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Community Coalitions: Implications for Educational Policy and Administrators, A Study of
Anderson Elementary in the Anderson Weed and Seed Neighborhood

A dissertation
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor in Education

by
Mary A. Rausch
August 2005

Terrence A. Tollefson, Ph.D., Chair
Andrea D. Clements, Ph.D.
James Lampley, Ed.D.
Louise MacKay, Ph.D.

Keywords: Coalition, Collaborative, Community, Title I School, Weed and Seed

ABSTRACT

Community Coalitions: Implications for Educational Policy and Administrators, A Study of Anderson Elementary in the Anderson Weed and Seed Neighborhood

by

Mary A. Rausch

In 2001, the Anderson Neighborhood of Bristol, Tennessee, received official recognition as a Weed and Seed site by the United States Department of Justice. This designation is provided to a local coalition of committed community members organized to “weed” out the elements that contribute to crime and delinquency in a targeted neighborhood and “seed” in strategies to build strong neighborhoods. Anderson Elementary School is a key partner in the effort and the conduit for a variety of coalition initiatives.

Through investigation of measures and surveys administered at Anderson Elementary School, the study was designed to ascertain if there were improvements in quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance, discipline referrals, test scores, and grades) at Anderson Elementary after multiple strategies were implemented in the Anderson Neighborhood. Findings revealed that attendance improved in the first two years but then declined by end of the five-year period studied. Improvements were documented in the other three areas. In addition, this study focused upon the differences in improvements between the two populations attending school at Anderson: those residing within the Weed and Seed boundaries and those residing outside the designated area. Whereas Weed and Seed students performed below the nonWeed and Seed

students each year, the differences were reduced over the five-year period. A final analysis was conducted regarding comparisons to both Central and Fairmont Elementary schools in Bristol, Tennessee, the other two Title I schools in the system. Anderson showed the greatest improvement in the area of discipline whereas Central made the largest gains in tests scores and Fairmount was consistently higher in attendance.

Because so many variables can mitigate academic performance, faculty and staff members' perceptions regarding a variety of coalition efforts initiated through the Weed and Seed effort were measured by survey and analyzed. Educational professionals reported observing positive changes in community commitment and involvement. To further qualify successful strategies and required skill sets regarding leadership to build school partnerships with community coalitions, an indepth interview was conducted with the principal at Anderson Elementary School. The leadership themes documented in the interview were consistent with postmodern leadership theory.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the youth of the Anderson Neighborhood with great anticipation and firm conviction that they will continue to fulfill all their families' hopes and aspire to incredible dreams for who they are to be--may they be rooted deeply in their individual values, grow strong through their community's commitment, and contribute significantly to Bristol's future. To that end, may Bristol resolve to always keep its promise to its youth. As a community, may Bristol continue to find opportunities to work together while addressing every risk factor and enhancing any protective factor that promotes the healthy, happy, and full development of each Bristol youth.

Further, this work is dedicated to two extraordinary Bristol youths, Ellisa and Christen Rausch. They continue to inspire their family and many others by surpassing every hope and dreaming incredibly large.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This author must acknowledge the Anderson Neighborhood, including Anderson Elementary School, for their willingness to not only participate in this research but also participate in this community experiment called “Weed and Seed.” In particular, special acknowledgement is extended to the “champions” of the Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed effort: Deputy Police Chief Mike Yaniero and his “partner in crime-prevention” Anderson Elementary School's Principal, Dixie Bowen.

In addition, during the course of this research, the loss to cancer of our esteemed committee member and ELPA Department Chair, Dr. Russell West required additional effort for the remainder of this dissertation committee to see this project as well as others through to completion. Their commitment to all the ELPA students through this sad time in spite of their own grief is a reflection not only of their professionalism but also their compassion. They exhibited these qualities in tribute to their colleague, who had, in turn, made a practice of exemplifying them to us all.

Finally, special appreciation is extended to Rocky Rausch, who shares this author's passion for youth. In addition to practical contributions made to complete this study, his partnership in youth ministry over the years has significantly shaped this research. With anticipation, we now begin our next experiment in youth leadership and are ready, once again, to be transformed in the process.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Major Mike Yaniero, Deputy Chief of the Bristol, Tennessee, Police Department, drove through the Anderson Neighborhood once again surveying the area he knew inside and out. It was spring of 2001 and he had just spent the past 18 months combing over every detail of this area both at his computer and actually out in the neighborhood. During that time, he had identified the neighborhood's obstacles and assets on paper and in meetings. He had quantified and qualified the needs, as well as the possibilities, of this area to the rest of the community. He knew all the crime statistics, most of the residents' opinions, every abandoned building, several of the failed businesses, much of the school's situation, and many family stories. He also knew that the direction of the neighborhood should be changed and the recent designation by the United States Department of Justice of this area as an officially recognized Weed and Seed site in February provided the best opportunity (Community Capacity Development Office, 2004).

For months, Major Yaniero had invited other community stakeholders to create a coalition on behalf of the Anderson Neighborhood and submit an application to receive this designation. As he drove through the neighborhood yet again, he passed spaces crying out for attention and other places whose commitment had been key to the "Official Recognition" or "OR" strategy submitted for approval. The strategy included the four components required by the Department of Justice: law enforcement, community policing, neighborhood restoration, and prevention/intervention/ treatment programs. He had meticulously followed the guidelines from the executive office of Weed and Seed regarding what was necessary: a local coalition of committed community members organized to "weed" out the elements that contribute to crime and delinquency. This coalition was to simultaneously engage in strategies that are proven to "seed" in components that counteract crime through a variety of activities in each of those four

components. After having received “OR” status, these same participants must remain engaged as an application for funding was compiled. Despite the good news that the site had been designated, there was still considerable work to be done to maintain partner commitment to the coalition while preparing a financial application. Among the initial partners he identified in the area were several youth service organizations, businesses, and churches whose support and facilities had been committed for programmatic efforts in the neighborhood. Ready to move the process to the next level, he parked outside the school to attend a meeting involving perhaps the most critical partner of all in this coalition effort: Anderson Elementary School.

Major Yaniero had approached the principal at Anderson, Dixie Bowen, early in the process in the fall of 1999 knowing that the school’s participation would be a cornerstone piece in this coalition strategy. Relatively new to the principalship, Ms. Bowen had come to the position in February 1997 as an interim placement directly from the classroom and was later named to fill the position for the following school year. She was beginning her second full year as principal and was a recent graduate of the Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis master’s program at East Tennessee State University. She had attended local public schools and received her undergraduate teacher preparation locally at King College, which was also an initial partner in the project. Although native to the area, during her tenure as principal, she was learning much about the specific needs of the Anderson Neighborhood and Anderson Elementary School. In her childhood, this area had been a vibrant part of Bristol; now, she witnessed the adverse impact of the neighborhood’s deterioration on many of her students and their educational progress. At the same time, Major Yaniero, who was a strong advocate of placing school resource officers in the middle and high school, was aware of the research regarding the power of school partnerships to prevent crime and reclaim communities. He envisioned the school serving as a “safe haven” for the implementation of multiple prevention/intervention/treatment initiatives by concentrating the community’s attention and resources on the neighborhood. Likewise, Ms.

Bowen surmised that working together to combat crime and delinquency in her school's neighborhood could also produce positive academic results for her students.

On this day in 2001 as he entered Anderson Elementary School, Major Yaniero was bringing several exciting ideas to benefit the Anderson Neighborhood via the school serving as a primary conduit. He was aware from criminal justice research that building social capital was the crucial component in reclaiming a neighborhood from the ravages of crime (Lewis & Salem, 1985). The school was the ideal place to build that kind of social capital not only through student-centered prevention strategies designed to break patterns of delinquency in the neighborhood but also through engaging a broader segment of the neighborhood through parents' participation with the school. Although the school staff had a growing reputation of commitment to the students from this neighborhood and their particular needs, there was a history of low parent and community involvement in the school. This was particularly evident in a 1993 system-wide study of all the Bristol schools by the Educational Leadership Laboratory at East Tennessee State University that reported "parent, school, and community relationships" to be the only category of school climate rated below the national norms at Anderson Elementary School (Bartell et al., 1993).

Major Yaniero and his coalition partners were aware of this situation and had developed a host of possibilities designed to focus community awareness and resources on the neighborhood and the school. Most had not been implemented in Bristol before; a model of joint ownership, shared funding, and mutual decision-making was somewhat of a new paradigm in this small southern town where models of collaboration are more difficult to find than one might think. Bristol is already divided by the Tennessee-Virginia state line, thus, creating two city governments, two school systems, and two police departments. This particular collaborative effort did not require crossing state lines, but it did call for considerable cooperation between the Bristol City Schools, the Bristol Police Department, and Bristol Development and Leisure

Services; these systems all possessed their own sets of operating protocols and turf concerns. To complicate the process further, the strategy involved partners who functioned with more decentralized and less hierarchical structures: non-profit youth service organizations, churches, businesses, a local college, and most importantly, residents. This coalition building effort was no small task--it would involve personal risk-taking, resolution of turf issues, and a tolerance to forego control on the part of all participants. Ideas like a community policing office being housed in the elementary school, having King College students as tutors in the classroom, and developing programs with the Boys & Girls Club as an after-school "safe haven" opened up the campus for possibilities as well as problems. As Major Yaniero and Ms. Bowen met to solidify this partnership in 2001, this vision was merely the beginning of the ripple effect often associated with community coalition building.

Background of the Problem

Four years later, the Weed and Seed effort has been continuously and fully funded and is meeting all of its stated goals and annual benchmarks. Final analysis of project outcomes will be compiled at the end of the five-year recognition and funding period whereas benchmarking is ongoing through regular six-month reports. At this point, projected outcomes regarding crime and delinquency through strategies in the four areas (law enforcement, community policing, neighborhood restoration, and prevention/intervention/treatment) appear to be on target and the project is documenting many new initiatives in all four of the areas. In addition to measurable improvements in each of the four areas, it has been speculated by coalition members including the principal at Anderson that these multiple efforts are also positively associated with measures of academic progress as well. However, because the goals of the Weed and Seed effort are directly tied to crime, no specific measures of educational outcomes were included in the original project. Investigation of whether there is an improvement in measures related to academic

achievement is needed to verify whether improvements indeed exist. Of particular concern is whether these efforts have produced improvements for those Anderson students who reside within the Weed and Seed area boundaries.

In an educational era with the goal to “leave no child behind,” educational leaders must consider every possibility that could contribute to students' success. One of the primary concerns with the recent *No Child Left Behind* legislation is connected to the variety of variables that impact educational achievement. Educators are wary of being held accountable for producing educational results that can be so highly impacted by variables outside the direct control of the educational environment. Consequently, many pro-active educational policy makers are considering partnerships that can extend their schools' influence to address the myriad of components contributing to educational success including the role of community coalition efforts. Regardless of the future of the *No Child Left Behind* initiative and the specific objections to the requirements, the reality is that committed educators are ethically burdened to seek solutions that serve every child, particularly those at-risk. In neighborhoods like Anderson's, with a number of identified risk factors and few protective factors, there is considerable motivation for educational leaders to solicit as many resources and solutions as possible. Additionally, if community coalition strategies demonstrate potential for contributing to academic improvements, those educational leaders looking for new paradigms to foster student achievement should also reflect upon their own leadership roles, both in their schools and in community coalitions, to foster these collaborative efforts on behalf of their students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if there are differences in quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance, discipline referrals, and improved test scores and

grades) at Anderson Elementary School after multiple strategies were employed to address crime and delinquency through the Weed and Seed Project that began in 2001 in Bristol, Tennessee.

Although all of the Weed and Seed area is included in the Anderson School District, not all of the Anderson School District is included in the Weed and Seed area. Some students attending Anderson live in a higher economic area adjacent to the Weed and Seed site. From an educational policy perspective, it would be helpful to quantify any difference in rates of improvements for students in the two populations attending school at Anderson: those residing within the Weed and Seed boundaries and those residing outside the designated area. Often, students residing in areas receiving a Weed and Seed designation have additional barriers to academic success such as lower household income levels, more transience, and lower levels of educational attainment as is evidenced by the demographic data available for the Anderson Neighborhood from the Weed and Seed Data Center (2005). Because the coalition strategies target the identified needs of the Weed and Seed area, it became important to investigate any changes in educational achievement for that population as well as any changes for the school overall.

In addition, an analysis of data was conducted from similar schools in Bristol that were not currently participating in a strategic community coalition effort such as Weed and Seed. Comparisons were made to both Central and Fairmount Elementary schools in Bristol, Tennessee; both areas are designated for inclusion in the next potential Weed and Seed site for Bristol. These three schools (Anderson, Central, and Fairmount) are classified as Title I schools in Bristol, Tennessee, having more than half of their student bodies categorized as economically disadvantaged. Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965 provides funding to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students. According to the Department of Education's web site regarding Title I, the purpose of this Title is to "ensure that all children have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a quality education and reach, at

minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic standards and state academic assessments" (Office of Secondary and Elementary Education, 2005).

As Title I schools, both Central and Fairmont Elementary are in neighborhoods that are similar to Anderson's; however, they have not yet organized community coalitions specifically focused upon actively addressing their neighborhoods' needs. No neighborhood coalition effort exists in these areas as extensive as Weed and Seed although both schools do benefit from a coalition-sponsored mentoring initiative that actually originated with the Weed and Seed strategy that was purposefully designed to reduce substance abuse and delinquency.

An additional purpose of this study was to use qualitative methods to investigate professional perceptions of coalition efforts at Anderson Elementary School. National data and local anecdotal evidence are available regarding educators' assessments as to the impact of coalition efforts on students' achievement. To expand the analysis of the quantitative student data, this study included a survey to gather and evaluate feedback from the faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary School. Because so many variables can mitigate academic performance, faculty and staff members' perceptions regarding a variety of coalition efforts initiated through the Weed and Seed Project were evaluated. As educational professionals, their observations of these strategies and reflections of changes at the school because the implementation of these initiatives could add value to the study. In addition, educators' perceptions regarding the leadership strategies necessary for schools to partner effectively with community coalitions were investigated. To further qualify successful strategies and required skill sets regarding leadership to build school partnerships with community coalitions, an indepth interview was conducted with the principal at Anderson Elementary School.

Research Questions

The following research questions served as the focal point of the study:

1. Have quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance rates, number of discipline referrals, test scores, and grades) at Anderson Elementary School improved after multiple strategies were employed to address crime and delinquency through the Weed and Seed Project of Bristol, Tennessee, begun in 2001?
2. Are there differences in those educational success measures between the two subpopulations within Anderson Elementary School: those living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those living outside the boundaries of the Weed and Seed area?
3. If there are improvements in the measures above, how do those improvements compare to similar elementary schools in the system, i.e. Central and Fairmount Elementary schools?
4. What is the perceived impact of Weed and Seed initiated coalition efforts by faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary?
5. What are the most useful leadership strategies and skills to cultivate when building effective school partnerships with community coalitions?

Significance of the Study

As Anderson Elementary along with all of the nation's schools is challenged to "leave no child behind" by the United States Department of Education, educational leaders must consider a variety of strategies to address the complex intervening variables that influence a student's academic success. For students residing in high crime areas, such as the Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed area of Bristol, exposure to the fear and disorder associated with crime and delinquency including substance abuse and domestic violence can certainly be a mitigating factor

affecting academic success (Huizinga, Loeber, & Thornberry, 1994). In addition, Weed and Seed sites typically have other demographics associated with low academic achievement such as low-income levels and low educational attainment (Lewis & Maxwell, 1980). In the behavioral sciences, the cyclical nature of all these factors exacerbates risks and makes it difficult to ascertain causal relationships. To address this overlap of risk factors on a national level, several governmental departments such as the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services are beginning to work collaboratively on programs as a model to encourage local entities to do the same. These departments are pooling resources to fund programs that address the interaction of these factors by encouraging the use of prevention models that can be implemented across disciplines through coalitions at the local level (Watts-Davis, 2004). Using a systems theory approach without being tied to a direct cause-and-effect model, the idea is to impact as many variables as possible associated with school success by implementing multiple strategies through multiple sectors. At the national level, the goal is to build community coalitions to reach desired outcomes in a variety of areas affecting justice, educational, and human services concerns. This national trend, along with that of increased accountability in education, creates an environment rich in possibilities for educational leaders to leverage support through partnerships with community coalitions. Nevertheless, the question of whether or not these types of prevention activities are related to improved academic performance remains to be demonstrated locally.

