident. How does institutional racism factor into the achievement gap at the three schools? To answer this question a review of Critical Race Theory (CRT), especially regarding teacher mindset and behavior (growth vs. fixed; compliance vs. commitment and action aligned to school goals) is warranted. Critical Race Theory argues that racism is permanent and deeply embedded in our laws, institutions, cultures and psyche (Tate, 1997).

Educators being in a state of dysconscious can be considered a form of educational malfeasance (denial of ethnicity and culture of students and ineffective educational practices bestowed upon these students). Dysconscious-ness is a dimension of teacher mindset based on beliefs. During an interview Alice Evans shared that ineffective educational practices played out in this way at his school: “There was institutional racism in terms of Black boys and girls being sent to the office for disciplinary reasons at a disproportionate rate” (Spring 2012).

King (1991) says that Dysconsciousness is an “uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given” (p. 135). “Dysconsciousness need not be limited to racism, but can apply to justifications of other forms of exploitation” (King, 1991, p. 135).

What are the characteristics of this dysconsciousness?

- Perception that their individual beliefs are universal rather than based on a dominant culture

- Understanding that educational equity requires institutional change and reorganization that might affect them
- Being “unaware of one’s own subjective identities
- “limited knowledge and understanding of social inequity”
- A form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privileges

Limited and distorted understanding about inequity and cultural diversity (King, 1991, p. 135).

An example of dysconsciousness was shared by Alice Evans, principal of Community Elementary. She stated:

There is huge racism. They see themselves as city of white privilege, and yet our student population is mostly African-American and Latino.

Perception does not match reality. When I first came the staff was not talking about kids enough.” They have an early 1950’s mentality. It is as if the Civil Rights movement happened two weeks ago and we are Mayberry. (Spring 2013)

The phenomenon of dysconsciousness prompts the question, What sustains the beliefs in the face of reality? Researchers assert one cause is the guilt white teachers feel and the resulting confusion stemming from the guilt. King states that “White teacher education students often express such feelings of guilt and hostility and this suggests they accept certain unexamined assumptions, unasked questions, and unquestioned cultural myths regarding both social order and their place in it” (King, 1991, p.135).

Dysconsciousness manifests itself in that it devalues the cultural diversity and limits students’ thinking about what teachers can do to promote equity” (King, 1991, p. 136). What can interrupt this dimension? Teacher preparation programs must integrate racial equity into the content of coursework and schools must examine practices that perpetuate racism and result in inequitable educational outcomes. King writes that, Teachers

–“uncritical and limited ways of thinking must be identified, understood, and brought to their conscious awareness. King asserts Dysconsciousness must be made the subject of educational intervention” (King, 1991, p. 140).

Principal Paul stated that she makes teachers aware of how the impact of their action may be perceived as racist by their students:

To support racial equity we must encourage and listen to the student voice – asking kids what they need. If a child tells me a teacher is racist or does not like me, I listen. Talking about race and using the protocols to help the child process and share. I have gone with children to model how to talk to the teacher. (Spring 2013)

The values and mindsets of the three leaders studied shows similarities to those leaders of turnaround schools nationally. They have been found to have an acute affinity to educate children who are low achieving and have a strong moral purpose guiding their actions to lead their schools. Studies of turnaround principals show they possess a “heartfelt desire to help raise the achievement of low-achieving children thereby enhancing their chances of success in life, an affective sensitivity to the unique challenges faced by underachieving children, and an authentic history from their own schooling, teaching in high-poverty areas or success in community-based programs with children from low-income families” (Burbach & Butler, 2011, p. 2). All three principals expressed this desire and worked their entire careers motivated by this desire and believed their moral purpose and being racial equity leaders were necessary to effectively educate the children they served. Next the findings about each principal’s leadership styles are presented.

Principal Leadership Style

Daniel Goleman reports that there are “six distinct leadership styles: coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching defined in Table 8 (Goleman, 2000/2007). These leadership

styles can be compared to principal and teacher characteristics identified by teachers who responded to the OCDQ-RE and OCDQ-RM. It should be noted that only five respondents completed the questionnaire for Principal Evans of Community Elementary so any results from that school must be interpreted with caution. The OCDQ questionnaire provided information for “openness” indices and these are interpreted the same way as the subtest scores, that is, the mean of the "average" school is 500. *Openness* is a combination of supportive, directive and restrictive subtests for principals. The collegial, intimate, and disengaged subtests define the degree of openness in teacher behavior. A score of 543 for teacher openness on the elementary survey represents an above average open faculty. A score of 650 for teacher openness on the middle school survey represents a highly open faculty.

All three principals demonstrated democratic leadership meaning they build consensus through participation. Teacher perceptions of actions related to this principal leadership style varied. In addition to exhibiting democratic leadership, Principal Paul demonstrated authoritative and coaching leadership according to teacher responses. Principal Paul had the highest scores on OCDQ aligned to an affiliative style. Her democratic leadership was also recognized by her results on the PIMRS in the area of Defining the Schools’ Mission. She received a 4.0 on a 1-4 scale. It is important to note that Principal Paul demonstrated more than one leadership style because leaders with the best results do not rely on one type and they must switch them as situations dictate (Goleman 2007, Murphy, 1989; Louis, 1991).

Table 8 shows the alignment between the styles identified by Goleman and those domains assessed on the OCDQ. Definitions for each descriptor are included.

Table 8. Goleman’s Leadership Styles and Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire Domains

Goleman	OCDQ Domains	Questions from OCDQ-E and OCDQ-M (4 scale)	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Collegeville Middle
		<i>The principal</i>			
		-is autocratic (E)	2.50	2.19	
Coercive-leaders demand immediate compliance	Directive - is rigid, close supervision. The principal maintains constant monitoring and control over all teacher and school activities, down to the smallest detail.	-schedules the work for the teachers (E)	2.50	1.96	
		Restrictive-			
	is behavior that hinders rather than facilitates teacher work. The principal burdens teachers with paper work, committee requirements, routine duties, and other demands that interfere with their teaching responsibilities.	-monitors everything teachers do (E, M)	1.50	2.57	1.86
		-closely checks classroom teachers activities (E, M)	4.00	2.75	2.00
		-rules with an iron fist (M)			2.33
		- supervises closely (M)			2.45

Goleman	OCDQ Domains	Questions from OCDQ-E and OCDQ-M (4 scale)	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Collegeville Middle
<i>The teachers</i>					
Authoritative - leaders mobilize people toward a vision	Disengaged - signifies a lack of meaning and focus to professional activities. Teachers are simply putting in time in non-productive group efforts; they have no common goals. In fact, their behavior is often negative and critical of their colleagues and the school.	-administrative paperwork is burdensome (E)	2.50	2.27	
		-have a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority (E)	4.00	1.60	
		-help each other out (E)	2.50	3.07	
	Restrictive- is behavior that hinders rather than facilitates teacher work. The principal burdens teachers with paper work, committee requirements, routine duties, and other demands that interfere with their teaching responsibilities.	-Faculty meetings are useless (E)	2.00	1.90	
		-exert pressure on non-conforming faculty members (E,M)	1.50	1.40	1.86
		-interrupt each other teachers who are talking during staff meetings (M)			1.90
		-stay after school to tutor students who need help (M)			-2.90

Goleman	OCDQ Domains	Questions from OCDQ-E and OCDQ-M (4 scale)	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Collegetown Middle
		-accept additional duties if students will benefit (M)			2.95
		Make wise cracks to each other during meetings (M)			1.81
		-explains his or her reasoning for constructive criticism (E)	3.50	2.67	
		-goes out of his way to help teachers (E, M)	3.50	2.45	2.48
		-looks out for the personal welfare of teachers (E, M)	4.00	2.71	2.52
		-treats teachers as equals (E, M)	4.00	2.43	2.62
		-Compliments teachers (E, M)	3.50	3.96	2.48
		-goes out of his way to show appreciation to teachers (E, M)	3.50	2.57	2.66
		<i>The principal</i>			
Democratic-leaders build consensus through participation	Supportive-reflects a basic concern for teachers. The principal listens and is open to teacher suggestions. Praise is given genuinely and frequently, and criticism is handled constructively. The competence of the faculty is respected, and the principal exhibits both a personal and professional interest in teachers.	-listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions (E, M)	3.5	2.89	2.57
		-explains his or her reasoning for constructive criticism (E)	3.5	2.67	
Pacesetting-leaders expect excellence and self-direction	Supportive-reflects a basic concern for teachers. The principal listens and is open to teacher suggestions. Praise is given genuinely and frequently, and criticism is handled constructively. The competence of the faculty is respected, and the principal exhibits	<i>The principal</i>			
		-encourages teacher autonomy (M)			2.52

Goleman	OCDQ Domains	Questions from OCDQ-E and OCDQ-M (4 scale)	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Collegetown Middle
	both a personal and professional interest in teachers.	#NAME?			2.57
		<i>The principal</i>			
Coaching - leaders develop people for the future	Supportive- reflects a basic concern for teachers. The principal listens and is open to teacher suggestions. Praise is given genuinely and frequently, and criticism is handled constructively. The competence of the faculty is respected, and the principal exhibits both a personal and professional interest in teachers.	-goes out of his way to help teachers (E, M)	3.5	2.45	2.48
		- explains his or her reasoning for constructive criticism (E)	3.5	2.67	
		-uses constructive criticism (E, M)	4.0	2.85	2.14

A comparison of the three principals' schools show similarity in the domains of directive behavior (average) and marked differences in restrictive behavior (lower and higher than 84 percent of schools). The OCDQ-E and QCDQ-M also assess teacher perception of principals in the area of *Restrictive principal behavior*. This is behavior that hinders rather than facilitates teacher work. The principal burdens teachers with paperwork, committee requirements, and other demands that interfere with their teaching responsibilities.

Principal Paul's strengths were she demonstrated supportive behavior toward teachers, yet she did not hinder teachers by burdening with managerial tasks and is open to teacher autonomy. In contrast, Principal Fitzgerald's results were not as positive. Her weaknesses included being directive which is characterized by constant monitoring and control, not fully committed to helping teachers develop students both socially and intellectually and not being open to teacher autonomy and supporting teacher collegiality. A relative strength of Principal Paul identified by respondents on the OCDQ – RE was *Principal Openness*. While Principal Fitzgerald's *Principal Openness* was identified by respondents as being above average, it was interesting that teacher openness was below average. Collegeville's score of 492 and teacher openness represents a faculty that is fairly open.

There were not enough respondents to analyze the results for Principal Evans of Community Elementary. Based on the limited number of respondents (5) Principal Evans' openness score is below average and teacher openness was very low. However, using data from PIMRS and a 2013 evaluation for Principal Evans some comparisons can be made for similar concepts assessed. For example, on a 2013 district administrated evaluation by staff the majority of respondents reported that Principal Evans "creates safe and secure school environment and a culture that is conducive to teaching and learning". This is surprising considering the responses that generated an openness score below average and teacher

openness was very low from the small group of respondents on the OCDQ. Results for all three principals are shared in Tables 9-10.

OCDQ results were similar to the PIMRS results for teacher and principal trust. The PIMRS was weak in the area of principal and teacher trust and the PIMRS results will be discussed more in depth later in this chapter..

For example, the researcher compared three questions for restrictive principal behavior from the OCQE to the PIMRS results. Question #4 states, “The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers”; Question #18 states “Teachers have too many commitments” and Question #25 states “Administrative paperwork is burdensome”. Results from respondents for Magnet Elementary indicated a 2.56 average for question #4, 2.12 for #18 and an average of 2.05 for #25. Results from Community School respondents indicated a 2.8 average for #4; 2.6 for #18 and 2.6 for #25. On the OCDQ-M for Collegeville the following question were used to compare the PIMRS results. #4 – “Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching”; #34 – “Administrative paperwork is burdensome” and #42 – “Assigned non-teaching duties are excessive”. Results from Collegeville respondents indicated averages of 2.29 for #4, 2.71 for #34 and 1.86 for #42.

Figure 3 shows school results on all domains of the OCDQ. The six scores represent the climate profile of the school.

If the score is 200, it is lower than 99 percent of the schools.

If the score is 300, it is lower than 97 percent of the schools.

If the score is 400, it is lower than 84 percent of the schools.

If the score is 500, it is average.

If the score is 600, it is higher than 84 percent of the schools.

If the score is 700, it is higher than 97 percent of the schools.

If the score is 800, it is higher than 99 percent of the schools (Hoy, Tartar & Kottkamp, 1991,1997).

Figure 4. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire School Results

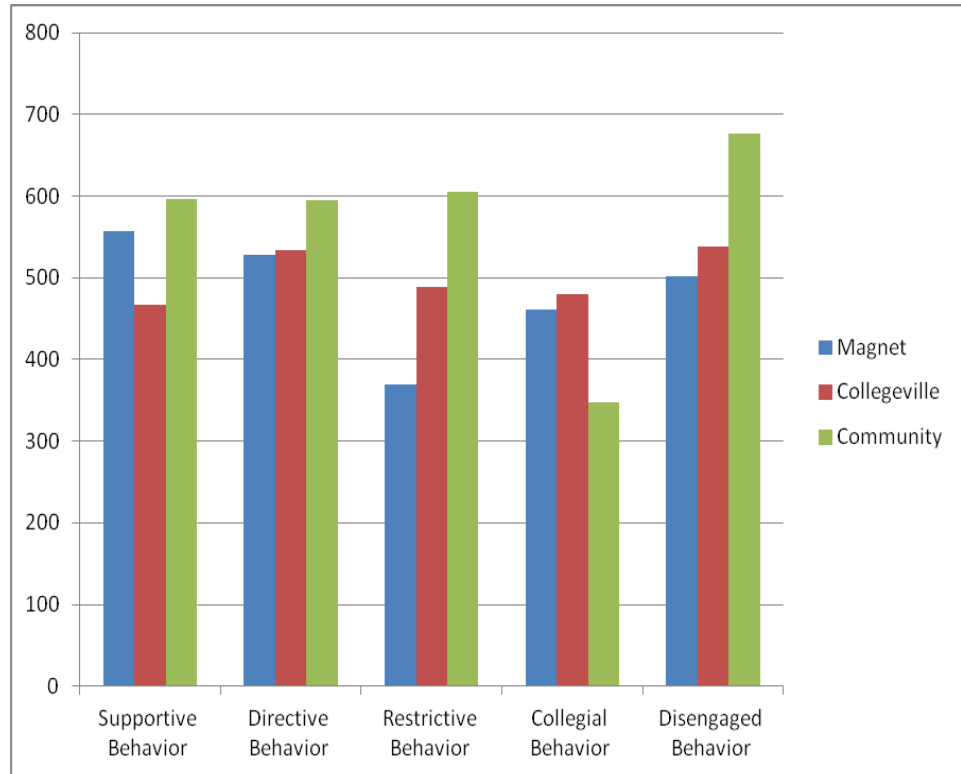


Table 9. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Community Elementary (5 respondents)

Dimensions (subtests)	Standardized Score	Score Interpretation
Supportive Principal Behavior	596	almost higher than 84% of schools
Directive Principal Behavior	595	higher than 84% of schools
Restrictive Principal Behavior	605	higher than 84% of the schools
Collegial Teacher Behavior	347	lower than 97% of schools
Intimate Teacher Behavior	386	lower than 84% of the schools
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	676	higher than 97% of the schools
Principal Openness	465	below average
Teacher Openness	352	very low

Figure 5. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Community Elementary (5 respondents)

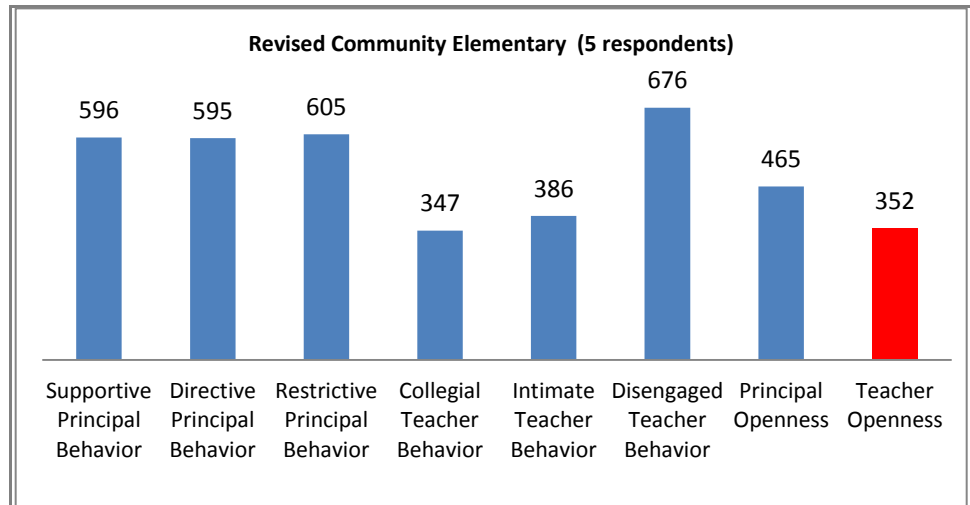


Table 10. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire Magnet Elementary (43 respondents)

Dimensions (subtests)	Standardized Score	Score Interpretation
Supportive Principal Behavior	557	between average (500) and higher than 84% of schools
Directive Principal Behavior	528	average
Restrictive Principal Behavior	369	lower than 84% of schools
Collegial Teacher Behavior	461	almost average
Intimate Teacher Behavior	452	almost average, but lower than 84% of schools
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	502	average
Principal Openness	543	above average
Teacher Openness	470	below average

Figure 6. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire Magnet Elementary (43 respondents)

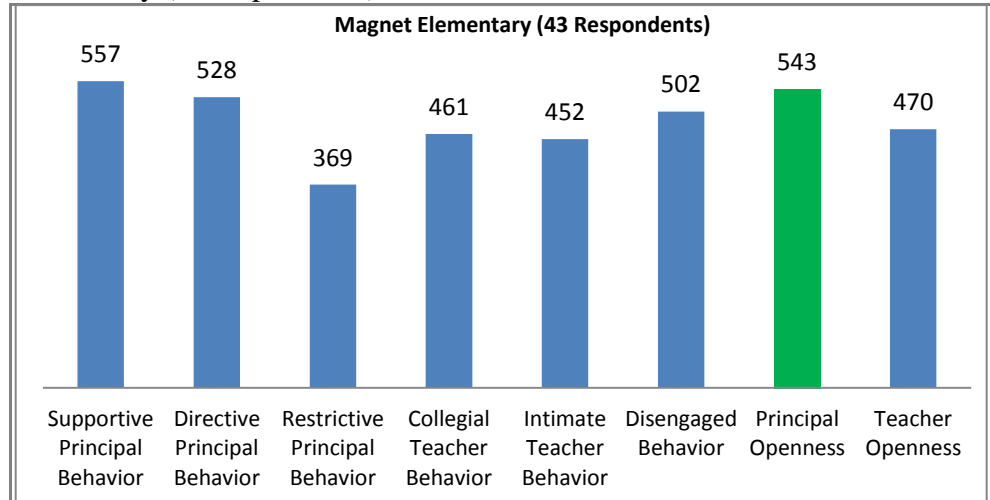
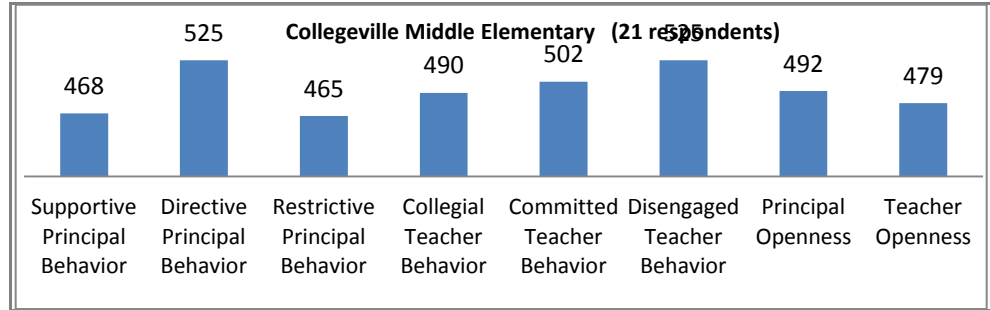


Table 11. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire Colledgeville Middle (21 respondents)

Dimensions (subtests)	Standardized Score	Score Interpretation
Supportive Principal Behavior	468	lower than average
Directive Principal Behavior	525	slightly higher than average
Restrictive Principal Behavior	465	lower than almost 84% of schools
Collegial Teacher Behavior	490	slightly lower than average
Committed Teacher Behavior	502	average
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	525	slightly higher than average
Principal Openness	492	average
Teacher Openness	479	slightly below average

**Figure 7. Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire
Collegeville Middle (21 respondents)**



For Community School the scores for supportive, directive and restrictive principal behavior were higher than 84 percent of schools nationally. The school results were above average for disengaged teacher behavior. Collegial and intimate teacher behavior results indicate that faculty were not respectful of their colleagues, strong in social relations among teachers or enjoyed working with colleagues. For Magnet Elementary, the scores for supportive, directive and principal openness behaviors are in the average range. Teacher openness was below average meaning the faculty was not open. For Collegeville, the scores for supportive and restrictive principal behavior were lower than average and directive behavior is higher. This means the principal did not reflect a basic concern for teachers, does not respect competence of staff and maintains constant monitoring and control over teachers and school activities, down to the smallest detail.

The results about principals' leadership style are important because it has a measurable effect on climate (Goleman, 2000). Some have found that a highly facilitative principal leadership style, with the principal as "follower or leading from the center" promoted better restructuring. Other studies have indicated, however, that a more directive leadership style may have been helpful (Murphy, 1989; Louis, 1991).

Instructional Leadership

Next an examination of the data related to the most important facets of instructional leadership is completed by using the analytic framework based on Phillip Hallinger's model. This is codified in The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 1982, 1990). The framework has three functions: establishing and communicating the school's mission and vision, providing leadership and management of the school's instructional program, and developing school culture that effectively and efficiently supports the work of teaching and learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987, Leithwood & Day, 2007; Hallinger 2011; Wahlstrom et al., 2010). Supervisors and teachers completed the survey. For each item on the scale the rater assesses the frequency ranging from (1) almost never to (5) almost always with which the principal enacts a behavior or practice associated with the leadership functions (*Defining a School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program and Developing A Positive School Climate*). The instrument has a scale of five choices for responses and is scored by calculating the mean for the items that comprise each subscale. Framing the School's Goals and Communicating the School's Goals comprise the Dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*. This means the principal works with staff to ensure there is a clear school mission that is focused on academic achievement of students. It is crucial that staff buy-in to the mission. The second dimension *Managing the Instructional Program* incorporates the leadership functions of Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum and Monitoring Student Progress. The principal is expected to see evidence of the goals being addressed at the classroom level, providing instructional support to teachers, there is a review and use data from standardized and criterion referenced assessments and there is coordination of the curriculum across grade levels and among teachers. The third dimension *Developing a Positive School Learning Climate* includes the functions of Protecting Instructional time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility; Providing

Incentives for Teachers and Providing Incentives for Learning. This means principals expect a continuous improvement of teaching and learning and there are high expectations for both students and staff. Tables 10 and 11 identify each school's results.

Supervisors' and Teachers' Perspectives on Principals' Leadership

The assistant superintendents and superintendent who served as supervisors for all three principals completed PIMRS in the fall of 2013. The superintendent for Principal Evans was interviewed during his first year supervising her. The superintendent retired and a different superintendent completed the PIMRS. Principal Fitzgerald's supervisor had supervised her for two years and Principal Paul's supervisor had supervised her for five years. Principal Paul's supervisor identified far more domains as relative strengths than her counterparts' supervisors. During the school year each supervisor indicated they had between 5-9 visits to check in on classroom instruction, principal actions and discuss areas of concern. Each visit was greater than 20 minutes in length.

A review of teacher survey results indicates Principal Paul received the highest average for *Framing School Goals* and *Communicating School Goals*. This was similar average on the Supervisor results. Her supervisor gave her all fives for *Provide Incentives for Teachers* as well. On the teacher survey her lowest scores and possible areas for growth were *Maintain High Visibility* and *Provide Incentives for Learning*. Principal Paul's supervisor ranked the dimension of *Monitors Student Progress* as the lowest. On both the teacher survey and supervisor survey Principal Evans received the lowest averages on all dimensions among the three principals. On the teacher survey her lowest scores were identical to Principal Paul's. The lowest supervisor rating was for *Supervises and Evaluates Instruction*. On the teacher survey Principal Fitzgerald received the highest average for *Supervise and Evaluate Instruction, Coordinates the Curriculum, Monitors Student Progress; Maintains high Visibility; Promotes Professional Development* and *Provides Incentives for Learning*. Her supervisor rated her the highest in

Maintain High Visibility and Promote Professional Development. Her lowest score was for Provide Incentives for Teachers on both teacher and supervisor surveys. Results from supervisors and teachers are captured in Tables 12 and 13.

For both the Collegeville teachers and Principal Fitzpatrick and for Community School teachers and Principal Evans the low scores indicate that there was a lack mutual respect and trust. The teachers do not believe they can trust the principals at their words, they do not believe that the principals value the expertise of teachers nor do they believe they are effective managers of the school. This is similar to results on the OCDQ. A comparison of the three principals' schools show similarity in the domains of directive behavior (average) and marked differences in restrictive behavior (lower and higher than 84 percent of schools).

However, for Principal Evans these results are a sharp departure from her 2012 district administered evaluation. On a 2013 evaluation by staff the majority of respondents reported that Principal Evans: Models value, beliefs and attitudes that inspire all students and staff to higher levels of performance, includes staff in analyzing student data and developing plans aligned with school improvement plan; provides leadership for changes needed to implement the goals; leads efforts to assess, develop; and improves school culture and instructional programs that promote student learning and uses her time to improve teaching and learning. (Spring 2013)

Respondents shared that the principal sometimes demonstrated the behavior for the following:

- Communicates effectively with staff
- Recognizes accomplishments of staff and students toward a positive school climate
- Other significant feedback from evaluation

- 49 out of 68 respondents report they strongly disagree (28) or disagree(21) that teachers have adequate space to work productively
- 31 out of 68 agree that teachers are recognized as educational experts
- 32 out of 68 agree that faculty has an effective process for making group decision

Table 12. Supervisor Results for Principal Instructional Management Scale (scale of 5)

Dimensions/functions	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet	Fitzgerald Collegeville
Framing School Goals	3.6	5.0	4.0
Communicating School Goals	3.8	5.0	4.4
Managing the Instructional Program	3.8	4.2	4.6
Coordinates the Curriculum	3.8	4.4	3.6
Supervises and evaluates Instruction	3.0	4.2	4.6
Monitors Student Progress	3.1	3.8	4.4
Protect Instructional time	4.4	4.4	4.4
Maintain High Visibility	3.8	4.8	5.0
Provide Incentives for Teachers	4.0	5.0	2.8
Promote Professional Development	3.8	4.8	5.0
Provide Incentives for Learning	5.0	4.6	3.2

Table 13. Teacher Results for Principal Instructional Management Scale

Dimensions/functions	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet	Fitzgerald Collegeville
Framing School Goals	3.0	4.2	3.5
Communicating School Goals	3.0	4.0	3.5

Supervise and Evaluate Instruction	3.4	3.7	3.8
Coordinates the Curriculum	3.1	3.5	3.6
Monitors Student Progress	2.5	3.0	3.5
Protect Instructional time	3.1	3.3	3.3
Maintain High Visibility	2.0	2.6	3.2
Provide Incentives for Teachers	2.6	2.9	2.9
Promote Professional Development	3.1	3.5	3.8
Provide Incentives for Learning	2.3	2.8	3.8

The 5Essentials survey used to assess a school’s readiness for improvement also provided evidence of the three principals’ implementation of a shared vision.

The 5Essentials’ category of *Effective Leaders* includes feedback about principals and teachers implementing a shared vision for success.

- Hiring new professional personnel
- Planning how discretionary school funds should be used
- Determining books and other instructional materials used in classrooms
- Establishing the curriculum and instructional program
- Determining the content of in-service programs
- Setting standards for student behavior

For the 2014 5Essentials Collegeville Junior High results in the area of Effective Leaders was *Weak*. Collegeville received a score of 29 on Effective Leaders, representing its aggregate performance across four key indicators of this essential:

- Teacher Influence (37 - Weak)
- Principal Instructional Leadership (20 - Weak)
- Program Coherence (36 - Weak)

- Teacher-Principal Trust (23 - Weak)

For Magnet Elementary the result for Effective Leaders was *Neutral*. Magnet Elementary received a score of 51 on Effective Leaders, representing its aggregate performance across four key indicators of this essential:

- Teacher Influence (23 - Weak)
- Principal Instructional Leadership (61 - Strong)
- Program Coherence (60 - Strong)
- Teacher-Principal Trust (61 - Strong)

Weak or very weak ratings indicate that principals do not set high goals for instruction or practice shared leadership. These schools are not poised for sustained improvement.

Table 14. 2012 to 2014 5Essentials Results for Effective Leadership

	Teacher Influence		Principal Instructional Leadership	
	2012	2014	2012	2014
Community Elementary	51 – average	42 – Neutral	10 -needs support	12 –very weak
Magnet Elementary	31 - Weak	23 - Weak	51 - Neutral	61 - Strong
Collegeville Middle	51 - Neutral	37 - Weak	29 - Weak	20 - Weak

Table 15. 5Essentials 2012 and 2014 School Results for Teacher Principal Trust

	Teacher-Principal Trust	
	2012	2014
Community Elementary	22 - needs support	22 - Weak
Magnet Elementary	55 - Neutral	61 - Strong
Collegeville Middle	31 - Weak	23 - Weak

The PIMRS results can be compared to each school 5Essential reports. On the 5Essentials survey, none of the schools were ranked strong for Effective Leadership (Instructional leadership, program coherence and teacher/principal trust).

The results of the Organizational Climate Questionnaire for both Elementary and Middle Schools somewhat contradicts teachers assessment of principals protecting their time as reported on the PIMRS. Teacher respondents for the PIMRS identified all three principals as having relative strengths in the following domains: *Protecting Instructional Time*.

This section examined individual principal's values, dispositions and leadership styles based on their perceptions, as well as those perceptions of their teachers and supervisors. Next we move on to an examination of each school's culture and climate and principals' strategies to address barriers and the impacts of their strategies.

School Contexts: Culture, Climate and Achievement

There were several challenges faced by each school principal including persistent low student achievement in math and reading, lack of cohesive curriculum, lack of positive faculty morale and negative school climate. Similar to failing schools nationally, in the schools studied there was a lack of instructional focus, coordination of the curriculum and negative staff mindsets. There were also external factors present related to district support, community perceptions and other barriers that inhibit school success. Each principal was guided by their views of the purpose and aims of education, identified common and unique school challenges and implemented a set of strategies to address the challenges. In the next section I begin with sharing data gathered about each school's culture, then how the cultural features of each school are related to similar characteristics of poor performing schools. Also, included are ways the principals' sought to address their schools' challenges.

Negative School Culture

Culture is the way the school operates based on its stakeholders' values and beliefs. Climate surrounds the operation of the school and is based on how stakeholders' feel and perceive the school to be. All three principals had to address barriers of negative school culture. For example, Principal Evans stated the following:

Where I get a little angry is when I hear excuses. I am dealing with nepotism and five affairs that have created fractures in the staff, such as divorces (there were people slept with each other). (Spring 2013)

During a 2013 interview Principal Paul from Magnet Elementary shared that negative school culture was manifested in how students acted in the school. She stated she observed "students not wanting to stand out in class and peers relationships were tough". In a 2013 interview Principal Evans stated that, "when she became principal, Stakeholders seem content with too little, yet students recognized they were not being challenged based on the school's student survey results on 5Essentials survey."

In Principal Fitzgerald's school, Collegeville, the importance of understanding the school's history in order to change the culture was acknowledged by a Collegeville leadership team member. She stated, "The school has a history of ups and downs. Coming in as principal to deal with an extreme down, there was a lot of immediate action necessary to make the required changes for our school culture."

Through interviews with the three principals they shared they had to face normative practices related to teacher professionalism, negative climate and/or culture and lack of coherent instructional practices.