With this national trend in mind at the local level, this researcher investigated whether there are improvements in academic measures after community coalition strategies have been focused upon Anderson Elementary School through the Weed and Seed Project. The results of this study will be reported for the final evaluation of the Anderson Weed and Seed Project. Of particular concern were improvements for those students residing within the targeted Weed and Seed site so that the two subgroups within Anderson Elementary School could be compared.

Additionally, using comparison with similar schools might have implications for educational leaders to explore the possibility of community coalition building to enhance academic achievement at other schools in the Bristol area. With the potential for an expanded Weed and Seed site in Bristol at the end of the five-year designation period, this study could be significant as other schools such as Central and Fairmount Elementary anticipate possible participation with Weed and Seed and other coalition partnerships. These partnerships might not only provide support to address mitigating variables related to academic achievement at particular schools but they could also assist schools in leveraging additional resources both from entities within the community as well as those external sources that require the demonstration of an active interdisciplinary coalition for funding.

Even though the data from Anderson Elementary School cannot be generalized to other schools, the investigation of educators' perceptions might prove useful to other schools considering partnerships with community coalitions. In addition, the implications for leadership were explored through an indepth perspective of one principal's experience; this could assist other educational leaders in developing strategies and skills to partner effectively with their communities. The study's significance was the analysis of the community coalition partnership with Anderson Elementary School; perhaps the findings could have potential implications regarding future coalition efforts also focused at Anderson Elementary or at schools facing similar issues.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the population at Anderson Elementary School in the Weed and Seed designated area of Bristol, Tennessee, and any generalization regarding the quantitative data is not appropriate. However, through the qualitative analysis, implications for educational

leaders regarding partnerships with community coalitions could be considered in the context in which they are offered particularly for communities of similar demographics.

Definitions of Terms

1. *Community Coalition*--An alliance of community members who maintain their own autonomy and gather for the purpose of coordinating efforts and combining resources to reach a common goal. For a community coalition, the goal is centered upon impacting change that is based upon an identified community need or concern (National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute, 2004).
2. *Full Service Community School*--A school with a broadened mission and vision to meet the needs of all of its students by using the school facility to offer a full range of student services. The school operates as a community-owned facility and offers programs primarily in the after-school hours, using a collaborative partnership model and a systems approach to prevention (Dryfoos, 1999).
3. *Safe Haven*--a neighborhood location provided to youth offering supervised, safe, structured activities during nonschool hours and also serving as a community “hub” for other community resources (Community Capacity Development Office, 2004).
4. *Title I School*--A school eligible for federal funding because of the economic status of its student body through the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965 for the purpose of improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged. Currently, schools having a poverty rate of 40% or more are eligible (Office of Secondary and Elementary Education, 2005).
5. *Weed and Seed*--A strategy administered by the United States Department of Justice in over 300 designated neighborhoods across the country in which a community coalition commits to “weed” out the elements that contribute to crime and

delinquency in the targeted area and “seed” in components that counteract crime through activities in four areas: law enforcement, community policing, neighborhood restoration, and prevention/intervention/treatment (Community Capacity Development Office).

6. *Transience*—The degree of mobility and frequency of transitions experienced by students. Higher rates of transitions and mobility constitute risk factors that are correlated with increased risk of drug and crime and lower levels of academic achievement. The more people in a community move, the greater is the risk of both criminal behavior and drug-related problems in families. (Communities That Care® Youth Survey, 2004).

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 includes the background of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, definitions of terms, and an overview of the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature encompassing three primary areas: community coalitions, educational partnerships, and leadership. Chapter 3 describes the methods and procedures used in this mixed-methods study including a description of the population, the research design, instruments used to collect the data, and how the data were analyzed. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research and the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study with conclusions, recommendations, and implications.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Community coalitions and American education have enjoyed a long courtship. As early as a century ago, John Dewey espoused the virtues of strengthening the relationship between community and education calling for "closer ties between the academy and the larger community" in order to sustain a healthy democracy (as cited in Halliburton, 1997, p. 24). Halliburton noted that the change of the centuries both in Dewey's day and later produced similar circumstances that challenged education. Halliburton pointed out, "The hungry and homeless challenge social resources, crime and poverty plague overcrowded cities, and school systems struggle to provide the education children need to survive" (p. 24). Although their interest in one another remains strong and constant, the reluctance to commit, more often than not, has kept communities and schools from uniting their efforts. As in any relationship, commitment involves navigation through crucial issues including personal risk-taking, resolution of turf issues, and a tolerance for a shared leadership model with the ability to forego a degree of control. Perhaps the crises facing both communities and education in this new millennium have forced some to reprioritize, trust one another, and to make the commitment for better or for worse. A survey reported by Hutchinson (2001) noted that in America, the community is "most likely to be motivated to take action for public education when there is a crisis, such as a shooting or a threatened take-over in their schools or serious funding cuts" (p. 3). However, only half of Americans said they were involved in improving education and only 22% said someone in their community was taking a great deal of responsibility for education. Because of these growing crises, some communities and schools are beginning to risk partnership commitments and there is emerging research regarding the results. Community coalitions, educational

partnerships, and the leadership strategies to mediate the two are beginning to emerge in the literature. To examine community coalitions and educational partnership possibilities more clearly along with the unique leadership roles they require, this literature review is organized into three sections: Community Coalitions, Educational Partnerships, and Leadership.

Community Coalitions

The powerful force of community has been involved in shaping society since the beginning of human relationships and in America, commitment to the democratic ideal tends to cause one to favor public involvement. In the political arena, civic advocacy often emerges as groups band together to influence policy decisions. Although community coalitions are also seeking social change, the targets of community coalitions are not policy makers or the political apparatus although these may be affected sometimes by coalitions' efforts. Instead, community coalitions target a change in the community that is based upon identified need and agreed upon by the members. These members represent stakeholders in the community who maintain their own autonomy. At the same time, they combine their efforts and resources in partnerships to produce change that accomplishes a mutually agreed upon goal that likely could not be accomplished by any one member alone.

Consequently, community coalitions can take a variety of forms gathered around a mixture of interests and mutual goals. Some community coalitions are long standing, others are short-term commitments that disband once objectives are met. Coalitions may be initiated as a “grass-roots” effort from the bottom-up or they may be initiated from the top-down as in many agency-based initiatives (Florin & Chavis, 1990). The study of community coalition development is emerging and “Although community members have learned much about the coalition building process, the success rate is mixed and the track record of their successes and failures is largely unwritten and thus not widely known” (Wolff, 2001, p. 173). Several

researchers are beginning to construct designs to investigate models of community coalitions, coalition building theory, best practices, and to measure the factors influencing successful coalitions. Boles (1995) developed a *Coalition Building Survey* to use in her research of four alcohol and drug prevention coalitions to measure the following variables: leadership, goals, roles and responsibilities, procedures, decision-making, assessment of needs, inviting participation, resources, and communication. Later, Wolff identified nine key dimensions related to coalition success and best practices: coalition readiness, intentionality, structure and organizational capacity, taking action, membership, leadership, dollars and resources, relationships, and technical assistance. Not surprisingly, the common component of coalition success highlighted throughout the literature was leadership. Mizrahi and Rosenthal (2001) documented that competent leadership was most often identified with coalition success.

Community coalitions can form around any issue about which a group desires to mobilize for change. In the literature regarding coalitions, it appeared there were as many community coalitions as there were community issues. As a result of the newly formed White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI), many coalitions addressing a variety of concerns were purposely inviting faith-based partners to participate (Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, 2004). Currently, each of five major departments in the federal government has a representative from the OFBCI to assist with the inclusion of these partners at the local level. These departments include Justice, Education, Health and Human Services, Labor and Housing, and Urban Development. According to Chaves (1999), the executive order establishing the OFBCI in 2001 had as its goal to support the work of the nation's armies of compassion and to enlist, equip, enable, empower, and expand their efforts; this includes civic, social, charitable, and religious groups. Documentation of faith-based efforts and their effectiveness are occurring more frequently in the literature (Chaves).

One nationwide community mobilization effort on behalf of youth has used a local grass-roots model combined with support from the national level. “America’s Promise” was begun by retired General Colin Powell (America's Promise, 2004). As the founding chairperson, Powell convened a Presidential Summit in 1997 in Philadelphia of all the previous living presidents and Mrs. Ronald Reagan. Their staff members had compiled research to determine where the collaborative leadership of so many previous presidents could focus best to impact America for the new millennium. It was determined that an asset-building approach to youth development was needed to mobilize America’s communities to serve youth. A Presidential Proclamation (see Appendix C) was signed challenging the nation’s communities to “pull together” to provide increased access to all youth and five promise areas were identified:

1. ongoing relationships with caring adults/mentors,
2. safe places and structured activities during nonschool hours,
3. a healthy start and future,
4. effective educations leading to marketable skills, and
5. opportunities to give back through service. (p. 1)

These five fundamental areas were distilled from 40 developmental assets outlined by the Search Institute following years of youth development research (Benson & Walker, 1998). Additional research has indicated that increased access to the five promises reduces a variety of health-compromising behaviors including alcohol and drug use and delinquency (Benson & Leffert, 1998). The importance of providing youth access to the fundamental resources in America’s Promise is related to the development of the social capital needed for healthy development. Sipe (1998) professed that for the most vulnerable youth, deficiencies in these areas not only do not correct themselves over time but also actually increase as youth grow older. Therefore, America’s Promise encourages community coalitions to develop strategies that focus attention and resources on creating increased access to these five areas. Although America’s

Promise provides no direct funding for local coalitions, the national organization does offer considerable technical support, staff consultation, networking opportunities, and capacity building strategies to equip community coalitions to mobilize local support on behalf of youth. Recent research regarding the use of the America's Promise framework has been conducted by the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management ("Study's Findings Support America's Promise Model," 2005). Initial findings indicated that the framework has proven useful in the following areas:

1. providing a strong organizing framework for goal-setting, planning, action, and outreach;
2. expanding the number of promises being delivered to youth in communities;
3. influencing the establishment of new collaborative programs in the community;
4. mobilizing volunteers at the community-wide level; and
5. inspiring, encouraging, and energizing community initiatives. (p. 1)

The America's Promise model has been applied in the Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed site as part of the coalition efforts addressed in this study. In addition, Bristol's Promise: Youth Networking Alliance, a city-wide coalition of youth service entities, also supports the local Weed and Seed coalition efforts (Bristol's Promise, 2004). The Weed and Seed mentoring initiative that began at Anderson Elementary School was built upon the five promises research of America's Promise (2004) and has since been replicated through another Department of Justice grant, the Drug Free Communities Program, thereby leveraging additional support for youth at Anderson Elementary as well as the other schools in Bristol. The Drug Free Communities program clearly exemplifies two of the coalition trends documented in the literature. First, it is a collaborative effort modeled at the federal level and administered by both the Department of Justice and the White House Office on National Drug Control Policy in an effort to coordinate program delivery through an integrated systems approach (Watts-Davis,

2004). Second, a local community is required to have a functioning community coalition to qualify for Drug Free Communities' funding with membership representation from multiple sectors providing leadership for multiple strategies (Abramson & Rosenthal, 1995). The Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed Strategy, Bristol's Promise, and the Bristol Drug Free Coalition are three local coalitions receiving support from the national level to enhance efforts. All three are composed of representation from multiple community sectors and have leveraged resources to address issues in the Anderson Neighborhood and at Anderson Elementary School.

From a national perspective, the field of substance abuse has been key in promoting community-based coalition models to implement prevention, intervention, and treatment initiatives. As early as 1990, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, a division of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, that in turn is an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was among the first to challenge communities to develop coalitions to address and receive funding for substance abuse prevention (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, 2004). Since that time, there has been multiple evaluation strategies employed to assess the effectiveness of these efforts. The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America has partnered with these government agencies in an effort to support these local coalitions by funding training opportunities and promoting research regarding the effectiveness of community coalitions in the prevention of substance abuse. Solon, Gupta, Gaugler, and Gabriel (1997) in their study summarized seven years of prevention partnership through the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention coalitions, reported the challenge of effectively evaluating indicators of local substance abuse problems and cautioned that community indicators of substance abuse must be interpreted with care. Although the theory and research associated with community coalitions is relatively new, there is evidence that community coalitions are emerging with greater frequency and becoming more sophisticated in evaluation planning (Wolff, 2001). From the initial work in the field of substance abuse, there is

a growing effort to substantiate the potential of coalitions to address a variety of concerns. From the trends in the literature, it is not difficult to foresee that the issues around which communities may create coalitions will continue to overlap and expand. However, for the purposes of this study, the literature pertaining to community coalition partnerships with education was more closely reviewed.

Educational Partnerships

There was an interesting chronological phenomenon evident in the literature regarding educational partnerships and community collaboration in that there was relatively little documentation prior to 1995 and an increasing proliferation of material since the new millennium. This surge of interest and literature was not particularly surprising in light of the other trends already reviewed and could be understood in terms of related forces. For example, the complexity of overlapping variables that affect youth development and academic achievement requires solutions that are more complex. Other interacting trends already noted include the societal demand for educational accountability that is also occurring simultaneously with the restriction of resources available because of post-9/11 economic trends. Lunenburg and Irby (2002) documented the “positive impact of research into the benefits of family and community involvement on national educational policies over the past decade” (p. 39). The literature revealed linkages between schools and communities at all levels from preschool through higher education. Epstein and Sanders' (2000) model indicated the need for partnerships based upon “overlapping spheres of influence” regarding the needs of youth and called for “specialized study of policy issues pertinent to these linkages” (p. 289). Several articles provided overviews of educational partnership practices and trends and generally called for more community partnerships. Some included professional reviews of best practices and advocacy for particular models. Most were studies regarding the effectiveness of particular partnership

initiatives implemented in a specific setting. As background for this study, it was helpful to review several of these best practices, promising models, and specific initiatives focusing on those most relevant to the neighborhood's population.

Much of the research documented the need facing educators today regarding the barriers to students' success and the call for reform. The title of Banathy's (2001) article summed up the tone: "We Enter the Twenty-First Century With Schooling Designed for the Nineteenth." From a systems design perspective, Banathy advocated for a paradigm shift from a version of education created in the industrial age with the tendency "to act autonomously, separated from other societal systems" to a system responsive to the information age characterized by "integration with other social and human service systems as a comprehensive system of learning and human development" (p. 287). This call for educators to think systemically and proactively regarding partnerships was a reoccurring theme throughout the literature. For example, the Grand Rapids Educational Reform Initiative created the *Straight A Plan for Educational Reform* (2003) documenting five necessary components that cleverly all began with the letter "A"--the first was "Alliance" focusing on community responsibility for successful education. One assessment categorized community involvement in schools in four categories: business, university, service learning, and school-linked service integration and advocated for increased community participation to create positive outcomes for both students and the community (Sanders, 2003). A recent monograph included authors whose names are recognizable after reviewing related literature and presented strategies for "creating the school as the hub for school-linked services and providing opportunities for students to connect with the community" (Hiatt-Michael, 2003, p. 1).

This trend to forge educational partnerships with communities is not limited to the United States but has also occurred in several other countries according to the literature. Research regarding collaborative partnerships in schools across Scotland through three case studies

envisioned the school at the center of a complex web of relationships between the school and community (Martin, Tett, & Kay, 1999). Another study in Canada documented the role of community collaboration in inspiring gifted-but-bored students for academic engagement (Matthews & Menna, 2003). Similar to recent collaborative trends among U.S. governmental departments, Australia used a whole-of-government approach to enable different agencies to work together to integrate service delivery and created a program specifically designed to enhance community capacity building through educational partnerships (McGinty, 2002).

The role of community coalitions in helping schools more effectively identify and address multiple factors that can impact education was also documented in the literature. One study of school districts along the United States and Mexico's border reviewed the topic of educators attempting to address the impact of poverty and poor health on students' readiness to learn (Lee-Bayha & Harrison, 2002). This team of researchers made the point, "If schools were to respond successfully to increased accountability requirements, they must find ways to address noncognitive factors that can impede student learning" (p. 6). The researchers found that these school districts had created a variety of community partnerships with human service agencies that allowed them to combine resources and expertise from multiple agencies across districts. In dealing with homeless students in Charlotte, North Carolina, it was found that the needs of the youth could not be fully served in a separate transitional classroom but it was demonstrated that interagency collaborative efforts from across the community were necessary to effectively serve this population (Yon & Mickelson, 2000). In another study, researchers conducted an evaluation of a school partnership with community-based organizations providing services to at-risk youth in a large urban school district. This study analyzed both cognitive and noncognitive school indicators and documented small, but favorable effects on attendance, tardiness, and discipline measures in addition to finding that higher doses of intervention were associated with positive effects on noncognitive measures (Neace, Munoz, Weber, & Johnson, 2002). Citizens in Dallas,

Texas, have established Youth and Family Centers to offer services for “personal, physical, and mental health problems because the school administrators reported that classroom problems and academic failure can be attributed to these problems” (Bush & Wilson, 1997, p. 38). In Maryland, “Data from 82 urban elementary schools indicate that the degree to which schools are working to overcome challenges to family through community involvement predicted higher percentages of students scoring at or above a satisfactory level on state achievement tests” (Sheldon, 2003, p. 165). Consequently, the literature revealed associations between community partnerships and academic achievement with regard to a variety of variables including both academic measures of achievement as well as other factors that are associated with academic success.

Evidence of associations between broad spectrums of educationally related issues was also evident in the literature. For example, it was found that community involvement was associated with school readiness. In Wisconsin, community partners were engaged to assist with public awareness campaigns regarding the importance of early education both for promoting life-long learning benefits for children and for impacting the communities in which they live (Landsverk, 2003). A similar approach was documented in North Carolina and was outlined in a guide for building successful community collaborations to promote school readiness (Brown, 2003). Yet another model for early childhood development espoused the development of a network of community partners for facilitating effective early intervention (Wirtz & Schumacher, 2003). Literacy programs also documented the importance of community collaboration to implement successful strategies to target, recruit, and address identified community needs related to literacy (Reeder & Sowers, 2002). In California, work is being done to support community collaboration regarding the delivery of mental health services in schools (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2003) and addressed the nationwide trend by reporting:

Across the country, groups of people who often haven't worked together previously are combining their talents and resources to improve outcomes for children and youth by forming groups called collaboratives. (p. A)

Related to the delivery of mental-health services in schools is the area of substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment. This field lends itself particularly well to community partnerships with education based on the obvious complexity of the problem with its overlapping implications. Educational leaders understand that schools need a community approach to address substance abuse. The impact of substance abuse upon educational outcomes for youth has been well documented (Adelman & Taylor, 2003). Because of the pervasiveness and invasiveness of the problem, this is an area in which partnerships among schools, law enforcement agencies, juvenile courts, and treatment professionals have been developed across the nation. Community coalitions are excellent vehicles to bring invested leadership, critical expertise, and needed resources to establish sustainability in a community's campaign against substance abuse and for improved educational outcomes.

The literature also included information on school and community partnerships to address character education and service-learning endeavors and noted that community partners can provide programs as well as venues to serve (Sudeck, Dinovi, Gehringer, Tonia, & Wuillermin, 2003). Higher education institutions employing service learning in their curriculums also make excellent community partners with schools by providing college students who can apply what they are learning while serving as effective role models often augmenting resources and program delivery (Lindsey, 2003). Educators at Minnesota State University developed an after-school mentoring program targeting low-income youth in the community surrounding the campus with positive outcomes for both the college students and the community youth (Grineski, 2003).

Some communities have documented educational and community partnership efforts around economic issues as in the case of the Central Educational Center in Newnan, Georgia (MacAllum & Johnson, 2002). This coalition model included a large number of business owners and managers along with educators, college administrators, and other community members to create partnerships for work-based learning experiences through internships. The authors reported the coalition has helped mobilize economic development in their county by facilitating job training and placement in conjunction with the technical school. Whereas some educational coalitions form around specific issues, others have been convened to address the needs of a particular school as in the case of one middle school attempting to address concerns pertaining to program satisfaction (Williamson & McElrath, 2003). For this school, the district developed a community partnership involving a local university that created multiple strategies to reduce tensions by addressing the concerns identified. This community partnership model of addressing concerns and expanding resources has been replicated in other middle schools as well (Clark & Clark, 2003). As demonstrated by the variety of issues in the literature associated with coalitions, community partnerships bring in a broad range of expertise and experiences allowing new solutions to be constructed to address a broad spectrum of educational concerns.

After-school programs have been the earliest and most significant intersection of school and community partnerships. The literature revealed varied structures and approaches for these types of initiatives each uniquely defined by the venue in which they developed. They ranged from simple extended daycare operations providing care for school-aged children from after school until the end of the typical workday to more extensive operations providing a variety of programs and services. Educational leaders are aware that many youth leave school and enter neighborhood or home situations where much of the progress of the school day can be undone.

Regarding those students who do possess a healthy support system outside of school, a great number of them are often unsupervised in the period directly after school until parents complete work. The results of this unsupervised time is well documented in criminal justice research as the time of greatest youth involvement in delinquent activity (Blumstein, 1995). Not only does this behavior produce legal consequences for youth, but it also distracts from their commitment to secure a quality education. Educators have understood the potential for after-school programs to support academic gains (Fletcher & Padover, 2003). There has been a rapid expansion recently in after-school programs to address the need and increased support for educational leaders in developing quality programs (Noam, 2003). Based on their practical experience and a case study of their own program, two administrators at a California elementary school identified eight elements that should be included when planning an extended-day program and listed community participation as critical (Owens & Vallercomp, 2003). Another study documented that after-school programs can serve a variety of objectives including child care, youth development, and educational programs that can simultaneously serve the interest of the public, the schools, and law enforcement agencies (Reinhart, 2003).

Because of the youth development issues that are presented to educators through practical experience as well as documented in the literature, after-school programs have become the venue of choice to provide a broad range of prevention and intervention strategies. Because of the complex variables that impact educational achievement, the demand for increased accountability in education, a reduction in available resources, and some recent success of community coalitions, after-school time has become a valuable prevention and intervention time in the lives of youth. Strategies from tutoring and mentoring to substance abuse and nutrition classes are being added to the childcare component of extended-day programs. Within the past few years, after-school programs have begun to undergo a transformation and one researcher's name

continues to be at the forefront of the literature. Dryfoos (1999) presented her view in an article regarding the importance of after school programs:

As a primary community institution in the lives of children, schools have much to contribute to plans for addressing the needs of today's youngsters during time when classes are not being held. In recent years, demands have escalated for after-school childcare, educational enrichment, and safe havens that foster positive youth development. Many programs that respond to those needs are housed in school buildings. Some are operated by schools, some by community-based organizations, and others by partnerships between schools and outside groups. (p. 117)

From a background of health education, Dryfoos' (1996) connections with schools began with her investigation of school-based clinics through support from the Rockefeller Foundation. As she traveled, she learned of the full-service schools program in Florida that began in 1991 under then-Governor Lawton Chiles. This legislation required the collaboration of health departments and schools to work together to serve high-risk students in need of medical and social services in an easily accessible location (Dryfoos, 1996). Then, she studied two new middle schools that were implementing a community school model one in New York City and another in Modesto, California, and she identified "governance and turf issues, lack of continuity, public controversy, and funding" as possible barriers to success (Dryfoos, 1996, p. 18.). After much travel, research, and documentation, by 1998, she concluded that the fields of education and youth development needed to be united in their efforts (Dryfoos, 1999). At the same time, the Institute of Educational Leadership in Washington, DC committed a staff member to help launch the Coalition of Community Schools. According to the organization's website, as part of the Educational Leadership Institute one of the goals of this national coalition is to "conduct research about community schools that demonstrates its effectiveness and explores the tough challenges involved in creating and sustaining community schools" (Coalition for Community Schools, 2004, n. p.). Community school outcomes on students' learning and achievement, youth development, family well-being, and community life have been compiled and reported through

the Coalition of Community Schools on their website in an article by Blank, Melaville, and Shah (2003):

Charles Drew Elementary School in Philadelphia showed more improvement on the state's standardized reading and math tests in 1999 than any other school in the state. Hampton Year Round School in Greensboro, NC was awarded state "Exemplary School" status for increased test scores from 1997 to 1998 in reading, math and writing. St. Louis Park, MN have demonstrated an increase in Youth Developmental Assets as measured by the Search Institute Survey from the 50th percentile nationally to the 85th percentile. Principals reported less vandalism, increased parent involvement, better teaching practices, and improved public relations with the community due to expanded services in the schools. (n. p.)

Nevertheless, the literature suggested that the process of evaluating community schools was still being evaluated itself. There are many questions about what constitutes effectiveness and how to appropriately measure it. To further complicate matters, each project differs in the types of programs offered and its objectives; therefore, it is difficult to compile consistent data across programs. In her research, Dryfoos (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002) reviewed 49 different community school programs, all with unique programs employing varied indicators to measure academic success. She found that 36 of the 49 schools reported academic gains, primarily in reading and math, but stated that further uniform data would provide a more meaningful picture. Kronick (2002) stated that the problem of turnover rates attributed to high levels of transience at the types of schools where community schools are implemented also seriously complicated effective evaluation. The Molly Stark School in Bennington, Vermont, was used by Dryfoos and Maguire as a case study to evaluate effectiveness. Maguire, the principal at Molly Stark, reported increased test scores for fourth-grade students in percentage points gained from 1997 through 2001 after becoming a community school. In spite of being a Title I school, the gains were higher than the averages for both the district and the state in every category except one.

To answer the question, "What might a community school look like?" the literature indicated that each one must be individually tailored for the community, school, families, and

area they are to serve, therefore, there is no set formula or design (Kronick, 2002). However, Dryfoos and Maguire (2002) provided three descriptive paragraphs to provide a picture of the ideal community school:

A community school, operating in a public school building, is opened to students, families, and community, before during and after school, seven days a week, all year long. It is jointly operated through a partnership between the school system and one or more community agencies. Families, youth, principals, teachers, and neighborhood residents help to design and implement activities that promote high educational achievement and positive youth development.

The school is oriented toward the community, encouraging student learning through community service and service learning. A before- and after-school experience encourages students to build on their classroom experiences, expand their horizons, contribute to their community, and have fun. A family support center helps families with child rearing, employment, housing, immigration, and other issues. Medical, dental, and mental health services are readily available. College faculty and students, business people, youth workers, neighbors, and family members come together to support and bolster what schools are working hard to accomplish--ensuring young people's academic, interpersonal, and career success.

Ideally, a full-time community school coordinator works in partnership with the principal. The coordinator is a member of the school's management team and is responsible for administering the services brought into the school by community agencies. Over time, most schools consciously try to integrate activities in several areas to achieve desired results: quality education, positive youth development, family support, family and community engagement in decision-making, and community development. In this process, the school emerges as the community hub, a one-stop center to meet diverse needs and achieve the best possible outcomes for each child. (p. 4)

In order to provide a Northeast Tennessee perspective, Kronick's (2002) work with community schools in Knoxville, Tennessee, was reviewed more thoroughly. As a professor in educational psychology at the University of Tennessee, Kronick has engaged his students in service-learning projects that have helped establish three community schools in Knoxville--all of which are Title I schools--those that are eligible for federal assistance based on the high percentage of students at or below the poverty level. This provides a regional example of a trend across the nation of universities partnering with schools to develop full service community schools particularly in urban settings (Bepko & Payne, 2002). Kronick identified key steps in

starting a full-service community school and as evident in other literature, he also identified the critical importance of collaboration as the foundational step. He also provided some helpful information regarding the use of political pressure in creating climates that are open to community schools by citing his experience when invited to the State Capitol to discuss community schools with school superintendents from across the state. His observation was that the pressing concern regarding state budget issues left the superintendents little time to consider new, unmandated initiatives in spite of the potential leveraged resources that could result. The author concluded that perhaps the preferred point of initiation for community schools would be the “bottom-up” rather than “top-down” model. This has been substantiated by experience in Knoxville, where three community schools were begun with community and local school leadership rather than by school superintendents.

The literature suggested that although educational partnerships were not necessarily a new concept, they were taking on different forms in the new millennium. They appeared as diverse in structure and operation as are communities and were growing in number and influence. This diversity makes evaluation of their effectiveness challenging; nevertheless, professionals in the field are collaborating to refine that process. Of all the varied models, the full service community school concept appears to be the most comprehensive effort and is being successfully implemented in a number of Title I schools.

Leadership

An undeniable theme in the literature review of both community coalitions and educational partnerships was that of leadership. Effective leadership, whether exercised in community or school settings or more likely in “overlapping spheres of influence,” depends on personality traits, skill development, and group dynamics (Gardner, 1995, p. 7). Frequently, leaders do not set out to become such but are developed out of necessity as appeared to be the

case in several of the community coalitions and educational partnerships reviewed. In response to the demand for more effective strategies to meet the needs of at-risk youth, champions--those who are willing to take the next step even if it involves stepping up to leadership--have arisen in many communities and schools. These have included teachers, principals, parents, youth leaders, law enforcement officers, counselors, college professors, and health educators. As they become motivated by desire for change and a passion for youth, they have also emerged as local leaders in their spheres of influence or domains as characterized by Gardner. Coalition leaders and educational leaders must be inclusive with the goal of “seeking to draw in more people to their circle and motivated in large measure by the desire to effect changes” (Gardner, p. 13). The power of coalitions lies in a shared leadership model that includes leaders from a variety of domains with each bringing his or her expertise, resources, and creative energy to focus on the desired change.

While coalitions can be “championed” by anyone with leadership capabilities and relationships, most of the literature focused on the role of school leaders, particularly principals, to forge these partnerships. Coalition building is a challenge even for seasoned leaders but the literature revealed some notable patterns and strategies to consider. When 12 school board members were asked to identify standards for a school leader, community collaboration was the highest and most frequently ranked response followed by political context and resource management (Ramirez & Guzman, 2003). Because of the complex nature of bridging the gap between school and community, professional resources have been developed based upon best practices to support educational leaders who want to bridge that gap. These resources are in response to a number of dedicated educators who have tried various approaches to involve families and communities without the outcomes they expected (Ellis & Hughes, 2002). In Texas, because of the limited involvement of parents in Title I schools, research was conducted through neighborhood surveys regarding residents’ perceptions of schools (Davis & Karr-Kidwell, 2003).

The goal was to investigate those perceptions in order to assist administrators in creating a community relations program to engage the larger community including parents. The outcome revealed that community members did want to be involved with the school and the survey feedback about how they would like to participate was used to generate a plan to initiate those partnerships. Abrams and Gibbs (2000) looked at school-community collaboration building in urban communities and revealed an area of concern for educational leaders. Following a year of field observations with accompanying interviews, they found that social class and cultural barriers were often obstacles in establishing cooperative relationships between school staff, parents, and community members (Abrams & Gibbs).

The literature has demonstrated repeatedly the important role the principal plays in creating community partnerships (Bartusek, 2003). Educators at another urban high school identified four factors that allowed them to maintain successful community partnerships: “principal support and vision, commitment to learning, a welcoming school climate, and two-way communication with potential community partners about their involvement” (Sanders & Harvey, 2002, p. 1346). This study was particularly interesting because the case could be made that the first factor, principal support and vision, was also a determining factor for the remaining three identified factors: a commitment to learning, a welcoming climate, and open communication. That being the case, the principal’s leadership could be identified as the critical factor. Sedlack (2003) looked at principal leadership styles at four schools in two different socioeconomic communities. In the two schools located in low socioeconomic communities, the principals took a more proactive role in service delivery as well as provided advice and support. In the two schools in high socioeconomic communities, principals viewed themselves more as partners with parents in the community. These role perceptions provide a framework for assessing leadership differences, particularly when Title I schools are involved, where there is a greater need for services and support.

Another potential area of concern for educational leaders as they develop community coalitions is that of the proper relationship with faith-based partners. Educators, after years of carefully trying to keep church and state separate, may be justifiably confused with the federal government's new posture. However, the Department of Education Secretary, Ron Paige, indicated his support for proven efforts to help accomplish educational objectives that should include faith-based and other community partners (Paige, 2002). In a Fall 2002 speech in Atlanta shortly after the establishment of the Department of Education's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, Secretary Paige stated:

As part of the President's *No Child Left Behind* Law, we are charged with a bold goal. Listen to the name of his school improvement initiative: No Child Left Behind. None. No child. Each and every child in America should have an opportunity for a first-class education The President has called upon my help to achieve this end. As United States Secretary of Education, he has asked me to lead this initiative. He said to me, I need your help. Well, guess what, I'm here today to say to you, I need your help. I need America's help. We know that faith-based and community organizations have worked for years to leave no child behind. We know the Federal government is just coming along lately with that goal. We know you have been at it for some time. And, you are good at it. (n. p.)