Principal Fitzgerald from Collegeville summed up the many challenges she faced to turn around her school by sharing the following: Grades were based on content over mastery. It was culture shock when teachers had to start looking at their own instruction as to why the students were not behaving and not getting credits. They were mad and angry that

they could possibly be part of the problem. I used data and started with absenteeism of staff – how horrible. I shared that ‘We don’t have consistency of instruction’ and this was exacerbated when there were substitutes. I wondered, “What should I start with first instruction or behavior? (Spring 2013)

All three principals’ initial observations about their schools were similar. In an interview Principal Fitzgerald shared what she observed when she became the principal of Collegeville:

It was in complete chaos. Very little structure- kids were volatile, belligerent, language and mouthing off disregard and disrespect for adults. Other barriers included low expectations and no structure in classrooms. When I went into classrooms I could not believe what I saw. For example, one teacher never taught. They would sit and do photo booth, gang signs, doing nails, listening to music. (Spring 2013)

A member of Collegeville’s leadership team reported that Principal Fitzgerald:

consulted with several resources to determine how to change our school culture and make it more positive for the students, staff and community. It has been a key focus area as the principal and administration team believe that school culture shapes the success of our students. Our principal has set out to determine the contextual barriers that impede our ability to shape the character and culture of our school. Professional development and task specific teams were put in place to target these contextual barriers. (Fall 2013)

Principal Fitzgerald’s initial steps to turn around her school included the following:

We put in a structure- Collegeville Way- what our expectations for behavior and instructions. We scripted everything for staff down to a dress code. To have consistency in classroom rituals and routines, we used Lemov's Teach Like A Champion and we chose six strategies (Entry routine, 100 percent, no opt out, positive framing, slant and cold call.). A leadership team member described the work with Teach Like a Champion as the "most helpful text for her because it had immediate applicable practices that she could implement the next day". The Collegeville Show presented online every week to reinforce the Collegeville Way- academics, bullying, etc. In addition I secured two assistant principals and I believe invested in two of the best. She had to focus on being the instructional leader. One AP was organizational and the other had strength in school structures. All of have strengths, so we work cohesively. (Spring 2013)

In her second year Principal Fitzgerald attempted to shore up student skills and access to rigor by using Title I funds to pilot Crunch and Munch at Lunch where students took a bag lunch and worked on the basics She eliminated regular and accelerated courses, got teachers to look at instruction to determine why students were failing and to participate in professional development to learn teach questioning techniques and how to get students at all levels to participate. In addition, she sought to reduce suspensions and implemented school-wide grading practices that assessed students work with the expectation of 75 percent mastery and 25 percent assigned for homework for reading and math. Teachers looked at their grades and determined why there were a number of students who were not getting it. Yet, this did not have much impact because the school still had 50 percent of students failing as reported on report cards. Part of the Collegeville Way was the staff narrowed the concept of doing school

down to core values and do's and don'ts: Respectful, Academic, Motivation, Learn. This was included in the students' planners. The school added four more Teach Like a Champion strategies: *Stretch It, Explain, Every Minute Counts* and *Clear and Concise*. Only returning staff for the second year implemented the additional strategies.

A Collegeville teacher reported that Principal Fitzgerald established a shared mission and shared meanings among staff by surveying staff about their strongest and weakest classroom management areas and five effective strategies for positive learning environments. The top five practices were the ones chosen for staff to implement school-wide. The teacher interviewed reported she felt this was successful because the five strategies were derived from "real-time teacher data" and coworkers could observe each other using the strategy.

On the 2012 5Essentials reports for the category - *Supportive Environment (the school is safe, demanding and supportive.)*. Collegeville and Magnet School had "low response/not applicable. In 2014 Magnet Schools' results were the same. However Collegeville's rating was "neutral" for whether or not the school is safe and supportive. For Community School, *Supportive Environment* was an area of strength. 2014 results indicated this was "strong" meaning students feel safe and trust teachers and teachers are responsive to students needs and hold high academic expectations for students.

The data from the OCDQ and the PIMRS shared throughout this chapter is important because school culture holds the key to effective management of change and school improvement (Sparks 2009, Clive and Dimmock, 2005). In summary, this study of three schools confirmed that they had similar internal and external characteristics and barriers to those identified for failing schools described in the literature. Prominent for the three schools studied was teacher mindset, perceived barriers of contractual agreements, negative climate; lack of instructional focus; coordination of the curriculum and negative community perceptions of the

schools. Two of the principals cited a lack of district support and one cited the unique leadership structure imposed upon the school.

Sharing Characteristics of Poor Performing Schools

The limited literature on turnaround schools identifies that these schools have similar characteristics that are internal and external to the organizations that contribute to poor performance. In failing schools specific characteristics are often found, they include a lack of instructional focus, coordination of the curriculum and staff mindsets about student learning and responsibility for students' poor academic performance.

Instructional Focus

Poor instructional focus is both having scattered or inconsistent use of best practices and lack of strategies that work best for the children the school serve. The principals had a good understanding of the achievement level of their students and expressed that low expectations for student learning was part of the problem leading to the low achievement. For example, in an interview Principal Evans, Community Elementary principal stated:

The school provides a safe and supportive learning environment characterized by positive strong student and teacher relationships. "Teachers have a strong work ethic, yet poor student achievement results from this effort. There is a lot of teaching and not a lot of learning. (Spring 2013)

In another interview Principal Evans shared during her first observations of her school that the following existed:

There was no coherent curriculum or common instructional best practices agreed to by staff are used as a school. Also, I realized the staff in no way had an understanding about what 'Focus' school meant. They talked about International Baccalaureate (IB) and Reading First, a strategy for which

the school received a grant. As we started Reading First IB has been parked. For newer teachers they do not know what IB is and the middle school IB units lacked rigor in formative and summative assessment. Staff believed that if your (students) are nice and doing well physically that was the measure of success. Culture of Language of academic achievement and student learning was never used when talking with teachers. 5th grade student survey students felt the rigor was low. All 6th graders were placed in remedial classes for the 6th graders we sent to 7th graders. Teachers are using different methods for math instruction. (Spring 2013)

During an interview a Community School leadership team member shared the school needs “support in implementing school management and literacy alignment that is connected to standards. Because of the lack of curriculum alignment, lack of common core standards and lack of progress monitoring in literacy and math the teachers have felt frustrated in moving forward”. (Spring 2013)

To address lack of instructional focus Principal Paul implemented standards alignment through the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP), formed instructional leadership teams and completed multiple classroom observations. While Principal Fitzgerald used the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) to implement rigorous standards for students to learn embedded in units of study and used data systems to provide timely analysis of student performance based on the MYP units of study.

Poor instruction was evident based on results from the 2011-2012 5Essentials that surveyed teachers about whether the school offers *Ambitious Instruction* meaning English and math instruction are challenging and engaging and if the quality of student discussion is high. High quality student discussions are characterized by the following:

- Students use data and text references to support their ideas.
- Students provide constructive feedback to their peers/teachers.
- Students build on each other's ideas during discussion.
- Most students participate in the discussion at some point.

In 2011 Collegeville Junior High received a “weak” score on Ambitious Instruction, representing its aggregate performance across four key indicators of this essential:

- Course Clarity (29 - Weak)
- English Instruction (34 - Weak)
- Math Instruction (39 - Weak)
- Quality of Student Discussion (36 - Weak)

Collegeville Junior High completed the 2014 5Essentials Survey for which 54 percent of students responded and 89 percent of teachers responded. For Ambitious Instruction meaning Classes are challenging and engaging the rating was *Weak*.

The 2014 Magnet Elementary 5Essentials Survey results for Ambitious Instruction was *Low Response/Not Applicable*. The results for Ambitious Instruction on the 5Essentials survey for each school are captured in Table 28 - 29.

A weak score for Ambitious Instruction means the schools do not offer classes that are challenging and engaging. In addition, instruction is not well defined with clear expectations or aligned across grade levels. Collegeville results included student responses so those student report that in English they do not work to build and apply critical reading and math skills and in math they do not apply knowledge learned.

The importance of schools having clear expectations about content and instructional practices cannot be given short shrift. Based on the evidence collected the lack of an instructional focus was prevalent in all three schools. One of the key strategies reported by the three principals to address lack of instructional focus, staff mindsets and negative school culture included racial equity work as described earlier in the chapter.

Table 16. 2012 5Essentials Survey Results for Ambitious Instruction

	Quality of Student Discussion		Course Clarity		English Instruction		Math Instruction	
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Community Elementary School	63 strong	45 Neutral	60 strong	44 Neutral	40 Average	43 Neutral	29 Needs support	37 Weak
Magnet Elementary School	24 Weak	53 Neutral	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA	LA
Collegedale Middle	3 Very weak	36 Weak	LA	29 Weak	LA	34 Weak	LA	39 Weak

Note. LA indicates low response

Coordination of the Curriculum

Researchers report that student achievement is connected to what is taught and assessed (Squires, 2012). Coordination of the curriculum means having curriculum, instruction, assessment and learning materials well coordinated across the different grade levels at a school and consistency in the same areas among teachers in the same grade level.

Two of the schools are authorized as International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programs, while one is an IB Middle Years Program. IB authorized schools go through a rigorous internationally used process to receive the designation as an IB school. Reauthorization occurs every three years. Principal Evan’s supervisor shared, “Staff is steeped in early literacy grant requirements and IB PYP re-authorization”. At Collegedale attention to implementing IB is evident. The Collegedale leadership team discussed MYP – vertical articulation with a district high School and an action plan for re-certification process. They also discussed the feedback from an IB visit that asked them to be more visual as an MYP school. In addition, they discussed an idea of a Foundations course (IB core components) for staff because only two people are incorporating IB Learner Profile. A leadership team member reported that each leadership member “brings an essential piece to the puzzle of school reform. She is

focusing and taking the lead on MYP and getting our school ready for the 5 year review. Other leadership team members focus on teacher mentorship, building a system for teacher-to-teacher observation and building a master schedule.” However, despite having a programmatic MYP focus at a Colleagueville leadership team meeting teachers shared the following;

There was no curriculum and no common way to grade. 5th hour used for teaching a common advisory curriculum is a “dark black hole” everyone is in the halls and/or late. Grading is based on class participation (being there) which is basically grading on behavior. Another teacher offered that he graded based on work completion, attended and participated in class discussion. Another teacher expressed dissatisfaction because the course is unorganized. Other teachers shared the kids are pulled out to groups or never show up because it is viewed as an elective. Kids failed because they literally did not turn in one thing. It is my largest class. (Fall 2013)

There were concerns expressed about the advisory period, such as who is showing CNN news because social studies teachers are and that resource was identified to be used by for Foundations teachers. The team complained that Foundation prep is taking too much of their prep time. They shared a positive feature sharing the curriculum is excellent and engaging for 8th grade, but 6th grade does not have money to make it engaging.

I can’t hold people accountable if I have not provided professional development around our expectations. Provide the support first. This is the accountability. Learning should be the constant, not the time. We are unified. If 60 percent of your students have not mastered a skill it is not time to move on. Not be bound in the structure of a pacing guide. I

motivation is not there in a person- love for teaching and our kids I cannot provide it. Be on the dance floor. Yes I can have the balcony view to see everything, being in the classroom, part of the PLCs working alongside with teachers. It is having the right people in the first place. It was important to help develop teachers who wanted to be here and understood the work before us. Move others along. (Fall 2013)

At Magnet Elementary Principal Paul experienced some of the same concerns over curriculum alignment. Principal Paul's initial strategies included monitoring instruction by conducting "lots of observations and being in the classroom, being part of the PLCs working alongside with teachers. She distributed a staff survey to gather their thoughts about the school's current reality (Questions included "What do you do? How long? What do you like? What should be changed?"), and surveyed parents asking parent survey "Why did you choose the school?. She held individual meetings with staff over the summer, provided professional development aligned to school priorities, and; developed teacher's school and instructional leadership. She made school achievement data public, analyzed the data and then modified instruction. In an interview, she stated the following:

We review data weekly, including Mondo scores, OLPA, classroom assessments, exit slips at the end of a unit; PLC data; math review and district testing measurements. We look at math data and students were not doing well on number sense in 1st and 3rd grade. Administrative team meets with coaches and they bring student data. Too much time lapsed, so we went to biweekly. We do this to change instruction. (Spring 2013)

To gauge the impact of professional development and to monitor instruction the Magnet School staff used the Learning Walk protocol. Learning Walks are a professional development tool developed by the

University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning. "Walks are visits to classrooms by a small team of school adults using a specific protocol (Steiny, 2009).

Principal Alice Evans had an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and had ideas about moving the school forward. The challenge was overcoming barriers she cited that included a lack of coherent curriculum, low expectations for students, district imposed co-principal arrangement and institutional racism. A member of her leadership team shared his advantages during her tenure were "having teachers understand the need to align the curriculum, develop progress monitoring in all areas and holding teachers and students to high standards". (Spring 2013).

All three schools had teachers modeling what was considered quality instruction in each other's classrooms.

The 5Essentials survey measures how well coordinated a school's curriculum, instruction and learning materials are aligned. The 5Essentials survey *Program Coherence* measures whether curriculum, instruction, and learning materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at this school and there is consistency in curriculum, instruction, and learning materials among teachers in the same grade level at this school. The results for schools were as follows: Community 2011 "needs support", Magnet School 2012; "neutral" and Collegeville "very weak". The results in 2014 were as follows: Community was "very weak", Magnet was "strong" and Collegeville was "weak".

The Magnet School neutral rating is interesting because Principal Nancy Paul shared information about program coherence that seems to contradict teachers' neutral rating on the 5Essentials. She shared examples of staff working on implementing the district curriculum and explicitly informing students about expected learning. During an interview regarding curriculum changes, she shared the following:

Staff really worked hard on school-wide reading. We focused on core instruction- tier 1, teaching science everyday with a science coach for support, changing 5/6 to departments because we have experts in math and reading, so it was better for teachers to learn one curriculum very well and implementing the district curriculum and initiatives. We added dance and kids get physical education every day. We have a structured day to provide an environment that communicates to student that they can learn at a high level. Kids understand why we are doing what we are doing. There are no surprises. I used the walk-through process to check math lesson plans. Nothing is a surprise to teachers either. I communicated my intentions and did follow-through. (Fall 2103)

Magnet School had positive results for Program Coherence meaning programs are sustained and supported ad curriculum and instruction across grade levels is aligned. The opposite is true for Collegeville and Community School based on their results. This contradiction between the principal and teachers is important to note because it leads the researcher to wonder if there is a common definition of coherence between them and if there is an understanding if the staff defines coherence in the same way as the 5Essential authors. All three schools showed improvement from 2012 to 2014. Magnet Elementary made the strongest improvement going from neutral to strong. Tables 20-21 show data from two different years.

Table 17. 2012 The 5Essentials Survey Results for Program Coherence

	Program Coherence	
	2012	2014
Community Elementary School	1- Needs Support	1 – Very Weak
Magnet Elementary	53- Neutral	60 - Strong

School		
Collegeville Middle	19- Very weak	36 - Weak

Data from the PIMRS also provide evidence of principal supporting cohesive curriculum. The second dimension of the PIMRS *Managing the Instructional Program* incorporates the leadership functions of *Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum* and *Monitoring Student Progress*. The principal is expected to see evidence of the goals being addressed at the classroom level, providing instructional support to teachers, a review and use data from standardized and criterion referenced assessments, and coordination of the curriculum across grade levels and among teachers. Principal Paul’s supervisor ranked the dimension of monitors Student Progress as the lowest. On both the teacher survey and supervisor survey Principal Evans received the lowest averages on all dimensions among the three principals. On the teacher survey her lowest scores were identical to Principal Paul’s. The lowest supervisor rating was for *Supervises and Evaluates Instruction*. On the teacher survey Principal Fitzgerald received the highest average for *Supervise and Evaluate Instruction, Coordinates the Curriculum, Monitors Student Progress; Maintains High Visibility; Promotes Professional Development* and *Provides Incentives for Learning*.

Poor instructional focus and incoherent curriculum were found in the three schools studied. Another characteristic they share with other low achieving school is the presence of negative staff mindset and lack of collaboration among teachers. These phenomenon are discussed next.

Staff Mindsets

All three principals cited negative teacher mindsets and lack of positive faculty morale as barriers to high student achievement. The category of *School Commitment* measures the degree to which teachers are committed to working at the school as evidenced by indicating they are loyal to the school, enjoy working at the school and would recommend the

school to parents. On 5Essential survey respondents results for all three schools on *School Commitment* are low. Results can be found on Tables 18.

In 2011 the 5Essentials survey was given to Community School staff and 42 percent of teachers reported unfavorably to questions related to school commitment thereby placing it in the “needs support” range. In 2014 the results were “very weak”. For Community School this lack of school commitment sentiment was echoed in a 2013 evaluation for Principal Evans. On the evaluation 24 out of 68 agree overall to the statement, “My school is a good place to work and learn”, while 22 strongly disagree.

In 2012 and in 2014 Magnet Elementary school results indicated the school was “neutral” in the area of *School Commitment*.

For the Collegeville staff in 2012 the overall response was “weak” indicating they are not “deeply committed to the school. In 2014 the overall response continued to be “weak”. Deep commitment means teachers would not want to work in another school, would recommend the school to parents, look forward to daily work and are loyal to the school.

There was evidence from 5Essentials survey that these schools staff members exhibited this characteristic of not taking ownership of the students’ achievement. A category on the 5Essentials that measures this is *Collective Responsibility* meaning teachers share a strong sense of responsibility for student development, school improvement and professional growth. In this area of *Collective Responsibility* on the 5Essential survey given to Collegeville staff in 2012, the overall response was “weak” indicating a lack of shared responsibility for student learning and this continued to be the response in 2014. In 2011 the 5Essentials survey was given to Community School staff and results indicated the school “needs support” and in 2014 the responses indicated it was “weak”. In 2012 and 2014 Magnet Elementary school results indicated the school was “neutral” in this area. Results can be found in Table 18.

Magnet Elementary School showed the best results for *Collaborative Teachers*. Even though most of the results were neutral, the strong results for *Teacher to Teacher* trust indicate that teachers are respectful towards each other and show support for each other as evidenced by the score of 64 which placed it in the strong category. Community Elementary had the worst results. The results indicate that the teachers are not committed to the school, focused on their own professional development or feel responsibility for students achieving at high levels. They do not view themselves as being active partners in improving the academic achievement of students or improving the school. This contradicts the a strong rating reported from student responses for *Teacher Collaboration* meaning they see teachers observing each others' practice and working together. Colledgeville's results are not much better indicating a similar state of mind of their teachers.

Three questions for *Collegial Teacher* behavior from the OCDQ-E were used to compare to the PIMRS results. Collegial behavior supports open and professional interactions among teachers. Teachers are proud of their school, enjoy working with their colleagues, and are enthusiastic, accepting, and mutually respectful of their colleagues. Question #14 Teachers exert pressure on non-conforming faculty members; Question #19 Teachers help and support each other and Question #40 Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues. Results from respondents for Magnet Elementary indicated 1.55 average for questions #14, 3.19 for #19 and 2.95 for #40. Results from Community School respondents indicate 1.4 for questions #14; 2.4 for # 19 and 2.4 for #40. On the OCDQ-M the following questions were used to compare the PIMRS results. Question #4 - Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching; Question #34 - Administrative paperwork is burdensome and Question #42 - Assigned non-teaching duties are excessive. Results from Colledgeville respondents are averages of 2.29 for questions #4, 2.71 for #34 and 1.86 for #42.

In 2014 for Community School the score was “very weak” for Collaborative teachers. For Magnet Elementary in 2014 the result for Collaborative Teachers was “neutral”. In 2011 Collegeville Junior High received a “weak” score on Collaborative Teachers, representing its aggregate performance across four key indicators of this essential:

- Collective Responsibility (28 - Weak)
- Quality Professional Development (31 - Weak)
- School Commitment (13 - Very Weak)
- Teacher-Teacher Trust (58 - Neutral)

On the 2014 Collegeville 5Essentials Survey in 2014 for *Collaborative Teachers* meaning Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth the rating was “weak”.

Table 18. 2011 -2012 5Essential Results for Collaborative Teachers

	Collective Responsibility		Quality Professional Development		School Commitment		Teacher-Teacher Trust	
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Community Elementary School	40 - Average	32 - Weak	7 - Needs Support	5 - Very Weak	26 - Needs support	18 - Very Weak	13 - Needs support	1 - Very Weak
Magnet Elementary School	40 - Neutral	49 - Neutral	36 - Weak	52 - Neutral	32 - Weak	43 - Neutral	52 - Neutral	64 - Strong
Collegeville Middle	24 - Weak	28 - Weak	43 - Neutral	31 - Weak	34 - Weak	13 - Very Weak	39 - Weak	58 - Neutral

Teachers’ commitment to their school and willingness to work collaboratively is important because in schools, the orientation of a teacher to his or her own school in which he or she promotes their own self-interest can be a barrier to high student learning. A teacher’s mindset can be described as being growth one evidenced by teacher actions that show commitment to the school and acts in a way that is aligned to school goals. This is in contrast to a fixed mindset in which the teacher is compliant with principal expectations, but is not committed to the school or the

school's goals. One common strategy employed by the principals to address lack of collaboration and school commitment was to empower teachers in school decisions through leadership teams and this will be discussed later in this chapter.

Principals also employed individual strategies to create a positive mindset among staff. Principal Evans, from Community Elementary shared there was a dysfunctional culture that was misaligned to her goals for children. She strongly believed that all children can learn. Yet, she encountered a staff that did not share or act on this belief. During an interview a member of her leadership team shared the "leadership team has been working to have one voice; at times this has been problematic with team members not embracing the effort. Ms. Evans has confronted the member that has caused the fall out and the team began to move forward".

In an interview Principal Paul shared her observation during her first year at Magnet Elementary:

One barrier is the long-standing attitudes about working with all students and the attitude about responsibility to only their class. She heard staff stating, 'Oh that is my class. Your class is going down the hall you need to go get them'. I knew I had to message that they are all my children and we need to work together. (Summer 2013)

This included hiring teachers with the desired mindset. Principal Paul wanted "fresh perspectives from people wanted to be here". In her first year as principal she hired 17 new teachers and the next year hired three new teachers. Enrollment had plummeted with the school losing over 300 students in five years. White families abandoned the school and now the student body was 96 percent students of color. Principal Paul needed staff with a positive mindset, knowledge and skills to work with her school's student population to address school challenges or at least demonstrate the capacity to learn and willingness to improve. Therefore, she changed the interview process and required candidates teach a lesson

in addition to submitting the traditional resume and participating in an interview. To help with having teachers with positive mindsets during an interview, she reported that during her tenure as principal:

Staff had stabilized. In my first year, 17 out of 25 were 1st year teachers. Now I only replaced two teachers. Teachers are committed and use research. Teacher retention strategies include teacher coaches and monthly administrative team meetings. There is a process where teachers can communicate with administration and coaches. In a way they do not feel judged. (Fall 2013)

Similarly Principal Fitzgerald reconstituted staff. She believed that staff had been here too long and they were not all were ready to do what was required to help students. Before she recommended termination some teachers resigned or were reassigned and she received some voluntary placements. By reconstituting the staff and hiring for growth mindset, Principal Fitzgerald selected the needed mindset for teachers instead of developing it once teachers were hired. During a spring 2013 interview she shared that she “recruited what was needed and invested in external and young talent”.

All three principals cited the mindset of entitlement created unprofessionalism. During an interview the principal of Community Elementary School shared the lack of professionalism was evidenced by the following:

The school was cited by MDE for five years of testing infractions. It was related to securing the tests and leaving a math poster up. Nothing was related to cheating. There was a climate of a lackadaisical attitude, Passion, emotion and care for children was first and foremost. I am referring to those children who could not make the mark [academically] (Spring 2013).

Both principals of Community Elementary and Collegeville cited teacher contract as contributing to the sense of entitlement thus preventing

a sense of professionalism. For example, at Collegeville Principal Fitzgerald shared many staff were “clock watchers” and would only put in time as per the contract. The principal lamented she wished these teachers would “not be sitting looking at clock, looking at contract and saying I worked my 6 hours and 15 minutes” (Spring 2013).

In an interview Principal Fitzgerald stated,

The Union prevents some professionalism. I want to improve teacher practice and establish a professional culture. I use positive communication, support, have celebrations and try to keep negative comments out of the classroom. I need new teachers to buy-in. (Fall 2013)

One supervisor supported both principals’ sentiments. In an interview

Community Magnet Elementary’s Principal’s Supervisor K.L. shared barriers included open enrollment state laws that allow students from a neighboring district enroll in another district that the student is not a residence of, teachers’ contract such as tenure system and teachers must vote before any initiatives are engaged in and teachers’ interpretation of the contract (e.g. using personal days for vacation) (Fall 2013).

The barrier of external factors, such as collective bargaining agreement hiring and assignment to school procedures is important to note because it may impact a school’s successful turnaround. Weinberg (2011) shares that the organization the School Turnaround Group reports that critical elements for turnaround such as school-level autonomy are “crippled by traditional collective bargaining agreements which restrict school-based human capital decisions, restrict school based autonomy, reward seniority over performance, and waste time and resources” (Weinberg, 2011, p. 6). The tension between the principals need to direct teachers to transform the school and teacher contractual stipulations is

important. In a 1985 study of teacher contracts and school reform efforts Joyceson, et al found that districts with a history of cooperative relationships dealt more successfully with initiatives for change”. The researchers also found that resistance of reform by teachers is rooted in efforts to make the “school less stable, less cohesive, and less supportive of good teaching” (Joyceson, et al, 1985, pgs.1,6). However, the contractual prohibitive features cited by the principals (vacation time, work hours and focus of professional development) were not found to be barriers to implementing reforms in this limited study.

These climate and instructional barriers cited by the principals are important to note because a school’s culture and climate are critical to a schools’ success in terms of quality instructional program, educational practices, and learning for children. Poor performing schools are characterized by negative climates and/or cultures that do not support high achievement of teacher professionalism (American Institute of Research, 2010, p. 3).

Each principal utilized leadership teams and professional learning communities to address cultural barriers through empowerment of teachers in school level decision making and making instructional improvements. These will be discussed in the next section.

Leadership Teams

In addition to racial equity work two similar strategies employed by the principals were teacher leadership team structure and professional learning communities.

Bryk, et al. found that “there is extensive evidence now that schools organized as communities promote greater teacher commitment and more student engagement in school work (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1997). “One of the most powerful ways to improve teaching effectiveness is to give teachers time to work together with expert peers using data to monitor student progress and adjust instruction” (Ferris 2012, p. 2). All three schools utilized leadership teams, yet there were differences in composition, focus, purpose and processes. The constitution of each

school's leadership teams and the focus of their meetings were different. Collegeville's leadership team included the school's PBIS coach, administrative intern, assistant principal, and security guard. Community School's leadership team included teachers only. The Magnet and Community school leadership teams focused on professional development to improve instruction, thereby student achievement. Whereas the Collegeville team focused on school climate and technical aspects related to teaching.

During an observation of the leadership team at Magnet School the leadership group interaction was a focused discussion in small groups and laughter was present. Laughter was not present in leadership team meetings at the other schools.

The Magnet School team meeting was structured as a professional development session. Participants were expected to adhere to established protocol from the Courageous Conversations protocol's Four Agreements and Six Conditions. They were required to collaborate, read about a tool to gauge implementation of strategies, such as Learning Walks. Participants were expected to share their thoughts about learning. During the meeting Principal Paul discussed walkthroughs with her coaches and then the team discussed an article about Learning Walks. Teams members shared that "LWs had a focus that was specific, it was bookended by PD, focused on evidence collection, allows us to share practices; can apply within a school; there is a debriefing; helps people get out so my classroom lens and focuses on asking questions of students. Questions posed to the leadership team included, "How will staff feel about learning walks?" "How are equity walk-throughs different from Learning Walks?" (Magnet Leadership Team, 2013).

During an interview Principal Paul shared the following: I stand on developing leaders, not residing within me. Leadership is distributed throughout our organization. It was hard for people in the beginning. Used to the principal always leading a meeting. If we have a

staff meeting about math, our math coach should be leading. I co-plan with her, but the expert need to lead. Asking clerk to ask why people need to see the principal. Send to the nurse. Clerk asked, “What grade is your scholar in? First ask if they have spoken to the classroom teacher and then grade level administrator. My focus is on being in classrooms. I encourage people to schedule meetings. (June 2013)

These sentiments are an example about how she empowers her staff through the use of Learning Walks.

At Community Elementary School the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Team (CIA) is the Instructional Leadership Team of the school. CIA decided everything from professional development, school improvement goals, reviewing data and making curriculum or significant changes to instruction. In addition, there was a Faculty Council which is a working group of representatives of each department for each grade level. It is not a decision making group, but helps with daily operations. Principal Evans stated, “They are the sounding board for all interests and working groups”.

A leadership team member reports that Principal Evans “looks to the strengths of the leadership team, staff and others. Written communication from the principal supports her desire to gather staff input. She sent an email soliciting their input:

Please make sure you have reviewed the evening commitments or leadership interest chart I handed out to you with your teammates. I would like to begin creating Task Forces for specific evening or tasks for 13-14', please double check their willingness. Once again, evening commitments are voluntary beyond conferences and Open House. (Spring 2013)

During an observation of Collegeville School's Leadership team five members had other commitments, such as district-wide Advancement Via Individual Determination (a program to teach students in the middle of academic achievement to succeed in challenging courses) meeting and school parent involvement committee meeting and therefore did not attend. Most of the time discussion was spent on technical or nuts and bolts issues and were not academic. However, they spent a good deal of time discussing a rollout of expectations for students' behavior in the hallways, during arrival and dismissal time, classroom and lunch in the cafeteria in order to improve climate. Principal Fitzgerald stated, "Lessons will emphasize the Collegeville way: respectful, academic, motivated and safe". Leadership team members gave reports ranging from 8th grade tutoring enrollment in AVID, Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) and technology support for staff. A Leadership team member spoke about how the principal led the process of writing the school's mission statement and through this process there was "voice and empowerment given to teachers, so it was not a top down system".

By implementing leadership teams these principals have a proven practice for turning around a school. The purpose tied to instructional improvement exhibited by the work of the Magnet School and Community School teams is more closely aligned to impacting student achievement in contrast to the technical aspects of the Collegeville team's work during leadership team meetings.

Professional Learning Communities

Both Magnet and Collegeville utilized job-embedded Professional Learning Communities(PLCs). Community School used PLCs after school. Their districts had mandated PLCs for all schools. The use of Professional Learning Communities by the principals is noteworthy because it is an example of transformational leadership. As a response to mandates from NCLB for persistently poor performing schools to restructure, scholars looked to transformational leadership for leading in this unique school setting. The term transformational leadership was first coined by J.V. Downton (1973) in *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in a Revolutionary Process*. James MacGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the concept of transformational leadership in his book *Leadership*. He described it not as a set of specific behaviors, but rather an ongoing process by which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20). In their 2003 School Restructuring Study, Marks and Printy studied 24 elementary, middle, and high schools that made substantial progress in their reform efforts. They found that "transformational leadership emerged as the model needed by principals to lead schools through reform (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 371). In addition, PLCs are structures that support the principals' racial equity work. The use of Professional Learning Communities is seen as an asset in anti-racist schools. Singleton (2006) states that,

In an equitable anti-racist school system, teachers know that the institution exists to support them in improving their teaching. There is no retribution or condescension directed toward teachers who attempt to take advantage of the support system and who suggest changes and ways of improving it. The teachers work closely as a professional learning community using disaggregated data and action research to determine how best to reach every child. When one teacher succeeds, methods that led to success are shared with the other teachers in an atmosphere of mutual support, void of

turf protection and characterized by a desire to achieve excellence school-wide. (p. 227)

A question on the 2014 5Essentials benchmark for professional development in the *Collaborative Teacher* domain asks teachers “The professional development for this year included opportunities to work productively with colleagues in my school”. In 2012 Magnet school received a “weak” rating in the area of professional development. On the 2014 5Essentials 42 percent of Magnet Elementary teachers respondents reported they “strongly agree” and 44 percent reported they “agree”. In 2012 Collegeville received a “neutral” rating for Professional Development. On the 2014 5Essentials results for the questions about opportunities to work productively with colleagues 23 percent of Collegeville teacher respondents reported they “strongly agree, while 52 percent of respondents reported they “agree”. In 2011 15 percent of respondents reported they “strongly agree and 63 percent of respondents “agree” from Community school. For the 2013 results Community School was rated “very weak” in this area. Both Magnet School and Collegeville Middle improved in respondents’ satisfaction with professional development at their respective school. Community Elementary respondents were not satisfied with professional development at the school given the poor rating in 2013. The results from 2011-2014 are included in Table 18.