According to Paige, the goal of the Center is to “break down existing barriers and empower faith-based and community groups, enlisting them in support of the department's mission to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence for all Americans” (n. p.). The federal directives are clear that government funds cannot be used for any inherently religious activity, but faith-based and other community partners can provide a variety of support services from tutoring and mentoring at schools to donating use of their facilities and providing activities during nonschool hours. One bold and system-wide partnership was initiated by a Philadelphia school superintendent, who “saw religious institutions and schools as possibly the only two stable institutions remaining in the inner city” (as cited in Mundell, 2003, p. 2). This superintendent's comprehensive school reform plan involved linking schools with community-based organizations and bringing 10,000 volunteers into the public schools. By requiring each

school to seek a relationship with a local faith-based partner, he was able to fulfill his reform objectives. This innovative and risk-taking strategy was not without difficulties particularly in recruiting such a large number of volunteers. However, one result documented was a large faith-based mentoring program that included an academic support component (Mundell).

The literature regarding leadership for full-service community schools was interesting in that there was much discussion of shared leadership (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002). The most effective models involved a full-time community school coordinator who shared responsibility with the principal. Sharing of the facilities alone lends itself to several areas of potential contention between staff members who are there during the day and those who work after-school hours. To accomplish the integration of programs and coordination of service delivery, principals must not only be committed to the vision of how the community school efforts can enhance students' educational attainment but also must be willing to lead the school staff through any turf issues and be able model the ability to share leadership by relinquishing some degree of control.

Regarding community coalitions and educational partnerships, the literature clearly indicated that leadership was perhaps the most critical component. Although leadership alone is not able to forge and maintain these complex partnerships, leadership is the foundation and is a contributing factor to other important components. To build new partnerships and create new strategies, the literature indicated leaders must possess a range of characteristics, behaviors, and skills. They should demonstrate persistence for the lengthy work of building coalitions, openness to facilitate communication, compassion for the needs of the students and families they serve, wisdom to model effective problem solving, innovation to create new possibilities, courage to take risks, and a commitment to shared leadership models. The standards for leaders in such a role are high and frequently the financial compensation is not. Consequently, these leaders must be highly motivated by internal vision and not easily deterred by external challenges. The

research indicated that successful leaders, through either training or temperament, employ “inner leadership strategies--a pattern of thinking that sees opportunities instead of obstacles and constructive ways of dealing with situations” (Neck & Barnard, 1996, p. 24). This ability to think creatively and engage in effective problem solving may be critical for envisioning the possibility of collaborative efforts to meet the educational demands and personal needs of our nation’s youth.

The leadership challenges and skills associated with developing educational partnerships with community coalitions require that a principal possess an understanding of leadership theories and styles. Leadership theory has historically been associated with organizational theory; however, in the last half of the 20th century, theorists have begun to consider the study of leadership as meriting its own attention. Around mid-century, the two-factor theories of “task-focused” vs. “follower focused” models were left behind in favor of more multidimensional models (Owens, 2004). Many aspects of a leader’s relationship with his or her followers were explored to consider effective ways to create vision, inspire commitment, and motivate action in others. Leaders at the end of the century also witnessed the end of modernistic paradigms as the postmodern era was ushered in with the new millennium. New models of leadership were emerging with fewer hierarchical structures and educated followers expected to share in leadership decision-making. Differences between leadership and management began to be common research themes. According to Owens:

There is a qualitative difference between managing and leading and, some contend, they are mutually exclusive. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, for example, have told us that “Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing. (p. 275)

Owens pointed out that these leadership theories addressed effective leadership strategies that included the responsibility of leaders as change agents; leaders were no longer simply charged with maintaining the status quo but with transforming their organizations and followers. Owens

cited James MacGregor Burns as promoting his theory of transformational leadership and another related theory of Robert Goldleaf's servant leadership. Both of these postmodern leadership concepts focused upon leaders' role to envision better ways of doing things while motivating their followers to see and own the vision. Instead of employing "top-down" structures, poststructuralist leaders lead by example and by serving alongside to achieve the shared vision. Educational leaders who are building partnerships with community coalitions have access to a growing quantity of research on effective leadership theories that support the concepts of decentralized authority and shared leadership. Principals who are willing to venture such partnerships are very likely transformational and servant leaders by both temperament and philosophy.

Summary

Following a review of the literature regarding community coalitions and educational partnerships as well as the leadership strategies needed to connect them, there is sufficient evidence to support the call for greater community investment in education. As Dewey proposed a century ago, closer collaboration between the two is still warranted (as cited in Halliburton, 1997). Local community coalitions are being encouraged from the national level. Professionals in the field are working to determine effective and consistent evaluation protocols. It appears the trend for the near future will be a need for cooperative efforts not only to solve community problems but also to qualify for federal assistance to address those local concerns. Educational partnerships will also become more necessary as educators face increasing accountability and must find ways to address the intervening factors that impact educational achievement. These partnerships will vary according to the need of the school and community with full-service community schools being the most comprehensive model presented in the literature. Leadership

is the fundamental building block for coalition efforts. Whereas it may take one champion--perhaps a principal leveraging support for his or her students--to ignite the process, the initial goal is to include other leaders from a variety of domains to participate. Postmodern leadership theories, such as those espoused in transformational and servant leadership models, provide educational leaders with a theoretical framework to think about leadership skills and strategies. Committed educational leaders, in partnership with community coalitions, are in unique positions to transform their schools and communities. Their roles are to envision new opportunities instead of obstacles and to think critically about how to create lasting impact. Their willingness to serve in this capacity pulling the pieces of a community together in support of their students has the potential for significant outcomes, even “greater than the sum of the parts” serving alone.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the population studied, the research design, instruments used in data collection, and methods employed in analyzing the data. It provides background information regarding Anderson Elementary School in Bristol, Tennessee, the case under study, and other Title I schools in Bristol, Tennessee.

Population

Anderson Elementary is one of six elementary schools in the Bristol, Tennessee, city schools system. According to the 2003 State of Tennessee Department of Education Report Card (State of Tennessee, 2004), the system serves 3,845 students in grades prekindergarten through 12. The school system is not ethnically diverse having 92.9% Caucasian and 4.9% African American students. The percentage of disadvantaged students in the school system is 37.8%. There are three Title I elementary schools that account for 24% of the enrollment.

Anderson Elementary is located within the boundaries of the designated Weed and Seed site in Bristol, Tennessee. While not all Anderson students live within the Weed and Seed area, all of the designated area is within the Anderson school district. The area was selected as a Weed and Seed site because of higher crime rates relative to the rest of the city and greater economic deprivation. Demographics for the Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed site are provided in Appendix A. A map of the area is provided in Figure 1 with Anderson Elementary anchoring the bottom right corner of the shaded area.

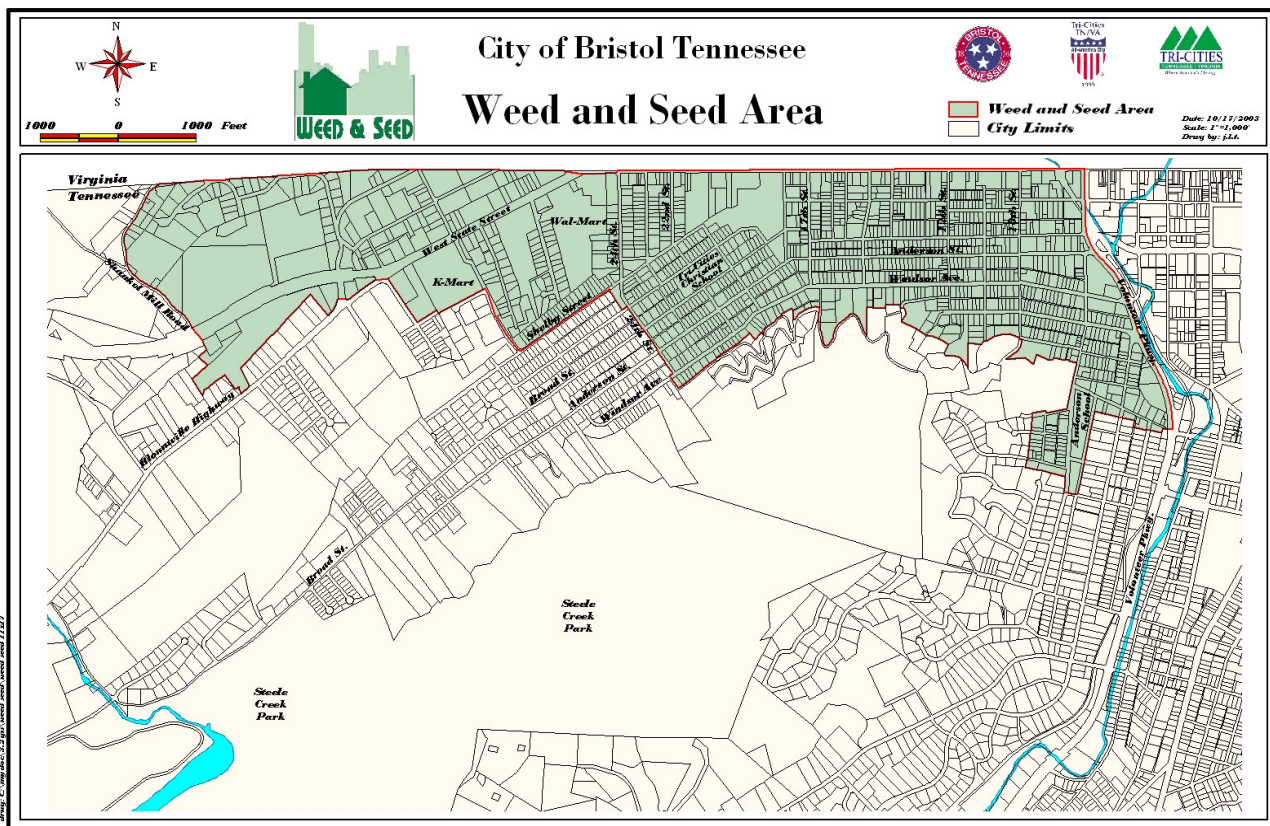


Figure 1. Map of Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed Site in Bristol, Tennessee

In addition to assessing any improvements at Anderson Elementary School, the data were reviewed to determine any differences in those improvements between students living within the Weed and Seed area and those outside the boundaries. The final quantitative component of the research design involved a comparison of the population at Anderson Elementary School with those of the other two Title I schools in the system: Central Elementary and Fairmont Elementary. The demographic information from the 2003 Tennessee Department of Education School Report Card (State of Tennessee, 2004) for those schools as well as Anderson's is listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Data on Three Title I Bristol Schools

Demographic Categories	Anderson	Central	Fairmont
Total Population	359	286	299
% Disadvantaged	62.4	80	63
% Caucasian	87.7	95.5	81.6
% African American	6.7	3.5	15.4
% Hispanic	3.6	.07	2.7
% Asian	1.9	0	0
% Native American	0	.3	.03
% Pacific Islander	0	0	0

Anderson is the largest of the three Title I schools and represents the greatest amount of ethnic diversity. While Central and Anderson serve adjacent neighborhoods, the ethnic and socioeconomic demographics are more similar between Anderson and Fairmont (State of Tennessee, 2004).

For the qualitative portion of this study, the population of educational professionals at Anderson Elementary was also studied to determine their professional judgments regarding the perceived impact of Weed and Seed coalition efforts at their school. A survey was developed and used for that population of 36 faculty and professional staff members. In addition, an interview was conducted with the principal of Anderson Elementary School to evaluate her perceptions regarding the implementation of the coalition partnership and any leadership considerations.

Research Design

The quantitative portion of this study was designed to answer research questions regarding measures related to academic success for students at Anderson Elementary and to determine if improvements were documented over the past five years since the initiation of efforts through the Weed and Seed Project. Five quantitative measures related to academic achievement were investigated for improvements from 2000 through 2004 to answer the following research question:

1. Have quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance rates, number of discipline referrals, test scores, and grades) at Anderson Elementary School improved after multiple strategies were employed to address crime and delinquency through the Weed and Seed Project of Bristol, Tennessee, begun in 2001?

The next analysis involved the two groups of students within Anderson Elementary: those students living inside the Weed and Seed designated area and those residing outside the designated boundaries. Differences in the mean scores of the two groups of students at Anderson were determined for each of the five years (2000 to 2004) being examined in the study to answer the next research question:

2. Are there differences in those educational success measures between the two subpopulations within Anderson Elementary School: those living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those living outside the boundaries of the Weed and Seed area?

To consider rates of improvement at Anderson in relation to similar schools and to answer the third research question, Anderson was compared to the other two Title I schools in the Bristol system: Central and Fairmount.

3. If there are improvements in the measures above, how do those improvements compare with those at similar elementary schools in the system, i.e. Central and Fairmount Elementary schools?

The researcher could not determine cause-and-effect impact of coalition efforts on academic achievement because of the number of other variables that could explain any differences; therefore, a survey was developed and administered for faculty and staff members to measure their professional perceptions of the coalition effort's impact. The survey was constructed using a Likert-type scale and open-ended questions. Several school professionals and community coalition members reviewed the survey for content validity. All of Anderson's 36 faculty and professional staff members were invited to participate to consider the fourth research question:

4. What is the perceived impact of Weed and Seed initiated coalition efforts by faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary?

Finally, the principal at Anderson Elementary School was interviewed to determine the leadership skills most relied upon and those developed in the process to effectively negotiate this partnership. Leadership theories and strategies identified in the literature were investigated. The interview questions were developed using an emergent design employing chaining and snowballing techniques to answer the last research question:

5. What are the most useful leadership strategies and skills to cultivate when building effective school partnerships with community coalitions?

Data Collection

The student data needed for the quantitative analysis were previously collected as part of the standard student record. The measures used were: attendance rates, discipline referrals, test

scores, and grades. All individual data were kept confidential and coded into statistical software (SPSS Student Version 11.0) with no identifying information pertaining to the subjects.

Following IRB approval, the quantitative student data specific for this study were analyzed in February 2005.

In addition to the collection of student data, faculty and staff members were sent a letter regarding the purposes of this study (see Appendix D). They were requested to participate in the study by providing data pertaining to their professional perceptions regarding the partnership between Weed and Seed and their school. The Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey, included in Appendix E, was a self-administered questionnaire constructed to measure educators' perceptions in the following areas: initiatives of the Weed and Seed Project pertaining to Anderson School's students, progress on related objectives of the Weed and Seed Project implemented over the past several years, personal observations of project implementation at their school and open-ended statements pertaining to observed changes and leadership challenges. Following survey-design suggestions by Creswell (2003), the survey was pilot tested by three educational professionals at other schools before being distributed to faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary. The survey was cross-sectional, with the data collected at one point in time, and administered in January 2005 with a pledge of anonymity.

The principal's interview was conducted in January and February of 2005. The initial questions for the interview were provided to the principal in advance and are included in Appendix F. From the initial questions, follow up discussion was generated using chaining and snowballing techniques to clarify details and expand to related topics. The data were then categorized into "clusters" or common themes (Creswell, 2003, p.192). Because the principal at Anderson Elementary was easily identifiable, submission to the Institutional Review Board included an Informed Consent Form, provided in Appendix G, to protect her rights and allow disclosure of the results. Trustworthiness was established through clarification of researcher

bias, analysis of discrepant information, and member-checking to verify results upon completion of the interview analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were collected and analyzed with the intent of determining the responses to five research questions:

1. Have quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance rates, number of discipline referrals, test scores, and grades) at Anderson Elementary School improved after multiple strategies were employed to address crime and delinquency through the Weed and Seed Project of Bristol, Tennessee, begun in 2001?
2. Are there differences in those educational success measures between the two subpopulations within Anderson Elementary School: those living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those living outside the boundaries of the Weed and Seed area?
3. If there are improvements in the measures above, how do those improvements compare to similar elementary schools in the system, i.e. Central and Fairmount Elementary schools?
4. What is the perceived impact of Weed and Seed initiated coalition efforts by faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary?
5. What are the most useful leadership strategies and skills to cultivate when building effective school partnerships with community coalitions?

For research question #1, an analysis of means was conducted using data collected from the five school years of 1999-2000 through 2003-2004. Because of high rates of transience at Anderson each year, pair-sample *t* tests were not employed. The mean scores analyzed for Anderson's students included attendance rates (as measured by days absent), discipline referrals (as measured by referrals to the principal), and reading and math Normal Curve Equivalent

(NCE) scores on the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Program (TCAP) tests. To assess improvement in grades, reading and math grades at the third-grade level were analyzed for three cohorts over a three-year period. These descriptive analyses of student data provided a comparison of means for Anderson Elementary students for each of the five years under study to examine changes and trends in these variables.