District support

There were mixed reviews about district support from the three principals. A unique barrier for Community Elementary was that the school had two principals, each with different leadership styles assigned to the school (one over 15 years at school and subject of research first year). Principal Evans stated that she was “Set up in a way that made me the bad guy”. Principal Evans reported the other principal sabotaged the work. The Principal on Special Assignment had been a former principal at the

school. Principal Evans reported how this was a barrier to changing her school's culture by sharing the following:

Having to deal with his style of leadership has been hard on the culture". It was one of fear almost abusive and if you were not on the principal's good side you could be in trouble for the next year. He rules his flock with coercion, intimidation and truly unethical threats and harassment. I went to Human Resources with the first month as was told nothing could be done. I met with the superintendent and I was targeted as not being a team player, as I watched this gentleman leave two days a week to teach IB internationally. I laid out specific evidence of his tactics at demoralizing staff or demeaning their work. He pulls down more than \$5000 per month with his extracurricular travel and consultation teaching IB. As staff poured into my office, I became a grief and pastoral counselor of support. Quite honestly they feel as though I won't "truly" be there to support them if the former gentleman is left to his reign and punitive coercion. (Spring 2013)

In an interview Principal Evans reported that her staff feels "wounded". When she reviewed her principal evaluation the staff asked, "Why are you here when he is still doing his shenanigans?" She held individual meetings with staff and did not use pen or paper, just allow staff to talk to her. Principal Evans reported that during these talks:

They thought he was scolding them and being disingenuous. As staff poured into my office, I became a grief and pastoral counselor of support. Quite honestly they feel as though I won't "truly" be there to support them if the former gentleman is left to his reign and punitive coercion. (Spring 2013)

A member of Community School's leadership team shared the former principal is still in the school and tries to derail Principal Evans' attempts to bring in change into the building. The principal of Community Elementary was new to district and the school and he cited this as a major barrier to leading the school.

Unique to Principal Paul among the three principals studied was that she was supported by central office expertise from her supervisor and a multi-tiered support team that included specialists in special education, reading, math and positive behavior support systems. Principal Paul had a very supportive supervisor.

Principal Fitzgerald shared her school's negative culture was exacerbated by changes to the school that included the school transforming from a junior high school to a middle school. With an addition of sixth graders, with teachers new to teaching grade 6, a new master schedule converting from a six period day to a seven period day, and a new quarter system and one new assistant principal there were massive changes in one year at her school. The changes resulted in an increase of 500 students creating a lack of space for three grade levels. Finding extra rooms is hard.

Principal Fitzgerald lamented "poor district support and central office administrators did not have a lot to say that is not positive". When her Superintendent called to offer her the job, she was taken aback. There was no information given about why she was chosen and her Assistant Superintendent never welcomed her to the job and never said anything about anything resulting in her not really knowing what she was walking into. The staff was aware that the new leader was expected to make changes. During an interview one member of Collegeville's leadership team shared that "It was my understanding that our principal was brought in to make changes. Her job was to take a school which was spiraling down and lift it up" (Fall 2013).

Each principal has access to professional growth funds through their principal contracts and their supervisors expected them to attend to

teacher professional growth as evidenced by the expectation that the 5Essentials data about professional growth would be analyzed and acted upon.

Parent and Community Perceptions

Another characteristic of many failing schools is that they develop a reputation and a history of poor student performance that induce a "low community opinion of the school" (Coby & Murphy, 2007, p. 643). Partnerships with parents and community can help reverse the community perception of the school. Each principal identified strategies to involve parents and community members to change negative narratives about their respective schools.

The principal of Community Elementary Alice Evans quickly realized that stakeholders were present at the table meaning cross section of parents and community members were involved), but in so many ways engagement at a deeper level was not happening. She understood that meaningful parent engagement was needed. Historically, there had been formal structures for parent engagement, such as a PTO as evidenced by meeting notes, but when he arrived the PTO did not exist. Another principal grappled with parent engagement aligned to the changing population they served. Collegeville's Principal Fitzgerald shared, "Some parents want a school with less diversity". Principal Fitzgerald's supervisor stated the school's barriers included "behavior of students, reputation of the school within the community where it resides, and achievement of students, divisiveness among staff and were not high performing". In addition, she shared that there was a "lack of community support from white residents and upper middle class African-American parents". Principal Fitzgerald shared that her supervisor told her "White parents did not want to come here. There are too many black students in classes so how could they be accelerating?" The supervisor expressed that a goal for Principal Fitzgerald was to reduce the number of parent complaints that land in Superintendent's office. It was important to "not have Superintendent view the school as a school on fire". However,

Principal Fitzgerald lamented that sadly, “What parents want violates our equity vision”.

All three schools implemented strategies to engage parents and there was evidence principal leadership was viewed as seeking partnerships with parents. On a 2013 evaluation for Principal Evans responses for 17 out of 42 questions the majority of respondents answered the administrator demonstrates this behavior most of the time:

- Uses a variety of sources of information when making decisions
- Finds ways to involve parents and the community in students learning
- Values staff and parent/community input

During an observation of the Collegeville leadership team members discussed ways to get more parent participation. At a leadership team meeting the Parent Involvement committee chair reported at their last meeting they discussed the following:

Members posed the question, “How do we invite parents to lunch by each grade level? They wanted to know “Can African-American parent involvement day be an all parent involvement day and have one grade level lunch that day? We need to figure out logistics and get more parents to attend parent/teacher conferences. Last year we found that sending home form for parents to indicate which night to attend helped boost attendance. Foundation teachers call the parents who did not return the form. At conferences parents were frustrated about wait time because they were used to elementary style. There is a need to hire interpreters.

Leadership team Teachers shared maybe we should reach out to Karen community and students from a district high school. (Fall 2013)

Principal Paul shared that when the school name was changed to honor a prominent leader it created an intense climate because some of the community members did not support it. It was common for neighborhood situations to come into the building. Therefore, she purposely made a

concerted effort to provide information to parents, welcome them and to have structured ways to give them information. During an observation of the Leadership Team at the school the outside hallway display stated, “Welcome to the Parent Resource Room where we play, learn, grow.

The principal of Community School also experienced community resistance and she described it as being based in “huge racism”. She believed the racism was grounded in the belief that the community sees themselves as city of white privilege, and yet the school’s student population is mostly African- American and Latino. Their perception does not match reality” (Fall 2013).

Principal Fitzpatrick from Collegeville shared the tension from her community involved the inclusion of special needs students with emotional and behavioral disorders when previously they had been secluded in isolated classrooms in a different section of the school. Parents of mainstreamed students expressed concerns, such as my child heard the word “Nigger”. Her supervisor relayed that community barriers included “perceived behavior of students and the reputation of the school within the community”.

In 2014 for the Community Elementary 5Essentials Survey for the area of *Involved Families* meaning the entire staff builds strong external relationships the school rating the rating was “very weak”. For the 2014 Collegeville results the rating was “weak”. For Magnet Elementary the results for *Involved Families* was “neutral”.

Harris and Goodall report that “there is a wealth of evidence which highlights that parental engagement in schooling positively influences pupil achievement and attainment” (2008, p. 278). All three principals recognized the need to involve their parents and implemented strategies to do so in meaningful ways. Singleton (2006) describes the vision for parent and community engagement:

Parents and other community members do not feel disenfranchised, nor do they feel intimidated due to their own personal educational attainment, English language skills, racial description, economic status, dress, or

perceptions of school derived from their own personal experiences. Families know that their voice matters in school affairs. They are invited, encouraged, and expected to participate in parent-teacher councils, teacher assistance, leadership teams, fundraising efforts, vision creation, school-improvement projects, and after-school activities. The family and community members feel ownership of the school and know they are a vital part of their student's success. (p. 234)

Each principal recognized the role community perceptions held in transforming their schools and identified strategies to involve parents and community members to change negative narratives about their respective schools.

Student Achievement Data

In all three schools the majority of students continued to perform below grade level. Historically since 2008, none of the schools have ever met AYP in the three subjects of reading science, or math. It should be noted new more rigorous standards aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were implemented in 2013 for reading.

Community Elementary and Magnet School have not met AYP for years 2009-2013 for math, reading and science. Magnet School experienced a decline in reading scores, decrease in math with an increase 2012-2013. Collegeville did not make AYP in math or science 2009-2013 and did not make AYP in reading from 2009-2012, yet made AYP in 2013.

Community School has had disappointing trends in student performance. Students have not made academic progress. Students did not achieve as they should have been and most students did not make average yearly progress (AYP) from year to year. As a result, the school did not meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind legislation. However, in 2014 the school did perform at or above district proficiency rates in math and reading, yet below the state average for reading, math and science. Community Elementary students' achievement on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments from 2008-2013 had been below the student

state proficiency levels. In 2009 in math Community Elementary School had 44 percent SPED proficiency and in 2014 47.7 percent proficient. In 2009 in reading 53.8 percent of students were proficient in 2012 62.7 percent and in 2014 40.9 percent after the new assessment was implemented. In 2009 in science 15.6 percent of students were proficient and in 2014 22.6 which was lower than 2013 results of 32.7 percent.. 2013 38.1 percent of African American students were proficient in math, 32.3 percent in reading and 27 percent in science. 40.4 percent of Hispanic students were proficient in math, 25.7 percent in reading and 20.5 percent in science. White students' results were 71 percent proficient in math, in reading White 72 percent, science 33.5 percent. SPED students were 28.9 percent.

Magnet Elementary students performed below district and state proficiency rates in math, reading and science. In 2009 for math Magnet Elementary School had 31.2 percent proficiency, in 2011 20.5 percent and in 2014 15.4 percent compared to 30.3 percent proficient in 2013. In 2009 in reading 40 percent of students were proficient in 2012 37.3 percent and in 2014 15.4 percent a decrease from 2013 rate of 21.2 percent after the new assessment was implemented. In 2009 in science 14 percent of students were proficient and in 2014 17 percent a decrease from 2013 rate of 26.2 percent. In 2014 only 14 percent of African American students receiving SPED were proficient in reading. 15.8 percent in math, 9.1 African American students categorized as SPED met proficiency.

For Collegeville, their students outperformed the district averages for science from 2009-2014 and in reading for 2011 – 2013. In 2014 Collegeville was the same as the district in math, lower in reading and higher in science. Compared to state proficiency rates, Collegeville was lower. In 2009 in math Collegeville Middle High School had 44.6 percent proficiency, in 2011 42.7 percent and in 2014 39.2 percent proficient compared to 42.2 percent proficient in 2013. In 2009 in reading 50.8 percent of students were proficient in 2012 61.8 percent and in 2014 34.9 percent compared to 36.3 percent in 2013 after the new assessment was

implemented. In 2009 in science 27 percent of students were proficient and in 2014 26.5 percent were proficient compared to 31.3 percent in 2013. In 2014 in reading 20.7 percent African American students were proficient, 34.7 percent Hispanic, 73.3 percent white and 16.7 percent SPED. In math 20.1 percent AA were proficient, 24 percent Hispanic, 74.8 percent white and 9.2 percent SPED. In science 12.2 percent AA were proficient, 23.8 percent Hispanic, 72.1 percent white and 5.3 percent SPED.

2009-2014 proficiency rates on MCAs for each school are displayed in Table 19.

Table 19. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments Results 2009 – 2014
Community Elementary Comparison

MN STATEWIDE	Math	Reading	Science
2009	62.3	72.0	N.A.
2010	64.7	72.4	48.8
2011	56.0	74.0	48.4
2012	61.3	75.3	50.8
2013	60.2	57.6	52.4
2014	60.5	58.8	53.4

CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT	Math	Reading	Science
2009	32.5	48.5	17.2
2010	41.5	54.5	18.5
2011	34.7	55.0	17.8
2012	35.7	54.6	26.5
2013	37.2	34.7	24.7
2014	30.1	31.6	20.7

COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY	Math	Reading	Science
2009	45.3	54.2	18.7
2010	54.8	61.4	12.6
2011	43.3	62.2	13.3
2012	46.6	61.1	28.6

2013	47.1	38.3	33.5
2014	33.5	40.9	22.6

Table 20. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments Results 2009 – 2014
Community Elementary Comparison

ST. XAVIER SCHOOL DISTRICT	Math	Reading	Science
2009	46.0	52.2	26.5
2010	49.1	52.2	27.1
2011	40.0	55.1	28.1
2012	40.2	55.8	28.2
2013	42.1	37.1	27.7
2014	39.2	38.0	23.5
MAGNET ELEMENTARY	Math	Reading	Science
2009	33.0	41.6	14.9
2010	28.8	39.8	6.5
2011	21.5	39.0	7.8
2012	20.9	37.3	18.2
2013	29.5	21.5	26.2
2014	15.4	15.4	17.0
COLLEGEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL	Math	Reading	Science
2009	44.6	50.8	27.0
2010	42.0	49.1	32.2
2011	42.5	56.4	33.8
2012	41.9	60.3	33.0
2013	40.2	36.1	31.3
2014	39.2	34.9	26.5

The Minnesota Department of Education’s (MDE) school performance designations are based on a school Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) and Focus Rating (FR) scores. The 2014 designations for the three schools studies are as follows: Community School is a

“Continuous Improvement School”, Magnet School is still designated as a “Focus” school and Collegeville does not have any designation. The lack of designation because the school had an MMR score in the middle 20% of Title I schools. Minor changes to the MMR and FR calculations were made and are reflected starting with 2013 results. Results prior to 2013 used previous MMR and FR calculations.

For 2014 Community Elementary had an MMR score of 45.18 and a FR of 48.80. These score reflected scores for “Proficiency of 19.74, Growth (average growth by Z scores) of 22.51 and “Achievement Gap Reduction of 25.44 for a total of 67.69 out of 150 points. FR was based on “Achievement Gap Reduction” 25.44, “Focus Proficiency” of 23.36 for a total of 48.80 out of 100 points. Community School’s has a designation of “Continuous Improvement” meaning the school is among the bottom 25 percent of Title I schools that have not already been identified as Priority or Focus. Continuous Improvement schools must work with their districts to create and implement improvement plans as well as set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to support school improvement efforts.

Magnet Elementary had an MMR score of 39.42 and a FR of 38.61. These score reflected scores for “Proficiency of 7.85, Growth (average growth by Z scores) of 22.97 and “Achievement Gap Reduction of 28.31 for a total of 59.12 out of 150 points. FR was based on “Achievement Gap Reduction” 28.31, “Focus Proficiency” of 10.31 for a total of 38.61 out of 100 points. Magnet School is designated as a “Focus” school. All Minnesota schools receive a Focus Rating (FR) that measures their contribution to the state’s achievement gap. The designation means Magnet School is among the 10 percent of Title I schools with the lowest FR are identified as Focus Schools and must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement interventions aimed at improving the performance of the school’s lowest-performing subgroups.

Collegeville Middle School had an MMR score of 33.26 and a FR of 36.39. These score reflected scores for “Proficiency of 24.68, Growth (average growth by Z scores) of 13.05 and “Achievement Gap Reduction

of 12.16 for a total of 49.89 out of 150 points. FR was based on “Achievement Gap Reduction” 12.16, “Focus Proficiency” of 24.23 for a total of 36.39 out of 100 points. Collegeville received a “no designation” from MDE. This means they had an MMR score in the middle 20 percent of Title I schools.

Table 21. Minnesota 2014 Multiple Measurements Rating and Focus Rating

SCORE AND DESIGNATION	COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY	MAGNET ELEMENTARY	COLLEGEVILLE MIDDLE
MMR	45.13	39.42	33.26
FR	48.80	38.61	36.39
Designation	Continuous Improvement	Focus	None

All three principals wanted to instill a sense of self-efficacy into all of their students by holding high expectations for teaching and learning, ensuring that instruction was rigorous and teachers received consistent professional development and expected teachers to collaborate and to take ownership for students’ learning. All of them implemented strategies for consistent and meaningful parental engagement.

Despite these strategies and having the will and mindset to transform their schools, low student achievement persisted. Data from the study suggests that leadership alone cannot turn around a school. It must be coupled with an examination of unique school contexts, implementing strategies to address negative school characteristics and having targeted district supports, especially to turn around a school within a short time frame.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the principal leadership dispositions, competencies, and practices that contribute to the transformation of Minnesota's designated Focus schools. An additional purpose was to examine principals' leadership in relation to their lived experience and how their dispositions influenced actions taken to transform their schools from low to high performing. In addition, learning how principals responded to their individual school contexts as they sought to shape their culture's processes and structures was a critical component to analyze.

A field study was conducted by using mixed methods study of interviews, surveys, and a collection and analysis of observational data, student achievement data and school value-added data. Quantitative methods were used to assess each school's culture, principals' instructional leadership and general leadership competencies. Achievement results on state assessments were examined to determine if the schools' work facilitated by principal leadership led to any changes in the school's performance in terms of student performance. Qualitative methods were used to learn about the principals' disposition to this type of school context and to understand the complex processes that underlie the principals' actions.

This study was designed to discover the complexities principals face as they lead "Focus" schools, the personal values and dispositions they bring to their leadership role and the critical dimensions of instructional leadership that they demonstrated. This field study hopes to shed light on the critical competencies and actions that principals employ to transform persistently low performing schools into high performing ones where children thrive. This research serves as a way to begin to use new knowledge about the problem of low performing (turnaround) schools and emerging solutions to inform analysis of improving schools.

The specific questions guiding the research included:

1. What values, attitudes and dispositions do the principals hold?
2. How do the culture, climate and the contextual barriers of each school shape the actions of the principals?
3. What do principals do? What is their work? What are their activities in a turnaround context?
4. What are the dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrated by principals to address the culture, climate and student achievement at their respective schools?

The following chapter includes (1) conclusions that address each of the research questions, (2) recommendations for school leaders, district supervisors and principal licensure programs, and (3) implications for further research.

The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 1982, 1990) provided a framework with three dimensions that served to guide the assessment of principals' instructional leadership in this study: *Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* (Figure 1). Within each dimension are instructional leadership functions. The strategies employed by the principals and the teacher and principal supervisor perspectives were evident within each dimension of instructional leadership. The findings are summarized in Table 27 and will be discussed further in the conclusion section.

Conclusions

The following section discusses conclusions based upon the data collected and analyzed for this study. Overall, while each principal's schools had pockets of positive changes in student achievement and cultural shifts, unfortunately at all three schools there wasn't evidence that their efforts resulted in whole school changes were transformative. Similar to a study of failing schools the principals were "tinkering toward transformation" (SREB, 2013, pg. i). None of the school cultures could be described as having a culture of fear, lack of trust or a lack of hope which are characteristic of climates in turnaround schools nationally.

Conclusions Related to Question 1: What values, attitudes and dispositions do principals hold?

All three principals studied identified personal values and mindsets to serve children whose achievement is below grade level and from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The three principals studied shared their desire to educate students in their schools and brought a strong moral perspective and racial equity lens to their work. Principal Evans' purpose was to provide her students equity in access and opportunity. Principal Paul possessed core beliefs that all children can learn and her work as an educator was to save children's lives. Principal Fitzgerald's purpose was to always place children first and their learning was the ultimate measure of success. Yet, the affinity for children and moral compass are not enough to turn around a failing school. Principals must be equipped with so much more to transform schools as evidenced by the research and the study of these three principals.

Conclusions Related to Question 2: How does the culture, climate and the contextual barriers of each school shape the actions of the principals?

All three principals faced contextual barriers related to culture, climate and achievement, especially in areas characteristic of failing schools nationally, most notably lack of teacher professionalism, instructional focus, lack of coherent curriculum; and negative staff

mindsets. According to Bonnan and his team (2000), school success and failure depend on the leadership and culture of a school. Climate is the formal and informal organization, personalities of participants, and the leadership of the school in present time (Hoy, 1990). Principals used a variety of strategies to address their respective school's barrier. Principal Evans focused on aligning the PYP and MYP programs, empowering teachers through the leadership team and a curriculum and instruction team and improving teacher professionalism. Principal Paul focused on raising the quality of instruction and professional development by conducting classroom observation, having staff observe each other classrooms using the Learning Walk protocol and implementing professional learning communities. Principal Fitzgerald focused on consistency in school-wide procedures such as establishing school behavior expectations through the Collegeville Way, common grading procedures and Teach Like a Champion instructional strategies. More of the specific actions that principals employed relevant to the dimensions of instructional leadership are included in Table 23. This table is explained more in the response for question 4.

Each principal used different leadership style as they worked with staff. Researchers have found that a highly facilitative principal leadership style, with the principal as “follower or leading from the center” promoted better restructuring. Other studies have indicated, however, that a more directive leadership style may have been helpful (Murphy, 1989; Louis, 1991). A conclusion about the impact of the principals' leadership styles cannot be made because there was not enough data about staff perspectives about what style was used for specific situations or decisions.

Conclusions Related to Question 3:

What do principals do? What is their work? What are their activities?

Instructional leadership research suggests that when principals focus on the improvement of instruction, student outcomes improve (Elmore, 2000; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Blasé and Blasé, 2002; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Ruebling, Stow, Kayona, & Clarke, 2004. Shared instructional leadership, its essential complement, describes the dynamic collaboration between the principal and teachers on curricular, instructional, and assessment matters to further the core technology of schools—teaching and learning. (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377). Transformational leadership provides intellectual direction and aims at innovating within the organization, while empowering and supporting teachers as partners in decision making.”(Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 371).

Regarding leadership in this type of school context the limited research on turnaround school leadership found that principals who have successfully transformed their schools for better teaching and learning communicate a positive vision that includes consistent, high expectations and ambitions for the success of their students. All three principals shared this positive vision for their schools.

Public Impact (2006) identified 14 Turnaround Competencies (Table 22) of principals who have successfully turned around their schools. All three principals demonstrated the following competencies: *Require All Staff to Change, Communicates a Positive Vision, Gain Support of Key Influencers; Measure and Report Progress and Require Decision Makers to Share Data and Problem Solve; Communicate a Positive Vision; and Help Staff Personally Feel Problems* through their racial equity work, leadership team’s use of reviewing data and monitoring results and engaging parents. Principals Paul and Fitzgerald also made necessary *Staff Replacements* and *Implemented Practices Even if Require Deviation*. Principal Paul also exhibited *Do Not Tout as Ultimate Success*. Much more research is warranted to determine if these

competencies are generalizable to other turnaround school principals serving various student populations and in diverse settings.

Table 22. Turnaround Principal Competencies

	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Centerville Middle
Concentrating on big, fast payoffs in the first year Turnaround leaders concentrate on a few changes to achieve early, visible wins. They do this to achieve success in an important area, motivate others for further change, and reduce resistance by those who oppose change.	No	No	No
Implement Practices Even if Require Deviation Turnaround leaders deviate from organization norms or rules when needed to achieve early wins. In a failing organization, existing practices often contribute to failure. This shows that changes can lead to success.	No	Yes	Yes
Require All Staff to Change When turnaround leaders implement an action plan, change is mandatory, not optional.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Make Necessary Staff Replacements Successful turnaround leaders typically do not replace all or most staff but often replace some senior leaders. After initial turnaround success, staff that does not make needed changes either leave or are removed by the leader.	No	Yes	Yes
Focus on Successful Tactics; Halt Others Successful turnaround leaders quickly discard tactics that do not work and spend more money and time on tactics that work. This pruning and growing process focuses limited resources where they will best improve results.	No	No	No
Do Not Tout Progress as Ultimate Success Turnaround leaders are not satisfied with partial success. They report progress, but keep the organization focused on high goals. When a goal is met, they are likely to raise the bar. Merely better is not good enough.	No	Yes	No
<i>Influencing Inside and Outside the Organization</i>			
Communicate a Positive Vision Turnaround leaders motivate others to contribute their discretionary effort by communicating a clear picture of success and its benefits.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Help Staff Personally Feel Problems Turnaround leaders use various tactics to help staff empathize with – or “put themselves in the shoes of” – those whom they serve. This helps staff feel the problems that the status quo is causing and feel motivated to	Yes	Yes	Yes

change.			
Gain Support of Key Influencers Turnaround leaders gain support of trusted influencers among staff and community and then work through these people to influence others.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Silence Critics with Speedy Success Early, visible wins are used not just for success in their own right, but to make it harder for others to oppose further change. This reduces leader time spent addressing “politics” and increases time spent managing for results.	No	No	No
<i>Measuring, Reporting (and Improving)</i>			
Measure and Report Progress Frequently Turnaround leaders set up systems to measure and report interim results often. This enables the rapid discard of failed tactics and increase of successful tactics essential for fast results.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Require Decision Makers to Share Data and Problem Solve Turnaround leaders share key staff results visibly, to highlight those who do not change and reward those who do and succeed. This shifts meetings from blaming and excuses to problem solving.	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source. Public Impact, 2006, p. 6-9

Successful leaders in the turnaround context collect and analyze data to identify high-priority problems, focus on the core of instruction, monitor student progress and provide appropriate support and intervention in the classroom and outside of the classroom within the school. They attend to having a high quality staff by providing coaching and support to staff through intensive professional development for staff and replace ineffective staff, if necessary. In addition, they cultivate external partnerships with parents, business and community (Herman & Huberman, 2012; Woods, Husbands & Brown, 2013; Public Impact, 2006).

All three principals built capacity of instructional staff, developed systems and processes, such as standards alignment mostly through PYP or MYP, instructional leadership teams, use of data systems and building a positive school culture. In addition, all three schools utilized job-embedded, ongoing professional development tied to teacher and student needs. Professional Learning Communities are undergirded by the collaborative use of data. Each of the principals utilized racial equity related tools and strategies to eliminate student racial disparities in achievement.

There were some differences in strategies employed. Principal Fitzgerald reconstituted her staff as directed by the district office, while Principal Paul strengthened the hiring process to determine teacher mindset and quality of instruction. Principal Paul focused on making data public and consistently monitoring results. In addition, she and Principal Evans developed specific communication messages about her expectations for teaching and learning. In addition, the principals built skill, knowledge and capacity of staff to implement evidence based practices and attempted to create a collaborative positive relationship among students, faculty and parents. All three principals used a strong racial equity stance and high expectations for student learning and teachers' instructional practice.

Conclusions Related to Question 4: What are the dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrated by principals to address the culture, climate and student achievement at their respective schools?

The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 1982, 1990) provided a framework with three dimensions that served to guide the assessment of principals' instructional leadership in this study: *Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* (Figure 1). For each dimensions are associated elements that can be aligned to the strategies employed by the principals studied. Table 23 provides information about the strategies aligned to the dimensions.

Table 23. Summary of Principal Strategies within Dimensions of Instructional Leadership and Impact

	Evans Community Elementary	Paul Magnet Elementary	Fitzgerald Collegeville Middle
<p>Defining the school’s mission</p> <p>-Frames the school’s goals -Communicates the school’s goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed specific communication messages about her expectations for teaching and learning • used a strong racial equity stance and high expectations for student learning and teachers’ instructional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed specific communication messages about her expectations for teaching and learning • used a strong racial equity stance and high expectations for student learning and teachers’ instructional practice • received highest score (4.0) on PIRMS Defining School Mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed specific communication messages about her expectations for teaching and learning • used a strong racial equity stance and high expectations for student learning and teachers’ instructional practice
<p>Managing the Instructional program</p> <p>-Coordinates the school’s curriculum -Supervises and Evaluates instruction -Monitors student progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implemented standards alignment mostly through PYP and MYP • formed instructional leadership teams • use of data systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthened the hiring process to determine teacher mindset and quality of instruction • focused on making data public and consistently monitoring results • implemented standards alignment mostly through PYP • formed instructional leadership teams • use of data systems • monitored instruction by conducting multiple observations and being in the classroom and being part of the PLCs working alongside with teachers • used the Learning Walk protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reconstituted her staff as directed by the district office • implemented standards alignment mostly through MYP • use of data systems

<p>Promoting a positive school learning climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implemented Professional Learning Communities • utilized job-embedded, ongoing professional development tied to teacher and student needs • exhibited “supportive” principal behavior on OCDQ • exhibited average “principal openness” on OCDQ (Note: small sample of 5 respondents for OCDQ) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created a sense of self-efficacy and self-management of learning in students • built skill, knowledge and capacity of staff to implement evidence based practices • created a collaborative positive relationship among students, faculty and parents • implemented Professional Learning Communities • utilized job-embedded, ongoing professional development tied to teacher and student needs. • exhibited low restrictive principal behavior on OCDQ • exhibited above average for principal openness on OCDQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implemented Professional Learning Communities • utilized job-embedded, ongoing professional development tied to teacher and student needs • exhibited higher than average for directive principal behavior on OCDQ • exhibited average principal openness • put in a structure- Collegeville Way- expectations for behavior and instructions. • used strategies from Lemov’s Teach Like A Champion • established school-wide grading practices
<p>Dispositions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had a dominant moral purpose focused around equity of access and opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • possessed core beliefs that all children can learn her work as an educator was to save lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose is to always what is best for the students

Impact

- left the district
 - no significant gain in student achievement over two academic years, yet pockets of success including students did perform at or above district proficiency rates in math and reading, yet below the state average for reading, math and science
 - 2013 district evaluation staff report she models values, beliefs and attitudes that inspire
 - 5Essentials report for 2014 indicates Community Elementary is not yet organized for improvement because they were rated “very weak” on 3 out of five essentials: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers and Involved Families
 - 5Essentials benchmark Supportive Environment was an area of strength. 2014 results indicated this was “strong” meaning students feel safe and trust teachers and teachers are responsive to students needs and hold high academic expectations for students.
 - remained as leader of her school
 - no significant gain in student achievement over two academic years
 - teachers report that collaborative leadership is present
 - teachers report positive feelings about the school
 - 5Essentials report for 2014 indicates Magnet Elementary is moderately organized for improvement because they were rated “neutral” on 3 out of five essentials: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers and Involved Families
 - reassigned as a principal at another district school
 - no significant gain in student achievement over two academic years, yet pockets of success including, students outperformed the district averages for science from 2009-2014 and in reading for 2011 – 2013
 - student discipline issue prompted parents and teachers to call on the district to intervene
 - 5Essentials report for 2014 indicates Collegeville is not yet organized for improvement because they were rated “very weak” on 4 out of five essentials: Ambitious Instruction, Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers and Involved Families
-

Recommendations

Hallinger and Murphy (2013) assert that principals cannot attend to the work that needs to be accomplished to create improvement because of being distracted by tasks that “fall into the category of important but not urgent activities” (2013, p. 10). Robinson and Buntrock (2011) believe that to turn around chronically low-performing schools, there must be a “systemic, rather than school by school approach. The limited research on turnaround school leadership found that principals who have successfully transformed their schools for better teaching and learning have support from district supervisors and departments focused on these areas of change:

1. Creating strong learning-focused partnerships with principals that help principals grow as instructional leaders.
2. Providing schools with high-quality, relevant services that directly support improved instruction, and
3. Leading the change process by teaching and learning, together with staff throughout the system, what the new work is and how to engage in it.

District support was not provided for two of the schools studied. Two out of the three principals had coaches, but none of these coaches had experience as a principal of a turnaround school. Unlike most turnaround schools two of the three used the organizational structure of PLC’s to allow teams of teachers to work together to plan instruction, share best practices and conduct peer review of each other’s work. However, similar to turnaround schools there was a revolving door for principal leadership. For the 2014-2015 school year only one of three principals remained at the helm of/her school. One was terminated and left the district and the other was reassigned as a principal at another district school. Instability of leadership is a characteristic of failing schools. Under the U.S Department of Education models for restructuring each requires the principal to be removed. Principals of Turnaround schools are expected to improve the dysfunctional aspects of school culture and simultaneously dramatically

improve students achievement and if they do not do so they are removed from the school.

The schools were also lacking a three-five year comprehensive strategic plan that included a differentiated staffing plan specific to needs of each school. Also, each school lacked a non-traditional school year and school year model. The school's calendar adhered to the district's agrarian society based calendar and length of school day was no different from higher performing schools with similar grade configurations. This is important because research from Public Impact (2011) about general school improvement strategies include the following:

- Establish professional norms for Human Resource management that creates flexibility for leaders and stability within teams
- Expand school day and/or school year to provide significantly more time for teacher collaboration, instruction
- Create a coherent, whole-school plan designed to meet the needs of high-challenge enrollments (2011, p.).

The following ideas for turnaround support were informed by study findings, based on general school improvement strategies and structures and strategies found to be necessary elements for turnaround success as described in this research's literature review and the researcher's 30 years of experience in urban and suburban districts as a teacher, district administrator for curriculum and professional development, principal and assistant superintendent for preK-12 schools.

Ideas for turnaround support

1. Hire principals with Turnaround school experiences for Turnaround schools. School superintendents should not assume a successful principal in a traditional school will do well in a turnaround school. In addition to possessing the general competencies for any school principals, turnaround principals must have a strong affinity for reversing the racial disparities for American Indian and children of color. Districts should implement plans for the recruitment, selection,

training and support for leaders of turnaround schools. This recommendation is supported by the literature. Researchers have found that stronger leadership appeared most important with schools with the greatest need (Hallinger 2013; Seashore, Leithwood & Wahlstrom, 2010). Mass Insight (2007) reports that turnaround leaders often require a different set of actions to result in dramatic achievement gains. McLester (2011) reports that leaders of turnaround schools may be ill prepared to provide the daring type of leadership necessary to transform such schools.