For research question #2, five hypotheses were tested by comparing the means of each measure for Anderson's students living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those residing outside the area, conducting *t* tests of independent means for each year. This was selected to analyze whether the differences between the two groups were significant. The null hypothesis was stated for each variable, assuming that there was no significant difference, and a level of significance of .05 was set to test the following hypotheses:

Ho 1: There are no differences between attendance rates (as measured by days absent) of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004 and those who reside outside the area.

Ho 2: There are no differences between discipline referrals (as measured by referrals to the principal's office) of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.

Ho 3: There are no differences between reading NCE Scores of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.

Ho 4: There are no differences between math NCE scores of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.

Ho 5: There are no differences between third-grade reading and math grades of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.

For research question #3, an analysis of means for Anderson Elementary School students was compared to both Central and Fairmount Elementary Schools. The measures examined included attendance rates (as measured by Average Daily Attendance divided by Average Daily Membership), discipline rates (as measured by number of suspensions), and NCE scores for reading and math. Descriptive analyses of the means for each variable were conducted to examine the changes and trends in all three schools over the five-year period under study and to compare those means between the three schools.

For research question #4, the Weed and Seed Coalition Survey was administered to Anderson Elementary School's faculty and professional staff. Ratings using a Likert-type scale were analyzed quantitatively and open-ended questions were analyzed for qualitative content. All data were categorized to explore clusters and common themes.

For research question #5, a qualitative analysis of the semistructured interview with Anderson Elementary school's principal was performed using chaining and snowballing techniques to allow for inclusion of greater detail and expansion of data collection based upon responses to the original questions. After data were analyzed, several trustworthiness strategies recommended by Creswell (2003) were employed: clarification of researcher bias, analysis of discrepant information, and member-checking to verify results upon completion of the interview analysis. These are presented as components of the qualitative analysis reported in Chapter 4.

Summary

For this study, data were collected to answer five research questions regarding Anderson Elementary School since the implementation of Weed and Seed coalition efforts began in 2001.

To answer the first three questions, quantitative measures were assessed over a five-year period. Question #4 required analyses of survey data regarding professional educators' perceptions about Weed and Seed, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Finally, a qualitative analysis of data collected in an interview was employed to consider leadership implications for effective school coalition partnerships to answer Question #5.

To answer the five questions of this study, a mixed-methods research approach was designed. According to Creswell (2003), "Mixed-method research has come of age. To include only quantitative and qualitative methods falls short of the major approaches used today in the social and human sciences" (p .4). The review of literature has provided more examples of mixed-method approaches that include a variety of data to answer pragmatic research questions based upon emerging theoretical paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). There has been a growing tendency in current social science research to depart from the "quantitative versus qualitative" categories and view research designs as existing on a continuum between the two (Newman & Benz, 1998).

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study by reporting the data examined in response to each research question. Employing a mixed-methods model, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data is presented to answer the five research questions.

In order to establish a baseline prior to the initiation of the Weed and Seed Project in 2001, data for this study were collected for a period of five years beginning with 1999-2000 through the most recent year, 2003-2004. An overview of the population for the five-year period is provided in Table 2 and includes the population for each year along with the number of those students residing within the Weed and Seed site and those residing outside the designated area.

Table 2

Five-Year Demographic Data for Anderson Elementary School

School Year	Total	In W&S	Out W&S	Transient
1999-2000	365	206	159	162
2000-2001	389	207	182	171
2001-2002	380	187	193	158
2002-2003	384	209	175	164
2003-2004	398	229	169	151

The number of students who were transient for the year was measured by calculating those who either entered later in the year or withdrew prior to the end of the school year. The problem of a high incidence of transience in the Anderson Neighborhood and Anderson Elementary School was evident in the data and has been cited as a obstacle for effective evaluation of other coalition efforts in Title I schools (Kronick, 2002). In a recent needs assessment of Bristol youth, respondents to the Communities That Care® Youth Survey (2004) indicated that “transitions and mobility” was the highest rated risk factor for Bristol youth with a scaled score falling above the national average. While this has been identified as a primary risk factor system-wide for Bristol youth, it is of increased concern for the population residing in the Anderson Neighborhood. It presents considerable difficulty in assessing a youth's progress over time. Consequently, this study was focused on changes in measures of the group means regardless of individual membership.

Research Question #1: Improved Educational Measures at Anderson Elementary

An analysis of means was conducted to answer the question regarding whether there have been improvements in the identified measures associated with educational achievement in students at Anderson School over the past five-year period during the timeframe of the Weed and Seed Project. Attendance was measured by average days absent. Discipline referrals included all referrals to the principal. The Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores on the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Program (TCAP) in reading and math were also compared over the five-year period. Finally, third-grade reading and math grades were compared over a three-year period for three separate cohorts. Table 3 provides the means for Anderson students for each year of the five-year period on four variables: days absent, number of discipline referrals, reading, and math NCE scores. Third-grade reading and math mean GPA's are presented for the three-year period in a separate table.

Table 3

Five-Year Means for Anderson Elementary Students

School Year	Attendance (Days Absent)	Discipline (Referrals to Principal)	Reading NCE	Math NCE
1999-2000	8.75	2.28	54.2	56.7
2000-2001	7.80	2.56	53.7	56.8
2001-2002	7.67	2.63	55.0	57.4
2002-2003	8.28	1.60	56.9	56.5
2003-2004	9.97	1.57	57.2	58.4

The results in Table 3 reveal that the average days absent per student at Anderson has not improved but in fact has increased from 8.75 days to 9.97 days absent. The average number of discipline referrals has decreased from 2.28 in 2000 to 1.57 in 2004 but not without increasing in the second and third years, 2001 and 2002. Both reading and math NCE scores show an overall improvement over the five-year period with the exception of decreases documented in reading for 2001 and another decrease occurring in math for 2003.

A separate analysis for grades was used because of complications in accessing grades for all students over the past five years. Elementary grades are not computerized and are only recorded on students' permanent record cards; these move with students when they move--once again impacted by transience. Students who had either graduated from Anderson to the middle school or moved to another school had no grades available at Anderson. However, many additional permanent record cards were located in archival files at the administration building and were retrieved for this study. Another factor affecting the analysis involved the change in grading from the primary grades (they do not use traditional letter grades) and the upper grades.

This meant that only those students currently in the fourth grade or higher had received traditional grades to use in the analysis. In addition, there is great variability of grade assignment criteria and content rigor between grades. Consequently, to assess whether there may be any improvement in grades, the third grade was selected as a standard to review over a three-year period when traditional letter grades were available for a cohort. This allowed an analysis of current sixth, fifth and fourth graders in the same critical skill-based areas of third-grade reading and math. To compare each cohort's mean Grade Point Averages (GPA) quantitatively, letter grades were assigned the traditional values: A=4.0 points, B=3.0 points, C=2.0 points, and D=1.0 point. Table 4 presents third-grade reading and math mean GPAs for the three-year period of 2001-2002 through 2003-2004.

Table 4

Third-Grade Reading and Math GPA Means for Three Years

School Year	Number of 3 rd Grade Students	Number of W&S Students	Number of non W&S Students	Reading GPA	Math GPA
2001-2002	43	23	20	2.98	3.07
2002-2003	51	31	20	3.02	3.00
2003-2004	41	24	17	3.07	2.80

An analysis of third-grade reading mean GPAs for the three-year period of available data revealed an overall improvement for Anderson's students. However, over the three-year period, the mean GPAs for math had declined.

Research Question #2: Differences Between Weed and Seed and NonWeed and Seed Students

To determine if there are significant differences in improvement rates of the two subpopulations at Anderson Elementary School, those living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those residing outside the boundaries, *t* tests of independent means were conducted to explore the hypotheses for each variable. A comparison of means for each year occurred for the following variables: attendance rates as measured by number of days absent, number of discipline referrals to the principal's office, NCE test scores for reading and math, and third-grade reading and math grades for a three-year period. This process provided an analysis of the differences between the groups over the five-year period for the first four variables and a three-year period for grades. Figures 2 through 7 include graphs depicting the mean comparisons for each variable. Tables 5 through 7 provide outcomes for each variable regarding *t*-test scores (*t*), significance levels of difference (*p*), and effect size (η^2).

Hypotheses for Research Question #2

Ho 1 (attendance): Mean differences of attendance rates measured by days absent were compared between the two groups over the five-year period. For the first three years of the five-year period under investigation, Anderson students in both groups were absent fewer days and it appeared that the students in the Weed and Seed area were improving at a rate to close the gap between the two groups. The final two years showed an increase in mean days absent for both groups. However, the students in the Weed and Seed area averaged only 1.8 more days absent in 2004 in comparison to 3.3 more days five years ago. The differences between the two groups were significant at the .05 level for each of the five years. The *t*-test scores, significance levels of difference, and effect size for the variable of attendance are presented in Table 5. The mean comparisons for attendance analyzed over the five-year period are illustrated in Figure 2.

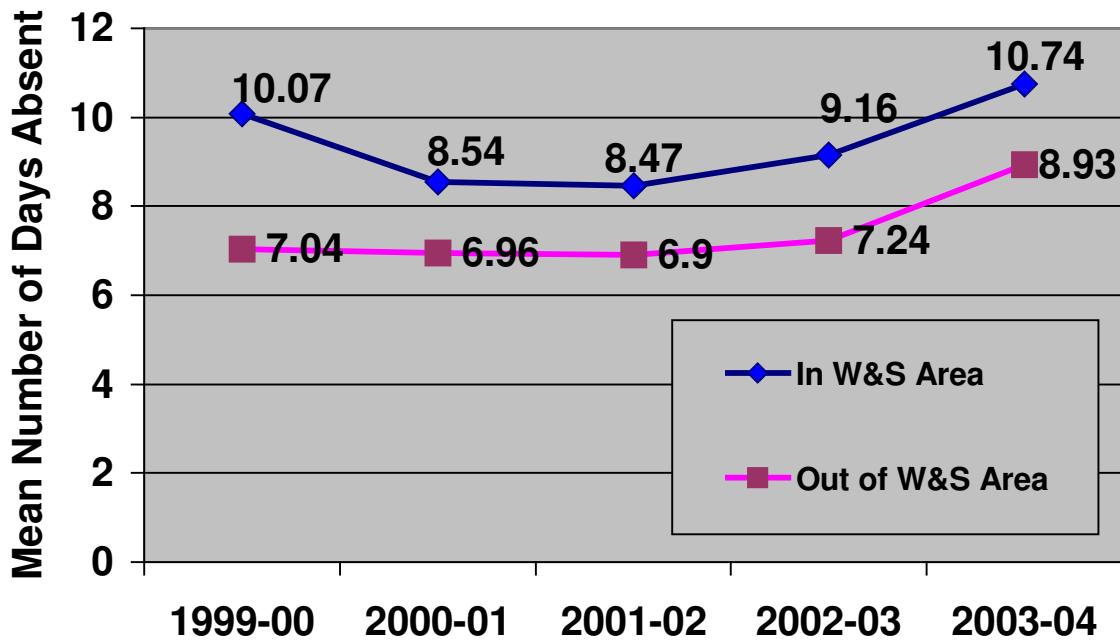


Figure 2. Comparison of Means for Attendance
 Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 2.

Ho 2 (discipline): The mean differences of discipline referrals measured by referrals to the principal's office were compared between the two groups over the five-year period. Students living in the Weed and Seed area averaged more discipline referrals than did those students living outside the Weed and Seed area. After increased discipline referrals in the second and third years, both groups had fewer trips to the principal's office in the fourth and fifth years. The decreases experienced in the past two years have reduced discipline referrals overall from the baseline year of 1999-2000. At that time, Weed and Seed students had an average of almost one more visit (.87) with the principal for disciplinary referrals. At the end of the five-year period, the average referral rate to the principal for Weed and Seed students had dropped to .33 more

times than the students living outside the area. As presented in Table 5, there were no significant differences between the two groups on measures of discipline for any of the five years investigated. Figure 3 illustrates the mean comparisons for discipline.

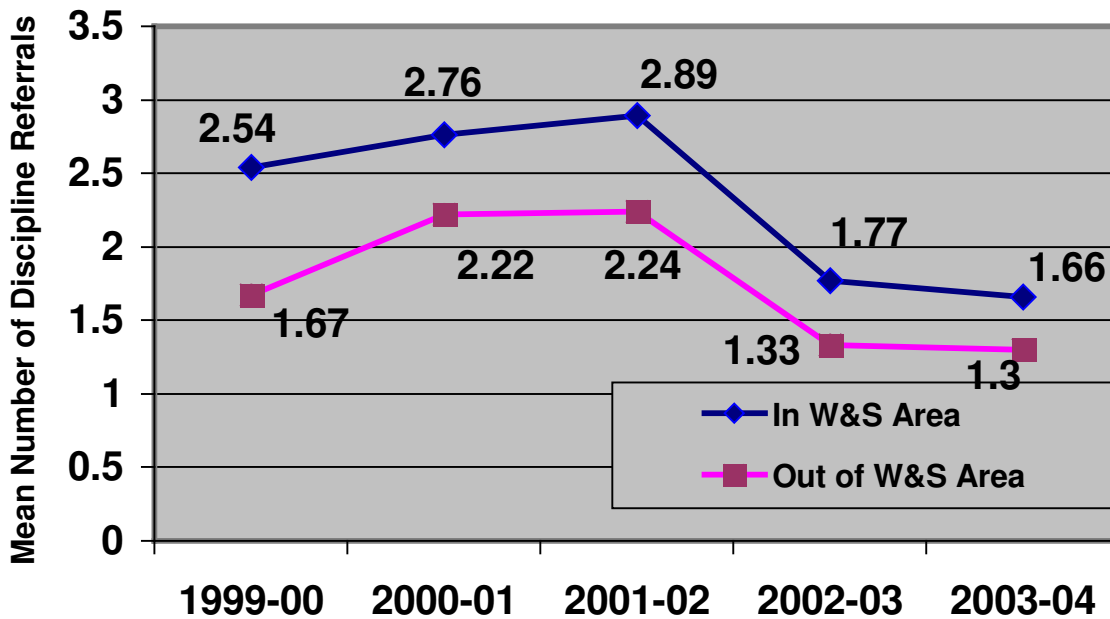


Figure 3. Comparison of Means for Number of Discipline Referrals.

Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 2.

Table 5 presents the *t*-test scores, significance levels of difference, and effect size between Weed and Seed and nonWeed and Seed students at Anderson Elementary for both attendance (measured by days absent) and number of discipline referrals for each of the five years studied.

Table 5

Significance Levels for Mean Differences Between Weed and Seed Students and NonWeed and Seed Students for Attendance and Discipline

School Year	Attendance Rates			Discipline Referrals		
	<i>t</i>	p	η^2 **	<i>t</i>	p	η^2 **
1999-2000	3.955	.001*	.04	1.791	.07	.01
2000-2001	2.354	.02*	.01	1.019	.25	.00
2001-2002	2.288	.02*	.01	1.408	.16	.01
2002-2003	2.573	.01*	.02	1.661	.10	.01
2003-2004	2.152	.03*	.01	.94	.35	.00

*significant at the .05 alpha level

** η^2 of .01, .06, and .14 are typically interpreted as small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively.

Ho 3 (reading NCE scores): The mean differences of reading NCE scores were compared between the two groups over the five-year period. Students living in the Weed and Seed area scored consistently lower on the reading portion of the TCAP over the five-year period. In 1999-2000, there was 9.3 points difference between the two groups, which was statistically significant, as reported in Table 5. By 2003-2004, there was 4.65 points difference, which was no longer a difference of statistical significance. As Weed and Seed students improved their mean scores over the five-year period, nonWeed and Seed students' mean scores have declined. The *t*-test scores, significance levels of difference, and effect size for reading NCE scores are presented in

Table 6. The mean comparisons for reading NCE scores analyzed over the five-year period are illustrated in Figure 4.