2. Maintain principal in a turnaround school for a minimum of five years. Two years is not sufficient for a rapid turnaround considering the dysfunctional cultural aspects found in the schools studied similar to those aspects for such school nationally as cited in the literature. This recommendation is supported by the findings from this study and the researcher's experience.
3. Implement strategies for hiring teachers that have the will, skill and capacity to teach children of color, poor students and those who are academically below grade level. From the researcher's experience and knowledge the turnaround teaching staff should be balanced between senior teachers who can bring a wealth of successful experience and knowledge and least senior teachers who have the mindset and commitment to work in a challenging school, yet lack the breadth and depth of experience and knowledge.
4. Utilize a framework to discuss the racial educational disparities and how to close the access, opportunity and educational gaps between white students and American Indian students and students of color. The application of Critical Race Theory by the principals studied and researchers, such as Glenn Singleton assert it is imperative to look at schooling through the lens of race because the predictability of students' achievement based on a student's race, ethnicity, home

language, personal characteristics or culture is a dimension that contributes to the achievement gap.

5. Develop a three-five year strategic plan for each turnaround school that details the current reality of the school's performance documented by multiple data sources, three to five goals to achieve turnaround, strategies to address the goals; and sub-plans that may detail such supportive components, such as professional development needed for principal and staff, budget and district level supports for the plan. The researcher's professional experiences supervising principals has found a detailed strategic plan has been helpful for her principals to guide their school improvement processes.
6. Monitor student achievement measures frequently and adapt instruction to address gaps in student learning. Identify a menu of interventions (wraparound services) tailored to address specific student needs (i.e. reading two years behind grade level, instability of resources: money, housing, food). These recommendations are especially important in light that for the schools studied there were only pockets of success in student achievement results.
7. Provide relevant and meaningful family and community engagement based on those stakeholders' perspectives as the principals studied indicated that negative and unrealistic community perceptions were a barrier that each needed to address.
8. Provide a standardized protocol for analyzing the data and using the results for district administered surveys, such as the 5Essentials. The protocol should include the expectation that principals use any school improvement survey to create personal growth plans to improve skills to lead their schools based on the results and to create actionable strategic plan to improve their respective schools.
9. Provide school marketing support to address negative community narratives about the school. The principals studied cited negative community perceptions as a barrier they needed to overcome.

10. Implement a plan for managing inherent stress of staff working in the turnaround school contexts. Minnesota's lowest achieving schools are populated by mostly American Indian and children of color who are poor. The researcher believes the social and emotional stresses these children bring to school that school staff must address beyond instruction may result in stress to staff that principal must attend to.
11. Provide authentic measures for determining success and ways to celebrate success as suggested by Public Impact's *Turnaround Principals Competencies*.
12. Provide differentiated central office support as in two of the schools studied principals identified lack of district support or district mandates as barriers.
13. Provide incentives for staff to improve their skills and to increase commitment to work in turnaround schools. Poor school commitment was a barrier identified for the schools studied and so innovative incentives to retain staff should be explored.

The implications for principal training programs, teacher licensure and district support are generated from a synthesis of this study, a review of literature about turnaround principal leadership and critical race theory; and the researcher's leadership experience. Principal licensing programs should provide courses that provide knowledge and skill building to be successful leaders of turnaround schools. Particular attention should be given to helping principals understand their values and the leadership style they will bring to approach leading a turnaround school, giving them tools to identify and address negative aspects of school culture, skills to hire, coach and support caring and competent teaching and support staff; sharing ways to meaningfully engaging parents and community members; approaches to creating and implementing a strategic planning to transform the school and strategies to communicate effectively to students and their families, school staff, district staff and community members. Principal

licensing programs should provide a mentor for one year after the principal completes the licensure program.

Teacher licensure programs should prepare teachers to examine their beliefs about racial groups of students and give them approaches to eliminate teaching practices that contribute to educational disparities due to institutional racism. Research supports this recommendation. Conventional education teacher education approaches must help prospective and practicing teachers “gain the critical skills needed to examine being educated in a racist society affects their own knowledge and their beliefs about themselves and culturally diverse others” (King, 1991, p. 143). In Professor King’s Social Foundations of Education courses she purposely “sharpens the ability of students to think critically about educational purposes and practice in relation to social justice and their own identities as teachers. In addition students are introduced to the “critical perspective that education is not neutral; it can serve various political and cultural interests including social control, socialization, assimilation, domination, or liberation (King, 1991, p. 140).

Superintendents and district staff responsible for principal leadership development can help turnaround principals by ensuring that the recommendations above are planned for, monitored for effectiveness and implemented with fidelity. District leadership development staff should help principals quickly assess their school’s culture and student achievement data, identify the most egregious cultural facets to eliminate and the levers to pull to accelerate student learning and to develop a three to five year strategic plan with goals and actionable strategies to transform their schools from low performing to high performing schools. Communication to and engagements with multiple stakeholders is necessary as well.

Implications for Research

At the outset of this study my hope was that the findings will result in knowledge and a set of strategies that will help leaders manage and lead

organizational cultural change at turnaround schools and provide information to school district administrators that will help in the recruitment, selection, training and support for leaders of turnaround schools. These findings may be useful in informing the design of principal licensure programs and professional development programs.

Additional research will need to be completed to determine if the minor reform in the turnaround schools will be sustainable—the ultimate goal of reform. A goal of school turnaround reform is to create sustainable change, so a critical action for principals of turnaround schools is to create lasting change versus incremental change. Cynthia Coburn provides a framework for determining if reform in persistently low-performing schools will be sustainable. The interrelated dimensions that are needed for lasting change - depth, sustainability, spread and a shift in reform ownership were explained in Chapter 2 (Coburn, 2003). According to Coburn one must attend to sustainability issue that is the reform may be adopted without being implemented or can be implemented superficially only to fall in disuse.

Close attention must be given to local schools' cultures. Mintrop (2009) states, “ Thus among the variety of corrective action and restructuring strategies that have been tried, none stand out as universally effective or robust enough to overcome the power of local context. Competence of provider personnel, intervention designs, political power of actors in the system, and district and site organizational capacity to absorb the strategies all strongly influence how a particular strategy will turn out”.

Based on the NCLB definition a successful turnaround of the school, none of the three principals was successful. School turnaround is defined as a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low performing school that produces significant gain in student achievement over two academic years (Mass Insight, 2007). But, if other measures are used for success the principals turned around their schools in important ways. The use of these other measures leads to an alternative definition for school

turnaround that includes value-added data and other indicators of the school success in terms of changed trajectory in areas of culture, climate, supervisor and community and parental satisfaction.

The Minnesota Department of Education (2014) expects turnaround principals to “build a shared vision, set high expectations for teaching and learning, monitor performance, make changes to the instructional program, and establish distributive leadership among staff. Interestingly enough, moving student achievement to a higher level is not cited as a goal for principal leadership. However, it is an expected result of the principal’s leadership. MDE (2014) expects the principal to “build the capacity of each school’s staff to implement instructional strategies and practices with fidelity resulting in increased student achievement”. All three principals took the above mentioned actions.

There was evidence that there were climate changes at Magnet School. In an interview, the Director of Leadership Development for the district for Magnet Elementary summed up a visit to the school, stating: The school had clear expectations about learning. In every classroom there were learning targets. Not only does the staff refer to the students as scholars they treat them like scholars. Responsive classroom is fully implemented. I observed kids running and adult said, ‘Excuse me. Show me how you can come down the hall because little eyes (younger students) are watching. Kids were in a scuffle. Teachers said I will work with these kids to solve the problem. (Fall 2014)

In an interview the supervisor for Principal Paul stated: For five years the staff has modeled the language, added Afro studies class in every grade. It is a Beacon school. Parent shared, “Every day my child comes home happy and wants to go to school each day”. One parent said, M my child is coming home talking about who he is”. Enrollment is up. Kids are happy because they are learning about who they are and happy to

come to school. Staff is not leaving. The staff has put it all together to move forward. (Fall 2014)

The data from multiple sources demonstrate an improvement in professional communities of practice and collaborative leadership. It is my belief that the perspectives of those (teachers) who have to implement the decisions made by the principal should be meaningfully included and the principals use of leadership teams are a powerful structure to do just that.

For the three schools studied there were pockets of success in student achievement. For example, all three schools increased the number of students who are proficient in science for a period of time. In 2009 Community Elementary School 18 percent of students were proficient and in 2013 33.5 percent. In 2009 Magnet Elementary School had 14 percent of students who were proficient and in 2013 26.2 percent. Colledgeville Middle School had 27 percent of students who were proficient and in 2013 31.3 percent. However the improvements were not sustained based on the 2014 MCA results.

Because the school showed pockets of success not limited to the federal definition of turnaround success a final recommendation is to develop an alternative definition to the limited NCLB definition of “successful turnaround”. From what the researcher has learned from studying these three schools when cultural barriers are impacting low-performing schools and the need for principals to have specialized competencies coupled with an affinity for the children enrolled in these schools, especially as the literature points out, when effective leadership is not coupled with other key supports then a rapid turnaround may be unrealistic. This reality was played out in the schools studied.

Unfortunately, for the schools studied they still faced serious negative realities despite targeted strategies employed by the principals. In 2012 Principal Fitzgerald lamented that the school was “in chaos”. Yet in 2014 not much had changed. During visits to the school the researcher observed students blatantly disrespected teachers, staff and each other. Teachers blamed the district’s inclusion of special education students and

a call to use different methods, other than suspension as a consequence for serious student misbehavior. A group of white female parents blamed the district and called for the assistant superintendent to meet with them demanding a set of actions be taken. While the principals made changes in organizational processes and procedures, provided professional development to change classroom practice and involved parents and other strategies to turnaround their schools it did not result in notable changes in student achievement. On 5Essential survey all three schools' results indicated school commitment is weak. School commitment means teachers are deeply committed to the school, connected to parents, loyal, would not want to work at another school and look forward to the work day.

Any research in finding out how to eradicate the under-achievement of students of color and of those who come from poverty is a worthy moral imperative. It is essential that we provide schooling that allows each child to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Children who are well educated better serve themselves, their families and their communities. Nationally and in Minnesota the majority of school identified as "Priority" and "Focus" are schools populated by American Indian and children of color, primarily African-American students. This research shed light on the barriers principals faced at their respective "Focus" schools and the critical dimensions of instructional leadership demonstrated and principal actions that they employed to transform their schools to be places where children of color and poor children thrive. It is hoped that any new knowledge about the problem of low performing (turnaround) schools and emerging solutions will be used to inform analysis of improving schools. Principal leadership in a turnaround context requires the ability to confront the complexities of the context. The greatest challenge for turnaround principals is that they must address both school culture issues as well as academic failure. Principals are responsible for shifting the negative school culture into a positive ethos and to raise student achievement simultaneously.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: 2012-2013 Minnesota Multiple Measurement Rating List

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
ACADEMIA CESAR CHAVEZ CHARTER SCH.	ACADEMIA CESAR CHAVEZ CHARTER SCH.	22.57 percent	24.09 percent
ANOKA-HENNEPIN PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	EVERGREEN PARK ELEMENTARY	34.13 percent	73.54 percent
BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY	26.55 percent	27.38 percent
BROOKLYN CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT	EARLE BROWN ELEMENTARY	44.25 percent	40.62 percent
CASS LAKE-BENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	CASS LAKE-BENA ELEMENTARY	13.96 percent	56.77 percent
COLLEGE PREPARATORY ELEMENTARY	COLLEGE PREPARATORY ELEMENTARY	5.29 percent	5.20 percent
COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	39.48 percent	32.88 percent
DUGSI ACADEMY	DUGSI ACADEMY	2.98 percent	3.69 percent
DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	LINCOLN PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL	8.96 percent	8.67 percent
DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY	24.41 percent	22.90 percent
EAST METRO INTEGRATION DISTRICT	HARAMBEE ELEMENTARY	35.51 percent	31.61 percent

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
EMILY O. GOODRIDGE-GREY ACCELERATED	EMILY O. GOODRIDGE- GREY ACCELERATED	30.51 percent	27.21 percent
EXCELL ACADEMY CHARTER	EXCELL ACADEMY CHARTER	29.21 percent	27.77 percent
GLENCOE-SILVER LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAKESIDE ELEMENTARY	52.39 percent	40.60 percent
HINCKLEY- FINLAYSON SCHOOL DISTRICT	HINCKLEY ELEMENTARY	19.75 percent	20.39 percent
HMONG COLLEGE PREP ACADEMY	HMONG COLLEGE PREP MIDDLE ACADEMY	11.81 percent	11.71 percent
HOPE COMMUNITY ACADEMY	HOPE COMMUNITY ACADEMY	50.66 percent	43.37 percent
LEARNING FOR LEADERSHIP CHARTER	LEARNING FOR LEADERSHIP CHARTER	18.78 percent	19.93 percent
LOVEWORKS ACADEMY FOR ARTS	LOVEWORKS ACADEMY FOR ARTS	32.71 percent	31.84 percent
MILACA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	MILACA ELEMENTARY	30.29 percent	28.45 percent

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	BANCROFT ELEMENTARY	40.86 percent	35.75 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	HIAWATHA ELEMENTARY	27.71 percent	25.68 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	LK NOKOMIS COMM-KEEWAYDIN CAMPUS	33.62 percent	29.94 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	LORING ELEMENTARY	29.85 percent	26.37 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	LYNDALE ELEMENTARY	34.24 percent	27.02 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	NORTHROP ELEMENTARY	67.39 percent	47.37 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	PILLSBURY ELEMENTARY	50.17 percent	49.05 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	PRATT ELEMENTARY	60.02 percent	42.17 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	SEWARD ELEMENTARY	50.95 percent	36.54 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	WAITE PARK ELEMENTARY	62.82 percent	50.93 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	WINDOM SCHOOL	52.22 percent	41.14 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	FOLWELL ARTS MAGNET	22.85 percent	20.98 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	ANDERSEN COMMUNITY	22.07 percent	21.40 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	SULLIVAN ELEMENTARY	14.35 percent	14.20 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC	ANISHINABE	4.71 percent	4.85 percent

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
SCHOOL DIST.	ACADEMY		
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	MARCY OPEN ELEMENTARY	54.72 percent	42.89 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	BRYN MAWR ELEMENTARY	28.79 percent	24.72 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	EMERSON ELEMENTARY	10.91 percent	9.77 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	NELLIE STONE JOHNSON ELEMENTARY	17.76 percent	18.00 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	WHITTIER INTERNATIONAL	28.30 percent	18.27 percent
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	WASHBURN SENIOR HIGH	37.02 percent	30.74 percent
MINNESOTA TRANSITIONS CHARTER SCH	MTS HIGH SCHOOL	78.90 percent	99.87 percent
MOORHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	ELLEN HOPKINS ELEMENTARY	34.24 percent	31.37 percent
NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL, INC.	NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL, INC.	45.44 percent	41.26 percent
OSSEO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	GARDEN CITY ELEMENTARY	56.97 percent	54.57 percent
PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY	PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY	37.30 percent	15.85 percent
RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	RICHFIELD STEM SCHOOL	33.29 percent	26.76 percent
RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	CENTENNIAL ELEMENTARY	51.08 percent	41.37 percent

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
ROBBINSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	MEADOW LAKE ELEMENTARY	25.77 percent	28.12
ROSEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	CENTRAL PARK ELEMENTARY	31.55 percent	33.09 percent
SOJOURNER TRUTH ACADEMY	SOJOURNER TRUTH ACADEMY	4.68 percent	5.88 percent
SOUTH ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST.	LINCOLN CENTER ELEMENTARY	29.46 percent	27.84 percent
ST. CLOUD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	MADISON ELEMENTARY	23.39 percent	25.25 percent
ST. CLOUD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	TALAHY COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY	3.19 percent	3.36 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHNSON SENIOR HIGH	45.84 percent	29.93 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	BATTLE CREEK MIDDLE	19.63 percent	20.22 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	FARNSWORTH AEROSPACE UPPER	10.15 percent	10.89 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	HIGHLAND PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL	29.56 percent	23.33 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	RAMSEY JUNIOR HIGH	26.30 percent	20.67 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHN A.JOHNSON ACHIEVEMENT PLUS EL.	12.76 percent	15.13 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	CHEROKEE HEIGHTS MAGNET ELEMENTARY	11.35 percent	12.05 percent

District Name	School Name	MMR	FR
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	BRUCE F VENTO ELEMENTARY	25.37 percent	23.27 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	FARNSWORTH AEROSPACE LOWER	31.89 percent	36.31 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	GALTIER MAGNET ELEMENTARY	8.33 percent	10.43 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	HIGHWOOD HILLS ELEMENTARY	48.93 percent	42.83 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	JACKSON MAGNET ELEMENTARY	35.04 percent	32.99 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	NOKOMIS MONTESSORI/MAGNET	32.74 percent	28.84 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	OBAMA SERVICE LEARNING ELEMENTARY	29.56 percent	29.28 percent
ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	AMERICAN INDIAN/MOUNDS PARK	28.86 percent	26.84 percent
URBAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	URBAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	12.13 percent	12.97 percent
WEST ST. PAUL-MENDOTA HTS.-EAGAN	GARLOUGH ENVIRONMENTAL MAGNET	71.14 percent	55.97 percent
WILLMAR PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY	30.20 percent	17.96 percent
WORTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY	29.54 percent	25.10 percent
YELLOW MEDICINE EAST	BERT RANEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	12.60 percent	11.91 percent

Appendix B: Principal Instructional Management Scale- Teacher Form

PART I: Please provide the following information about yourself:

(A) School Name: _____

(B) Years, at the end of this school year, that you have worked with the current principal:

- 1 5-9
- 2-4 10-15
- more than 15

(C) Years experience as a teacher at the end of this school year:

- 1 5-9
- 2-4 10-15
- more than 15

PART II: This questionnaire is designed to provide a profile of principal leadership. It consists of 50 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your observations of the principal's leadership over the past school year. Read each statement carefully. Then circle the number that best fits the specific job behavior or practice of this principal during the past school year. For the response to each statement:

5 represents *Almost Always*

4 represents *Frequently*

3 represents *Sometimes*

2 represents *Seldom*

1 represents *Almost Never*

In some cases, these responses may seem awkward; use your judgment in selecting the most appropriate response to such questions. Please circle only one number per question. Try to answer every question.