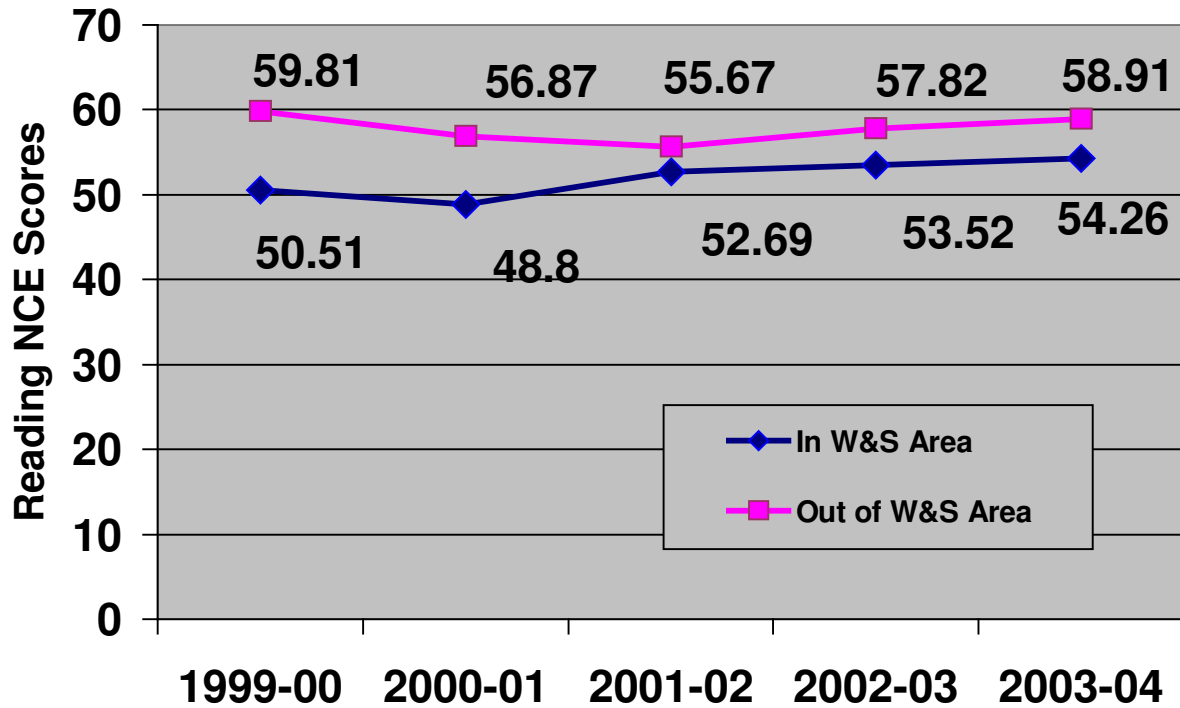


Figure 4. Comparison of Means for Reading NCE Scores
 Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 2.

Ho 4 (math NCE scores): The mean differences of math NCE scores were compared between the two groups over the five-year period. Students living in the Weed and Seed area scored consistently lower on the math portion of the TCAP over the five-year period. In 1999-2000, there was 9.5 points difference between the two groups; this was statistically significant. By 2003-2004, there was 3.21 points difference; this was no longer a difference of statistical significance. Table 6 presents *t*-test scores, significance levels of significance, and effect size for math NCE scores. As Weed and Seed students have improved their mean scores over the five-

year period, nonWeed and Seed students' mean scores have declined. The mean comparisons over the five-year period for math NCE scores are illustrated in Figure 5.

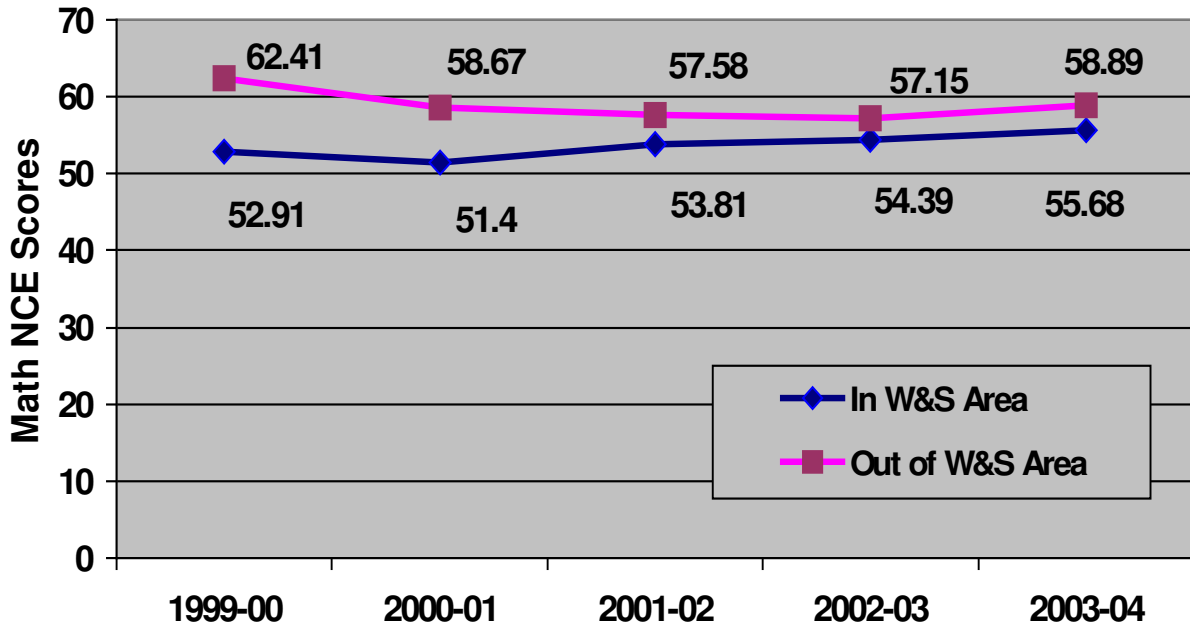


Figure 5. Comparison of Means for Math NCE Scores
 Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 2.

Table 6 presents the *t*-test scores, significance levels of difference, and effect size between Weed and Seed and nonWeed and Seed students at Anderson Elementary for both reading NCE scores and math NCE scores for each of the five years studied.

Table 6

Significance Levels for Mean Differences Between Weed and Seed Students and NonWeed and Seed Students for Reading and Math NCE Scores

School Year	Reading NCE			Math NCE		
	<i>t</i>	p	η^{2**}	<i>t</i>	p	η^{2**}
1999-2000	3.73	.001*	.03	3.65	.001*	.04
2000-2001	3.076	.002*	.02	2.796	.006*	.02
2001-2002	1.222	.22	.00	1.797	.07	.01
2002-2003	1.626	.11	.00	1.094	.28	.00
2003-2004	1.907	.06	.01	1.283	.20	.00

*significant at the .05 alpha level

** η^2 of .01, .06, and .14 are typically interpreted as small, medium, and large sizes, respectively.

An analysis of mean differences between Anderson students who live in the designated Weed and Seed area and those who do not reside in the area was conducted through *t* tests for independent means. The results revealed that there were significant differences in attendance rates as measured by days absent for all five years. No significant differences were found between the two groups for the mean rate of discipline referrals for any of the five years. For both reading and math NCE scores, there were significant differences between the two groups in the year prior to beginning the Weed and Seed Project (1999-2000) and the first year of implementation (2000-2001). However, there were no significant differences between the two groups for the past three years of the project indicating that the gap between the two groups is closing.

Ho 5(grades): The mean differences of reading and math GPAs were compared between the two groups over a three-year period. Whereas reading GPA means have increased overall, Weed and Seed students did not maintain the improvement made in the second year. For both groups, math GPA means have declined. For both reading and math GPAs, each year was analyzed for significant differences between the two groups using a *t* test for independent means. Although the Weed and Seed students fell below the nonWeed and Seed students for each of the three years, none of the differences was statistically significant. The mean comparisons for reading GPAs over the three-year period are illustrated in Figure 6 and math GPAs for the same period are presented in Figure 7. The *t*-test scores, significance levels of difference, and effect size for both reading and math GPAs are shown in Table 7.

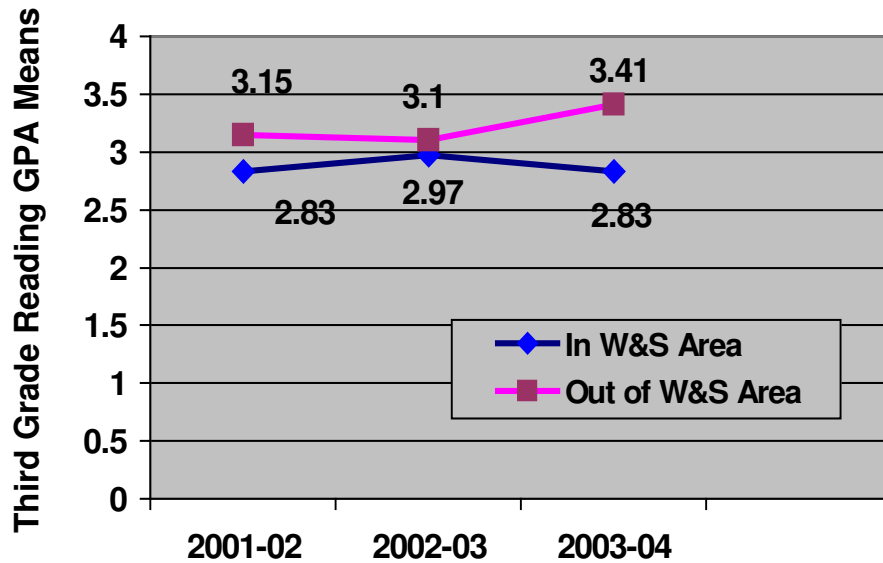


Figure 6. Comparison of Mean GPAs for Third-Grade Reading
 Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 4.

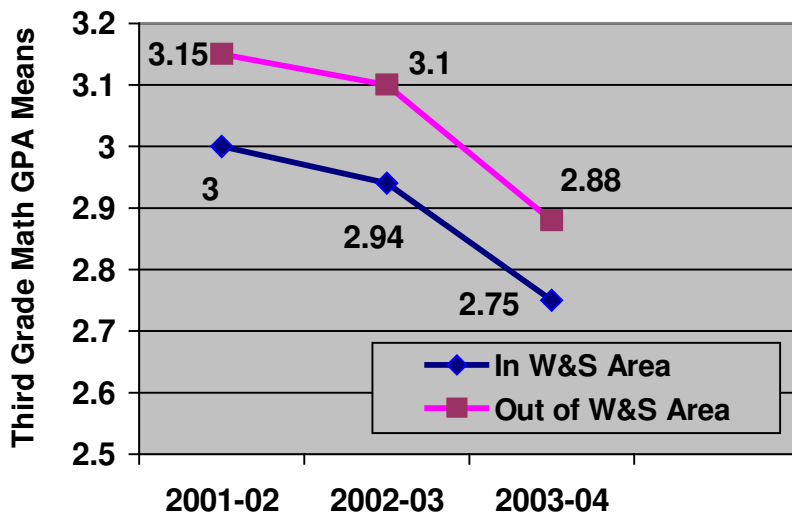


Figure 7. Comparison of Mean GPAs for Third-Grade Math Note. Numbers of students for each year are presented in Table 4.

Table 7
Comparison of Third-Grade Reading and Math GPA Means: Weed And Seed Students and NonWeed and Seed Students

School Year	Reading			Math		
	<i>t</i>	p	η^{2**}	<i>t</i>	p	η^{2**}
2001-2002	.981	.333	.02	.529	.606	.01
2002-2003	.453	.653	.00	.671	.537	.01
2003-2004	.1.862	.070	.07	.392	.697	.00

** η^2 of .01, .06, and .14 are typically interpreted as small, medium, and large sizes, respectively.

Table 8 provides an overview of the five hypotheses for Research Question #2 and the outcome regarding whether the null was accepted or rejected.

Table 8

Null Hypotheses Outcomes for Research Question #2

	Null Hypotheses	Outcome
Ho 1	There are no differences between attendance rates (as measured by days absent) of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004 and those who reside outside the area.	Rejected
Ho 2	There are no differences between discipline referrals (as measured by referrals to the principal's office) of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.	Failed to Reject
Ho 3	There are no differences between reading NCE Scores of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.	Rejected
Ho 4	There are no differences between math NCE scores of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.	Rejected
Ho 5	There are no differences between third-grade reading and math grades of students enrolled at Anderson Elementary who live within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who live outside the area in the five-year period from 2000 to 2004.	Failed to Reject

Research Question #3: Comparison of Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools

A comparison of data collected and reported annually on all three Title I elementary schools was completed in order to consider improvements at Anderson in relation to the other two similar schools in Bristol, Tennessee. Bristol Tennessee City Schools' Student Services Office provided data on attendance rates, measured by Average Daily Attendance divided by Average Daily Membership (ADA/ADM) and discipline, measured by the annual number of suspensions. The BTCS Office for Federal Projects provided mean test score data for all three schools. Because data were not provided on individual students at each school in mean scores for each school, a descriptive statistical analysis was performed. The Average Daily Membership (ADM) for each of the three schools was reported to the Tennessee State Department of Education for each of the five years under study and is provided in Table 9.

Table 9

Average Daily Membership for Three Bristol Title I Schools

School Year	Anderson	Central	Fairmont
1999-2000	338	271	288
2000-2001	348	293	321
2001-2002	377	295	315
2002-2003	359	286	299
2003-2004	339	243	251

Attendance

Attendance rates were calculated by dividing the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) by the Average Daily Membership (ADM) at each school. This provided a comparable percentage because the three schools are different sizes. The Tennessee Department of Education has set an attendance rate goal of 93%. All three schools met the state's goal for each year with Fairmount consistently above both the state requirement and the other two schools. Anderson began the five-year period with lower attendance rates than Central. In the third and fourth years, Anderson's attendance rates were higher than Central's were, but, by the end of the five-year period, Anderson's attendance rate had declined by 1.2%, with a substantial decline occurring in the final year. Central also declined one percentage point whereas Fairmount maintained an attendance rate of 95% after some gains in the interim years. Fairmount consistently demonstrated stronger attendance rates over the five-year period. The data are presented in Table 10 and illustrated in Figure 8.

Table 10

Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Attendance

School	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Anderson	92.2%	93.4%	94.8%	94.2%	93.2%
Central	92.8%	93.7%	94.3%	93.8%	93.7%
Fairmount	95.1%	95.5%	95.7%	95.6%	95.0%

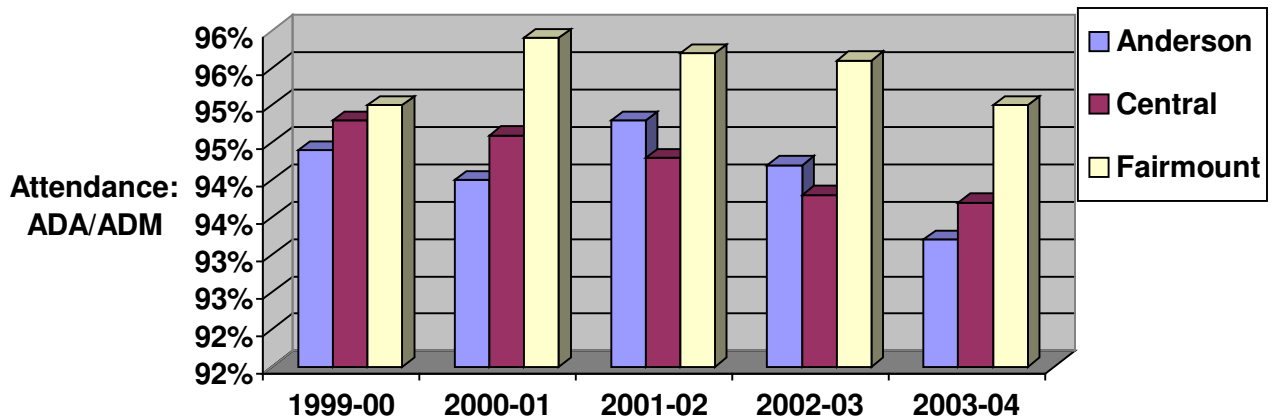


Figure 8. Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Attendance

Note. The Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the three schools for each year is presented in Table 9.

Discipline

To compare disciplinary data, the number of suspensions was used as the most constant measure between schools. Each school may have different protocols regarding remands and other disciplinary interventions. However, most elementary school principals within the Bristol system are likely to use similar behavioral criteria for suspensions. Anderson began the five-year period with more suspensions than the other two schools and showed the most disciplinary improvement in terms of a reduction in behavioral issues that warranted suspensions. Central and Fairmount appeared very similar in their pattern of reduction until the final year of data when Central had the highest number of suspensions among the three. The data are provided in Table 11 and illustrated in Figure 9.