Thank you.

To what extent does your principal . . . ?

Statement					
Frame the School's Goals	Almost Never				Almost Always
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	1	2	3	4	5

2. Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	1	2	3	4	5
3. Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development	1	2	3	4	5
4. Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals	1	2	3	4	5
5. Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school	1	2	3	4	5
II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS					
6. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	1	2	3	4	5
7. Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings	1	2	3	4	5
8. Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress)	1	2	3	4	5
10. Refer to the school's goals or mission in forums with students (e.g., in assemblies or discussions)	1	2	3	4	5
III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION					
11. Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school	1	2	3	4	5
12. Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction	1	2	3	4	5
13. Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference)	1	2	3	4	5

14. Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	1	2	3	4	5
15. Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	1	2	3	4	5
IV. COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM					
16. Make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, vice principal, or teacher-leaders)	1	2	3	4	5
17. Draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions	1	2	3	4	5
18. Monitor the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives	1	2	3	4	5
19. Assess the overlap between the school's curricular objectives and the school's achievement tests	1	2	3	4	5
20. Participate actively in the review of curricular materials	1	2	3	4	5
V. MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS					
21. Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress	1	2	3	4	5
22. Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses	1	2	3	4	5
23. Use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals	1	2	3	4	5
24. Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)	1	2	3	4	5

25. Inform students of school's academic progress	1	2	3	4	5
VI. PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME					
26. Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements	1	2	3	4	5
27. Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
28. Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
29. Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	1	2	3	4	5
30. Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
VII. MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY					
31. Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks	1	2	3	4	5
32. Visit classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	1	2	3	4	5
33. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	1	2	3	4	5
34. Cover classes for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives	1	2	3	4	5
35. Tutor students or provide direct instruction to classes	1	2	3	4	5
VIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS					
36. Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos	1	2	3	4	5
37. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	1	2	3	4	5
38. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files	1	2	3	4	5
39. Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition	1	2	3	4	5
40. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers	1	2	3	4	5
41. Ensure that inservice activities attended by staff are	1	2	3	4	5

consistent with the school's goals					
42. Actively support the use in the classroom of skills acquired during inservice training	1	2	3	4	5
43. Obtain the participation of the whole staff in important inservice activities	1	2	3	4	5
44. Lead or attend teacher inservice activities concerned with instruction	1	2	3	4	5
45. Set aside time at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from inservice activities	1	2	3	4	5
X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING					
46. Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter	1	2	3	4	5
47. Use assemblies to honor students for academic accomplishments or for behavior or citizenship	1	2	3	4	5
48. Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work	1	2	3	4	5
49. Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions accomplishments in class	1	2	3	4	5
50. Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Principal Instructional Management Scale- Supervisor Form

PART I: Please provide the following information if instructed to do so by the person administering the instrument:

(A) District Name: _____

(B) Your Position in the District: _____

(C) School Name: _____

(D) Number of school years the principal has been principal at this school:

- 1 5-9
- 2-4 10-15
- more than 15

(E) Years, at the end of this school year, that you have worked with this principal:

- 1 5-9
- 2-4 10-15
- more than 15

(F) Number of visits greater than 20 minutes in length to the principal's school this year:

- 1 5-9
- 2-4 10-15
- more than 15

(G) Gender of the principal: ___ Male ___ Female

PART II: This questionnaire is designed to provide a profile of principal leadership. It consists of 50 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your observations of the principal's leadership over the past school year. Read each statement carefully. Then circle the number that best fits the specific job behavior or practice of this principal during the past school year. For the response to each statement:

5 represents *Almost Always*

4 represents *Frequently*

3 represents *Sometimes*

2 represents *Seldom*

1 represents *Almost Never*

In some cases, these responses may seem awkward; use your judgement in selecting the most appropriate response to such questions. Please circle only one number per question. Try to answer every question.

Thank you.

Statement					

Frame the School's Goals	Almost Never				Almost Always
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	1	2	3	4	5
2. Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	1	2	3	4	5
3. Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development	1	2	3	4	5
4. Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals	1	2	3	4	5
5. Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school	1	2	3	4	5
II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS					
6. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	1	2	3	4	5
7. Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings	1	2	3	4	5
8. Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress)	1	2	3	4	5
10. Refer to the school's goals or mission in forums with students (e.g., in assemblies or discussions)	1	2	3	4	5
III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION					
11. Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school	1	2	3	4	5
12. Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction	1	2	3	4	5

13. Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference)	1	2	3	4	5
14. Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	1	2	3	4	5
15. Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	1	2	3	4	5
IV. COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM					
16. Make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, vice principal, or teacher-leaders)	1	2	3	4	5
17. Draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions	1	2	3	4	5
18. Monitor the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives	1	2	3	4	5
19. Assess the overlap between the school's curricular objectives and the school's achievement tests	1	2	3	4	5
20. Participate actively in the review of curricular materials	1	2	3	4	5
V. MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS					
21. Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress	1	2	3	4	5
22. Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses	1	2	3	4	5
23. Use tests and other performance measure to assess	1	2	3	4	5

progress toward school goals					
24. Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)	1	2	3	4	5
25. Inform students of school's academic progress	1	2	3	4	5
VI. PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME					
26. Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements	1	2	3	4	5
27. Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
28. Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
29. Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	1	2	3	4	5
30. Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time	1	2	3	4	5
VII. MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY					
31. Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks	1	2	3	4	5
32. Visit classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	1	2	3	4	5
33. Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	1	2	3	4	5
34. Cover classes for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives	1	2	3	4	5
35. Tutor students or provide direct instruction to classes	1	2	3	4	5
VIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS					
36. Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos	1	2	3	4	5
37. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or	1	2	3	4	5

performance					
38. Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files	1	2	3	4	5
39. Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition	1	2	3	4	5
40. Create professional growth opportunities for teachers	1	2	3	4	5
41. Ensure that inservice activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	1	2	3	4	5
42. Actively support the use in the classroom of skills acquired during inservice training	1	2	3	4	5
43. Obtain the participation of the whole staff in important inservice activities	1	2	3	4	5
44. Lead or attend teacher inservice activities concerned with instruction	1	2	3	4	5
45. Set aside time at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from inservice activities	1	2	3	4	5
X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING					
46. Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter	1	2	3	4	5
47. Use assemblies to honor students for academic accomplishments or for behavior or citizenship	1	2	3	4	5
48. Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work	1	2	3	4	5
49. Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions accomplishments in class	1	2	3	4	5

50. Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and	1	2	3	4	5
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Appendix D: Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Elementary

Directions: The following are statements about your school, Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes your school.

OCDQ-RE	Rarely Occurs	Sometimes Occurs	Often Occurs	Very Frequently Occurs
1. The teachers accomplish their work with vim, vigor, and pleasure.				
2. Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school.				
3. Faculty meetings are useless.				
4. The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers				
5. The principal rules with an iron fist.				
6. Teachers leave school immediately after school is over.				
7. Teachers invite faculty members to visit them at home.				
8. There is a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority.				
9. The principal uses constructive criticism.				
10. The principal checks the sign-in sheet every morning.				
11. Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching.				
12. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues.				
13. Teachers know the family background of other faculty members.				
14. Teachers exert group pressure on non-conforming faculty members.				
15. The principal explains his/her reasons for criticism to teachers.				
16. The principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions.				
17. The principal schedules the work for the teachers.				
18. Teachers have too many committee requirements.				
19. Teachers help and support each other.				
20. Teachers have fun socializing together during school time.				
21. Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings.				
22. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of teachers.				
23. The principal treats teachers as equals.				
24. The principal corrects teachers' mistakes.				
25. Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.				
26. Teachers are proud of their school.				

-
27. Teachers have parties for each other.
-
28. The principal compliments teachers.
-
29. The principal is easy to understand.
-
30. The principal closely checks classroom (teacher) activities.
-
31. Clerical support reduces teachers' paperwork.
-
32. New teachers are readily accepted by colleagues.
-
33. Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis.
-
34. The principal supervises teachers closely.
-
35. The principal checks lesson plans.
-
36. Teachers are burdened with busy work.
-
37. Teachers socialize together in small, select groups.
-
38. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.
-
39. The principal is autocratic.
-
40. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.
-
41. The principal monitors everything teachers do.
-
42. The principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers.
-

Appendix E: Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire- Revised Middle School

Directions: The following are statements about your school, Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes your school.

	Rarely Occurs	Sometimes Occurs	Often Occurs	Very Frequently Occurs
1. The principal compliments teachers.				
2. Teachers have parties for each other.				
3. Teachers are burdened with busywork.				
4. Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching.				
5. Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students.				
6. Teachers are committed to helping their students.				
7. Teachers help students on their own time.				
8. Teachers interrupt other teachers who are talking in staff meetings.				
9. The principal rules with an iron fist.				
10. The principal encourages teacher autonomy.				
11. The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers.				
12. The principal is available after school to help teachers when assistance is needed.				
13. Teachers invite other faculty members to visit them at home.				
14. Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis.				
15. The principal uses constructive criticism.				
16. Teachers who have personal problems receive support from other staff members.				
17. Teachers stay after school to tutor students who need help.				
18. Teachers accept additional duties if students will benefit.				
19. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of the faculty.				
20. The principal supervises teachers closely.				
21. Teachers leave school immediately after school is over.				

-
22. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues.
-
23. Teachers exert group pressure on non-conforming faculty members.
-
24. The principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions.
-
25. Teachers have fun socializing together during school time.
-
26. Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings.
-
27. Teachers are rude to other staff members.
-
28. Teachers make "wise cracks" to each other during meetings.
-
29. Teachers mock teachers who are different.
-
30. Teachers don't listen to other teachers.
-
31. Teachers like to hear gossip about other staff members.
-
32. The principal treats teachers as equals.
-
33. The principal corrects teachers' mistakes.
-
34. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.
-
35. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.
-
36. The principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers.
-
37. The principal keeps a close check on sign-in times.
-
38. The principal monitors everything teachers do.
-
39. Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.
-
40. Teachers help and support each other.
-
41. The principal closely checks teacher activities.
-
42. Assigned non-teaching duties are excessive.
-
43. The interactions between team/unit members are cooperative.
-
44. The principal accepts and implements ideas suggested by faculty members.
-
45. Members of teams/units consider other members to be their friends.
-

46. Extra help is available to students who need help.

47. Teachers volunteer to sponsor after school activities.

48. Teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems.

49. The principal sets an example by working hard himself/herself.

50. Teachers are polite to one another.

Appendix F Supervisor Survey Questions

Principal's Supervisor Interview Questions School Culture

1. How does the character of the school, the culture and history of the school and the contextual barriers shape the actions of the principals?
2. How are they developing a shared mission and shared meaning among school staff regarding student learning and approaches to learning (meanings and a common language)?

Principal Leadership

1. What values, attitudes and dispositions do they hold and how do these shape their work and how they prioritize their efforts?

Values, Attitudes, Dispositions

1. What do they do to influence events and outcomes in the school?
2. How do principals approach their role of leadership considering the school's culture? To what extent are they adopting distributive leadership?
3. What strategies did they use to learn about the school? What problem-solving methods did they employ? How did they approach decision-making?

Appendix G: Instructional Leadership Team Interview Questions

School Culture

1. How does the character of the school, the culture and history of the school and the contextual barriers shape the actions of the principal?
2. How is the principal developing a shared mission and shared meaning among school staff regarding student learning and approaches to learning (meanings and a common language)?

Principal Leadership

1. What values, attitudes and dispositions does the principal hold and how do these shape her work and how she prioritizes her efforts?

Values, Attitudes, Dispositions

1. What does the leadership team do to influence events and outcomes in the school?
2. How does the principal approach her role of leadership considering the school's culture? To what extent does she adopt distributive leadership?
3. What strategies did the principal use to learn about the school? What problem-solving methods did she employ? How did she approach decision-making?

Appendix H Individual Principal 1st Interview Questions

School Culture

1. How did you assess the school's culture and history? What elements of the school's history did you find helpful in assessing the school's culture? What did you find interesting or most revealing elements from the school's historical narrative? What contextual barriers to turning the school around did you identify? How did these barrier shape your actions as the principals?
2. What is the mission and vision of the school? How are they realized in everyday life of the school?
3. How did you develop a shared mission and shared meaning among school staff regarding student learning and approaches to learning?

Values, Attitudes, Dispositions

1. What personal values do you hold? What do you stand for?
2. What is your philosophy regarding teaching and learning?
3. How do your values and educational philosophy influence events and outcomes in the school?

Day in the Life

1. What is a typical day for you? How do you spend your time? What are your activities?
2. What tasks do you attend to on a quarterly basis, semester or yearly basis?

Student learning

1. What student learning issues did you identify needed improvement? What evidence did you use to identify these issues?

2. What were or are challenges to achieving student learning and achievement goals? What changes in teacher practice do you think have made or will make a difference?

What are the barriers to changing teacher practice?

3. What supports and/or system changes will teachers need to make these changes successfully?

Principal Leadership

1. What approaches did you employ to address the barriers and the actions you employ to begin the transformation of the school. How do you use data sources to inform her/his actions?
2. When things did not go as expected, how did you determine what you needed to do differently? Give examples. What specifically did you do differently?
3. What problem-solving methods do they employ? How do you approach decision-making?
4. How did you foster a culture in which staff is focused on and reflective about instructional improvement for student results? How did you use her/his leadership voice to communicate and reinforce the school's mission and vision and school improvement goals?

Appendix I Principal 2nd Interview Questions
Student Achievement Data

1. Review school's AYP data from 2013 assessments and discuss your analysis of data. How do you interpret/evaluate these test scores?

School Improvement

1. Review improvement efforts from 2012-13
2. How effective were these strategies? What data/evidence have you gathered to determine effectiveness/ineffectiveness of these strategies?
3. What were supports for these strategies? What were barriers to them? Identify internal and external to the school.

Priorities

1. What new priorities are you establishing for the school?
2. What characteristics of your school need to be turned around?
3. What strategies are you developing to reach these priorities?
4. What changes need to occur at the school in terms of teacher practice, beliefs and/or structures?

District Support

1. What direction and support, if any have you received from your direct supervisor?
2. What is your retention rate of teachers? Any special strategies to retain them?