Table 11

Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Discipline

Discipline Referrals: Number of Suspensions						
School	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	Change
Anderson	18	17	13	8	8	-10
Central	16	5	9	9	13	-3
Fairmount	14	9	7	9	7	-7

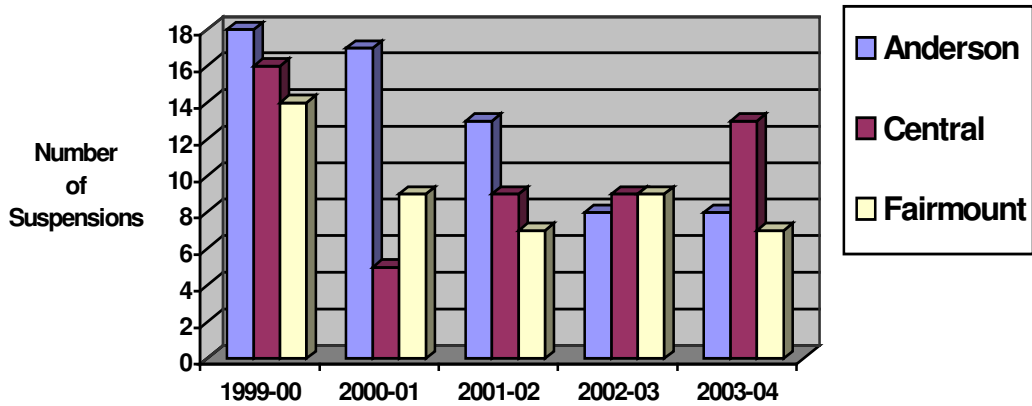


Figure 9. Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Discipline

Note. The Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the three schools for each year is presented in Table 9.

Reading NCE Scores

The Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores on the reading portion of the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Test (TCAP) were compared among the three schools. All schools demonstrated improvements over the five-year period with Central beginning at the lowest point and making the greatest gain. Anderson began with the highest score and at the end of the five-year period finished above the other two but without the same rate of improvement. Central has closed the gap between itself and Fairmount and currently ranks second of three in this category. Anderson began ahead of the other schools and finished ahead although by a smaller margin. The data are provided in Table 12 and illustrated in Figure 10.

Table 12

Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Reading NCE Scores

	TCAP NCE Reading Test Scores					
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	Change
Anderson	54.2	53.7	55.0	56.9	57.2	+3.0
Central	47.1	48.2	51.3	52.0	54.6	+7.5
Fairmount	51.2	52.4	51.7	54.7	54.3	+2.9

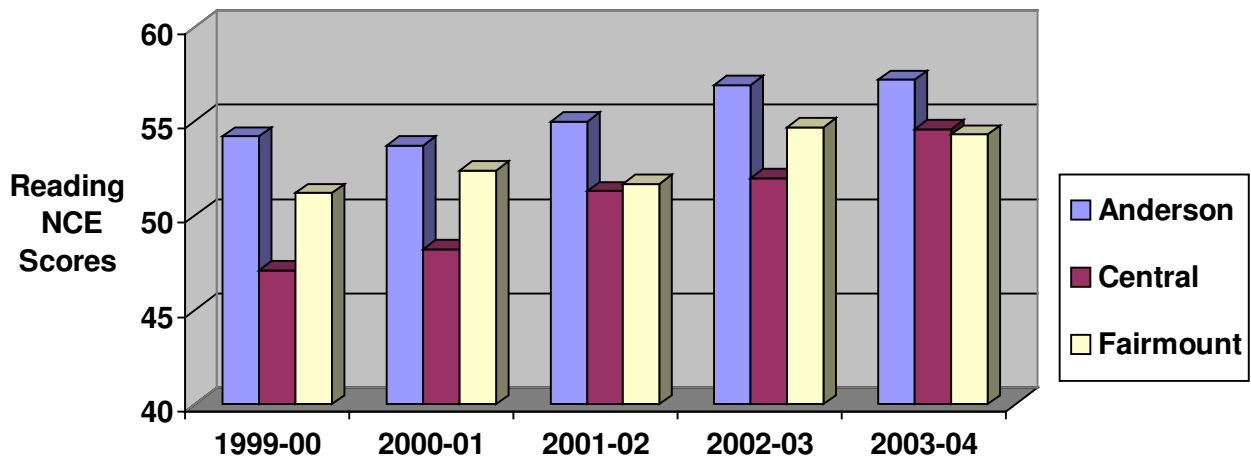


Figure 10. Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Reading NCE Scores
 Note. The Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the three schools for each year is presented in Table 9.

Math NCE Scores

A comparison on the mean NCE math scores revealed a similar pattern to the reading scores. All three schools have improved their scaled scores on the math portion of the TCAP. Anderson began the five-year period ahead of the other two schools and still has the highest mean score. However, Central has made significant gains and most recently is ahead of Fairmount, although the two have traded positions in 2000-2001 and 2002-2003. The data are provided in Table 13 and illustrated in Figure 11.

Table 13

Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Math NCE Scores

TCAP NCE Math Scores						
School	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	Change
Anderson	56.6	56.8	57.4	56.5	58.4	+1.8
Central	49.1	50.7	53.8	54.5	56.1	+7.0
Fairmount	48.0	51.6	51.3	56.4	54.2	+6.2

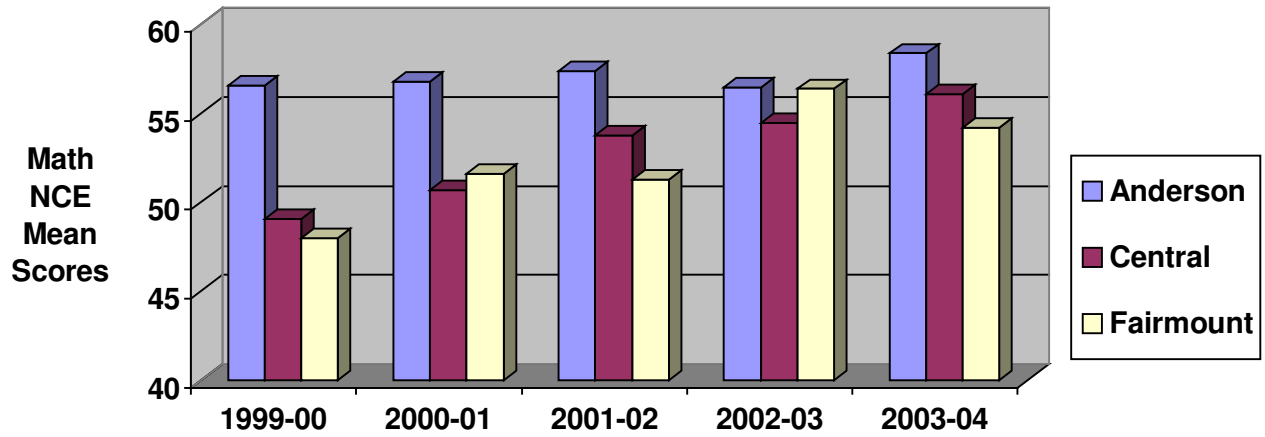


Figure 11. Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools: Math NCE scores
 Note. The Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the three schools for each year is presented in Table 9.

Research Question #4: Educators' Perceived Impact of Weed and Seed Project

A letter to the faculty and staff (see Appendix D) requested their assistance with the study by completing the Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey (see Appendix E) that was administered to faculty and staff at Anderson Elementary in January of 2005. The survey was distributed to 36 faculty and professional staff members with the assurance of anonymity. Twenty-four surveys were returned with a response rate of 67%.

Weed and Seed Initiatives

The three-page survey was constructed with a five-point Likert-type scale for two of the three components. The first component/page requested respondents to rate their perceptions of 17 initiatives of the Weed and Seed Project pertaining to Anderson School's students. The second component/page also collected data using a Likert-type scale to measure faculty/staff professional perceptions on 13 related objectives of the Weed and Seed Project implemented over the past several years and included four additional items regarding their observation regarding personal implications of project implementation at their school. The final component/page collected qualitative data using open-ended questions.

For the first component of the survey regarding specific Weed and Seed coalition initiatives, respondents were provided the following instructions and rating scale:

Please rate your professional assessment of the following initiatives regarding their effectiveness in serving Anderson students:

- 1: Detrimental and lacking any real meaning or value;
- 2: unhelpful and possibly a negative experience for some;
- 3: not significant either way;
- 4: somewhat helpful, meaningful, and/or valuable to the students; or

5: extremely helpful and/or meaningful to the students

The results with mean scores and their standard deviations are provided in Table 14.

Table 14

Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey Results: 17 Initiatives Implemented From 2001 to 2004

Weed and Seed Initiatives	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Community Policing Office	23	4.35	.714
Relationship w/Officer	23	4.09	.793
Truancy Intervention	20	4.25	.786
King College Tutors	24	4.79	.509
King College Coats for Kids	24	4.96	.204
Resource Fair/Picnic	23	4.39	.722
Book Fair Coupons	24	4.71	.624
Boys & Girls Club	24	4.83	.381
Summer Computer Camp	23	4.48	.593
Climbing Wall	24	4.46	.721
Climbing for Character Awards	23	4.61	.722
School Supply Drive	24	4.92	.282
National Night Out	19	4.21	.855
Mentoring Program	24	4.83	.702
School of Promise	22	4.68	.646
Rotary Basketball Park	23	4.00	.853
Work Camp Home Repair	23	4.57	.662

Weed and Seed Related Objectives

The second section of the survey solicited professional perceptions regarding 13 related objectives that were tied to the primary crime reduction (“weeding” activities) and social capital building (“seeding” activities) of the Weed and Seed Project. Because perception regarding changes and progress in these areas over time was central to most of the questions, several newer teachers declined to participate in this second section, citing their lack of baseline knowledge. To measure the items in this section, respondents were provided the following instructions and rating scale:

Please rate your professional opinion of the following statements regarding any differences at Anderson Elementary since 2001, prior to implementation of Weed and Seed:

- 1 – Strongly disagree,
- 2 – disagree,
- 3 – no opinion or no evidence,
- 4 – agree, or
- 5 – strongly agree

The results with mean scores and their standard deviations are provided in Table 15.

Table 15

Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey Results: Progress on 13 Related Objectives Since 2001

Related Weed and Seed Objectives	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Increased Attendance	19	3.42	.607
Reduced Discipline Referrals	19	3.68	.582
Improved Test Scores	18	3.39	.502
Neighborhood Pride/Commitment	18	4.11	.806
More Parental Involvement in Activities	19	3.74	.733
More Parental Interest in Education	19	3.74	.507
Connected to the Larger Community	19	4.00	.577
Access to Community Resources	19	3.89	.737
Academic Support from B & G Club	19	4.06	.873
Increased Feeling of Safety	19	3.74	.733
Fewer Criminal Activity Stories	19	3.53	.964
Increased Opportunities for Students	19	4.16	.898

Personal Observations

The second section also included four items to collect data pertaining to professional educators' perceptions regarding the planning time, potential disorder, loss of academic time, and leadership required to implement coalition initiatives at their school. Using the same rating scale listed above, respondents were asked to rate those areas from a personal perspective, considering the impact on their teaching responsibilities. The results with mean scores and their standard deviations are provided in Table 16.

Table 16

Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey Results: Four Areas of Personal Observations

Personal Observations	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Requires More Personal Effort	19	3.79	.918
Openness Leads to Increased Chaos	19	2.05	.848
Reduction in Academic Time	19	2.16	.958
Effectiveness Influenced by Leadership	18	4.06	.873

Open-Ended Responses

The third section of the survey included open-ended questions inviting the respondents to expand on the most noticeable differences they could attribute to the presence of the Weed and Seed coalition efforts, their concerns regarding sustainability, and the leadership challenges for their principal. Common themes in these statements identifying noticeable differences at Anderson since 2001 included the following:

- In students: more attending the Boys & Girls Club, positive effects of America’s Promise Mentoring Program, more students attending from neighborhoods outside the W&S area, more community and school pride, more service to others, and better attendance
- In families: more involvement through PTA participation, better relationship to school with more cooperation, and appreciation for support with school supplies
- In the neighborhood: cleaner with less disorder, more homes repaired,

new parks, bike trail, and sidewalks,
greater sense of pride, and
greater sense of security and safety

In yourself: increased awareness of student's needs outside the classroom,
more support to deal with students needs outside the classroom,
pride in being a part of a larger project that impacts my students,
and reward of seeing impact of programs

In colleagues: greater community involvement,
more confidence to access resources for students, and
a sense of community within the school to meet challenges

In your leadership: more time spent on teaching and less on discipline,
greater confidence that we can make a difference, and
feeling that my concerns about student needs are being heard

In Anderson
Elementary: more unity between school and home,
respect and cooperation,
pride and school spirit,
greater parent participation, and
greater understanding of the school's role in the community

In addition, two questions were asked about educators' perceptions of what may occur at the end of the Weed and Seed designation in 2006 and what they hoped the project might accomplish before then. The following themes emerged:

Impact when Weed and Seed designation expires:

reduced classroom help through King College tutors will impact academic progress,
less defined community goals,
fewer opportunities to function as a community,
less financial resources to address students' basic needs, and
loss of crucial after-school programming.

Desired accomplishments before 2006:

keep programs in place,
secure additional sources of funding, and
develop a sustainability plan.

Finally, a question was asked about their perception of the biggest leadership challenges for their principal when forging community partnerships to enhance the school's ability to meet educational objectives. The majority of comments did not focus on leadership issues within the school or even within the school system. Two primary themes emerged regarding the principal's leadership challenges:

1. her unique role of providing leadership to the community in making education a priority, primarily with parents and families within the Anderson community, and
2. the constant challenge to leverage the needed resources, financial and otherwise, and secure community commitments to make education for Anderson families a priority.

A qualitative summary and conclusion of the results of the entire survey, both the Likert-type scale ratings and the open-ended comments, are included in Chapter 5.

Research Question #5: Leadership for Effective School-Coalition Partnerships

To identify the most useful leadership strategies and skills to cultivate when building successful school partnerships with community coalitions, a semistructured interview was constructed and administered to the principal at Anderson Elementary School. The initial outline for the questions was provided in advance and is included in Appendix F. Because there is only one principal at the school, anonymity was impossible. In this case, the principal was aware and agreeable. Her informed consent is included in Appendix G. The interview focused on the leadership skills most relied upon and those developed in the process to effectively negotiate this partnership. Leadership issues and characteristics identified in the literature were investigated. The interview questions were developed using an emergent design employing chaining and snowballing techniques. Ms. Bowen was provided the initial questions before the interview. She

provided general written responses that were used as a basis for follow-up discussion both in personal interview sessions and by telephone.

When asked to give her primary apprehensions about beginning a partnership with Weed and Seed, Ms. Bowen responded:

The first thing that my director of schools said to me was that he had heard about a program called Weed and Seed, and that he thought it might “really be good for kids.” So, I went into the partnership with that very philosophy. There were not many apprehensions at all. More than apprehension, it was interest and excitement about what was in store for our children and their families.

Regarding issues encountered among her faculty and staff, Ms. Bowen noted the following:

There were not many issues. From the get-go, everyone was excited. The Anderson staff is an absolutely fine group of professionals and most of them have many years of experience. I believe that their experience has brought with it wisdom. They are truly wise in so many aspects of education and ways a community can pull together. At Anderson, we have the proverbial “village.” The staff saw the opportunity for more villagers!

Ms. Bowen did not acknowledge having any concerns regarding her administrators. She stated, “The support that I received from Dr. Dixon, Dr. Walters, and the school board was phenomenal. They truly have the best interests of children at heart. We all had high hopes for the Weed and Seed program.” Ms. Bowen recalled openness to the partnership based upon the initial feedback she received from parents. She recalled the following about parental attitudes:

Extremely positive feedback and it did not take long for the feedback to occur. Early on in the program, parents approached me with positive comments about the presence of a police officer, the neighborhood meetings, and the interest that the police department had taken in our district.

Her plan for answering everyone’s concerns involved listening and providing information. Her strategy for responding to the community involved promoting mutual respect and inviting input.

Most of the conversations started with, “How can I get what someone else received from W&S,” which was great, and exactly what we wanted to see. The members of the

Anderson community were ready for interventions. The timing was right and was happily received. There also seems to be a mutual respect that permeates all that surrounds our school. Parents know that we respect their ideas and invite their input. I believe that they trust us and believe in what we are striving to make happen in the education of their children.

When asked about her leadership philosophy and style, Ms. Bowen provided the following insights:

From the beginning, I knew it was going to be important to listen, listen, and then listen more. I learned much from Major Yaniero and the initial steering committee. There was cohesiveness from the beginning and much respect between and among committee members. If I had an idea or a rationalization for why perhaps something wouldn't work, they would listen. We would sometimes resolve the issue, and sometimes start from square one brainstorming new ideas.

Ms. Bowen stated that her initial vision for forging the partnership with Weed and Seed fit well with her own educational goals for Anderson and those of the Bristol, Tennessee, school system. She added:

The overall picture was for the quality of life for children to greatly improve. During the years since 2000, the school system has adopted the philosophy of "maximizing student success." The W&S philosophy (weeding out the negative; seeding in the positive) goes hand in hand with the BTCS philosophy. All that W&S has done has served to improve children's chances of success, chances of a better quality of life, now and in the future.

The most significant leadership challenges identified by Ms. Bowen involved the time involved to initiate and sustain effective partnerships. She said her primary concerns regarding time were:

Time constraints. Wanting it all NOW and realizing that seeds do not take root overnight. However, there have been many times along the way that I have felt like differences were made almost overnight. Time management is always a concern. Neighborhood meetings, steering committee meetings, landlord coalition meetings- -they are all important, but must be integrated into the schooling schedule of PTA, teachers' workshops, book fair nights, parent/teacher conferences, and so on. Many good things are happening, and it is challenging to make the right decisions on what should/should not occur and then when/ where. The management part mostly is a cinch. Thinking through what is most important for children is more challenging and of course so much more impacting on the precious lives we encounter.

Ms. Bowen expressed concern over the challenges Anderson Elementary will face when the Weed and Seed designation expires in 2006. She discussed the most significant challenge regarding funding by saying, "I do believe that if we cultivate and create new partnerships, the funding might not be of such a concern. It will take dedicated time and energies to continue with the partnerships." This challenge was related to Ms. Bowen's plan for the accomplishments she would like to see before Weed and Seed expires. She stated that a sustainability plan must be developed, explaining:

Having a plan for who will be responsible for certain duties would be helpful. When we no longer have a W&S budget, who will write grants or talk with area businesses for funding? It would be wonderful to have a plan to continue with King College tutors. They are such a valuable asset to the instruction and support of curriculum. I guess what I am saying is that it would be most helpful to have a comprehensive sustainability plan.

Ms. Bowen was asked to identify the biggest transformations she had witnessed at Anderson Elementary as well as in the neighborhood since the beginning of the Weed and Seed partnership. She reflected on the following:

I have seen open-mindedness among this community that has probably seen the program through. Also, there has always been a person or persons to step up to the plate when there is a task to be completed. There are so many people who take W&S to heart. It was really never, "will this work?" It was, "let's decide what good thing/s happens next." If there was ever real chaos, I was not aware of it. It is easy to be transformational when the change you see taking place is awesome! In my mind, the codes enforcement was definitely a life-changing endeavor. I could never get it out of my head that because a code was being adhered to, children were walking on more secure floors, living and playing on uncluttered streets, and just overall were living in a better community.

Finally, Ms. Bowen was asked how she had been transformed through this endeavor. She answered this question by relating:

Principals, and perhaps CEOs and most other leaders tend to "want things their way." They have a clear vision for what they want to see accomplished. I still "want things a certain way," but know that there are many people around me (teachers, parents, community leaders, and children) who know what the accomplishments should be better than I. They have taught me to truly be mindful of the perspectives of others.

Trustworthiness for the interview component of the analysis was established using three strategies: clarification of researcher bias, analysis of discrepant information, and member-checking to verify results upon completion of the interview analysis. Researcher bias was a potential factor affecting the data and analysis of the research. The principal investigator also served as the Weed and Seed Project Coordinator, whose responsibilities include regular evaluation of project components. This research will be included in the final evaluation of the project for the U. S. Department of Justice, which will include both achieved outcome measures as well as obstacles to anticipated successes. Consequently, the primary investigator was experienced in overcoming bias and providing objective assessment regarding project outcomes. In addition, the investigator provided additional analysis of discrepant information that emerged in the interview. While the literature documented the multiple challenges of initiating community coalitions and partnerships, Ms. Bowen's responses indicated some differences in her initial experience from the general themes in the research. The Chapter 5 summary and conclusions provide an explanation of this discrepancy. Finally, to confirm the trustworthiness of the interview, the strategy of member-checking was crucial to confirming that Ms. Bowen's responses were recorded accurately and the resulting conclusions drawn from that data were credible. A qualitative summary and conclusion of the interview results is included in Chapter 5.

Summary

Data were collected and results were compiled to provide information to answer the five research questions of this study. The first three questions involved analysis of quantitative data regarding improvements over the past five years: at Anderson Elementary with the two subgroups at Anderson: students residing in the Weed and Seed site and those living outside the area, and Anderson's improvements relative to the other two Title I schools in Bristol. The fourth research question regarding educators' perceptions of coalition efforts was analyzed using

both quantitative and qualitative data collected from the Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey. The final research question was answered with data collected in an open-ended interview with the principal at Anderson Elementary.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings and provide conclusions based upon the analysis of data reported in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 also includes recommendations for future research and implications for educational policy and administrators.

Research Question #1: Improved Educational Measures at Anderson Elementary

Analysis of data over a five-year period was used to answer research question #1: Have quantitative measures related to academic success (attendance rates, number of discipline referrals, test scores and grades) at Anderson Elementary improved during the time that multiple strategies were employed to address crime and delinquency through the Weed and Seed Project of Bristol, Tennessee, begun in 2001? The results summarized in Table 3 of Chapter 4 revealed improvement in three areas as evidenced by decreased number of discipline referrals and increased reading and math NCE scores over the five-year period. Unfortunately, attendance has not improved; instead, the number of days missed has actually increased since 1999-2000.

Attendance

Attendance showed an improvement trend in the first two years, down to a mean of 7.8 and 7.67 days absent from the 8.75 days in 1999-2000. Follow-up investigation with the principal revealed that was the time frame when an Early Truancy Intervention initiative was begun with the Weed and Seed Community Policing Officer newly housed at the school. Prior to court referrals, the Weed and Seed Officer would make a home visit to inform the family of what would occur should a referral to juvenile court have to be made. The principal reported that this

strategy was very effective and was implemented less frequently once the initial problem was addressed. In addition, she reported that the past two years, particularly the last, have been impacted by record flu epidemics that have reduced attendance rates throughout the system. All three schools did have a sizable drop, particularly in the last year, that essentially eliminated any overall gains that had been made in the interim years. This factor should also be taken into consideration when interpreting the data. However, by the fourth year, the mean days absent increased to 8.28 days and by the final year, the mean days missed had climbed to 9.97, higher than 1999-2000.

Discipline

There was evidence of an improvement in discipline actions as measured by reduced referrals to the office over the five-year period. Beginning at an average number of 2.28 referrals to the principal's office, after increasing in the second and third year, the fourth and fifth year showed reductions to a mean low of 1.57 trips to the principal office. In follow-up interviews with the principal, she attributed this decline to the interaction of multiple factors that included many effective teacher interventions as well as the presence of a Weed and Seed Officer on campus, additional classroom support from King College tutors and other community volunteers in the building, more students being better prepared for school with supplies and having homework completed at the Boys & Girls Club, and the initiation of more positive recognition for exemplary behavior like the Climbing for Character Awards when members from the community were invited in to award students for exhibiting character.

Reading NCE Scores

Reading NCE scores had also improved over the five-year period, with gains documented each year, except for 2000-2001. The teachers have worked diligently to implement many

reading support programs, both in the classroom and out. Many King College tutors worked with students one-on-one or in small groups under the teacher's direction to enhance reading skills. Programs that support reading outside of the classroom included efforts such as *Accelerated Reader* where students are encouraged to read independently at home. The Boys & Girls Club also supported this strategy by including *Accelerated Reader* time during their after-school program. This provided reading support for those students who may not have someone to help them read at home. In addition, the PTA has partnered with Weed and Seed to provide free Book Fair coupons to allow students the opportunity to choose their own books during the library's book fair reading promotion week. Just as with the improvement in discipline, there were multiple factors that contributed to the improvement of reading scores.

Math NCE Scores

Math NCE scores also improved over the five-year period, making gains each year with the exception of 2002-2003. Once again, teachers have received additional training and have been working on basic skill classes for improved performance, with basic math skills being a priority. Additional support for math skills relative to the Weed and Seed project included King College tutors who worked with students on math skills in the classroom and the Boys & Girls Club that provided after-school math homework support. Many factors can contribute to improved scores.

Grades

Finally, Table 4 revealed that there has been a slight improvement in third-grade reading grades over the three-year period from 2002 through 2004. At the same time, there has been a decrease in math grades in that same period. Because of the complications involved in tracking these data, few conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. Transience, along with a variety of

grading scales and strategies, made this variable difficult to track over time. However, a longitudinal evaluation plan could be developed that would provide teachers a standardized scale and record grades centrally before students moved to other schools. These data could provide evidence regarding whether Anderson students' classroom performance in reading and math is improving.

Research Question #2: Differences Between Weed and Seed and NonWeed and Seed Students

Because not all of the Anderson Elementary students resided in the targeted Weed and Seed area, the population was divided into two subgroups: students who lived within the designated Weed and Seed area and those who lived outside of those boundaries. Differences between the two groups were measured as they progressed over the five-year period. In order to determine the significance of the differences between the two groups, *t* tests for independent means were conducted for each variable using data for each year. This analysis was the basis of the conclusions for research question #2: Are there differences in those educational success measures between the two subpopulations within Anderson Elementary School: those living within the designated Weed and Seed area and those living outside the boundaries of the Weed and Seed area?

Ho 1 (attendance): As illustrated in Figure 2 of Chapter 4, Weed and Seed students consistently missed more days of school than students in the nonWeed and Seed area for each year under study. These differences remained statistically significant for all five years at the .05 level of confidence as presented in Table 5 of Chapter 4. However, even though both groups experienced an increase in the number of days absent, the Weed and Seed students have closed the gap between the two groups. In 1999-2000, on average, the Weed and Seed students missed more than three more days than nonWeed and Seed students. By 2003-2004, they missed fewer than two days more. If the increase in days absent for both groups can be partially explained by

extreme flu seasons, the data would indicate that the Weed and Seed students have improved in their capacity to return to school after illness; this might be related to a greater commitment to school attendance.

Ho 2 (discipline): As illustrated in Figure 3 of Chapter 4, Weed and Seed students consistently experienced more referrals to the principal's office over the five-year period as compared to nonWeed and Seed students. Table 5 in Chapter 4 revealed that none of these differences was significant for any year's data. However, the Weed and Seed students have again reduced the difference between the two groups by decreasing their mean number of disciplinary trips to the principal's office by 35%. Five years ago, Weed and Seed students visited the office .88 more times than nonWeed and Seed students and in 2003-2005 that difference had been reduced to .34 trips more. Although these differences were not significant, improvements by both groups have contributed to an overall reduction in discipline referrals to the principal.

Ho 3 (reading NCE scores): Figure 4 in Chapter 4 demonstrated the pattern of improvements in reading NCE scores for Weed and Seed students and nonWeed and Seed students over the five-year period. Table 5 in Chapter 4 revealed that the two groups had means that were significantly different during the first two years under study. Those differences were no longer significant in the final three years and the reduction in the differences was clearly illustrated in the line graph in Figure 4. The improvement of the Weed and Seed students from a mean of 50.51 to 54.26, a gain of 3.75 points over five years was encouraging. However, part of the reduction of the difference between the two groups was because of the loss of almost a point over the same period by nonWeed and Seed students from 59.81 to 58.91. While there has been an overall improvement in reading NCE scores, as reported under research question #1, the gain would have been greater had the nonWeed and Seed students' scores contributed to the overall improvement. This warrants further investigation to determine any possible explanation of this decrease by nonWeed and Seed students.

Ho 4 (math NCE scores): Mirroring the reading NCE scores profile, Figure 6 in Chapter 4 demonstrated the pattern of improvements in math NCE scores for Weed and Seed students and nonWeed and Seed students over the five-year period. Table 5 in Chapter 4 showed that the two groups had means that were significantly different during the first two years under study. Those differences were no longer significant in the final three years and the reduction in the differences was clearly illustrated in the line graph in Figure 6. The same scenario is evident in the comparison of math scores as was presented in the reading scores. Weed and Seed students closed the gap partially because of an improvement in their mean score over the five-year period but also because of a reduction in the mean scores of the nonWeed and Seed students. In both cases, while the improvements of Weed and Seed students have contributed to the overall improvement in Anderson's test scores, further study is warranted to determine how to continue to improve Weed and Seed scores while maintaining the mean scores of nonWeed and Seed students.

Ho 5 (grades): Figures 7 and 8 in Chapter 4 provided an illustration of the differences in third-grade GPA means for reading and math over a three-year period. Again, Weed and Seed students had mean GPAs that fell consistently lower than did those of nonWeed and Seed students. However, none of the differences was significant. In reading, while the nonWeed and Seed students improved from 3.15 to 3.41, Weed and Seed students improved in the second year and then returned to a mean GPA of 2.83. In math, both groups declined over the three-year period. Because overall math NCE scores improved, further investigation might explain the discrepancy between falling math classroom performance and rising math testing performance.

Research Question #3: Comparison of Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools

Anderson Elementary was compared to the other two Title I schools in Bristol, Tennessee, using reporting data provided by the Bristol, Tennessee, city schools appropriate administrative offices

to answer research question #3: If there are improvements in the measures above, how do those improvements compare to similar elementary schools in the system, i.e. Central and Fairmount Elementary schools? Because data were not provided on individual students at each school, only in mean scores for each school, a descriptive analysis of means provided the basis for the following conclusions:

Attendance

Attendance rates were calculated by dividing the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) by the Average Daily Membership (ADM) at each school. This provided a comparable percentage because the three schools are different sizes. The Tennessee Department of Education has set an attendance rate goal of 93%. All three schools met the state's goal for each year with Fairmount being consistently above both the state's requirement and the other two schools. By the end of the five-year period, Anderson's attendance rate had declined by 1.2%, with the most substantial decline occurring in the final year. Central also declined one percentage point while Fairmount maintained an attendance rate of 95% after some gains in the interim years. Fairmount consistently demonstrated stronger attendance rates over the five-year period. However, a review of Figure 8 in Chapter 4 may substantiate the flu epidemic as a potential factor as the drop in attendance rates over the last two years seemed to be impacting all three schools.

Anderson began the five-year period with the poorest attendance rate and appeared to be making progress, particularly in the third and fourth year, when Anderson's rate surpassed Central's rate. By the fifth year, Anderson had fallen behind the other two schools again, losing the previous gains. It appeared that some of the Early Intervention Truancy efforts by the Weed and Seed Community Police Officer should be re-established in an attempt to hold the progress being made by Weed and Seed students and help deter the development of poor attendance

patterns that may be developing among the nonWeed and Seed students. Fairmount's consistent attendance rates may also provide possible strategies that could be used at Anderson.

Discipline

To compare disciplinary data, the number of suspensions was used as the most constant measure between schools. Each school may have different protocols regarding remands and other disciplinary interventions. However, most elementary school principals within the Bristol system are likely to use similar behavioral criteria for suspensions. Anderson began the five-year period with more suspensions than the other two schools and showed the most disciplinary improvement in terms of a reduction in behavioral issues that warranted suspensions. Central and Fairmount appeared very similar in their pattern of reduction until the final year of data when Central had the highest number of suspensions among the three.

Anderson Elementary has demonstrated the most improvement compared to the other two Title I schools in this disciplinary category. This is significant to the Weed and Seed strategy with the primary goal of reducing crime and delinquency. It could be surmised that greater order in the community may translate into fewer disciplinary issues that were brought to school. Early in the Weed and Seed project, an anti-gang initiative targeting the Anderson Neighborhood was implemented to counteract the encroachment of gang activity moving in from Chattanooga. The removal of these elements from the neighborhood was a primary Weed and Seed goal. In addition, one of the community policing goals was to create better relationships and enhanced respect through increased police presence in the neighborhood as well as the presence of an officer at the school. These could be among the contributing factors relating to reduced incidents of behavior warranting suspensions.

Reading NCE Scores

The Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores on the reading portion of the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Test (TCAP) were compared among the three schools. All schools demonstrated improvements over the five-year period with Central beginning at the lowest point and making the greatest gains. Anderson began with the highest score and at the end of the five-year period finished above the other two but without the same rate of improvement. Central has closed the gap between itself and Fairmount and currently ranks second of three in this category.

Anderson began ahead of the other schools and finished ahead, although by a smaller margin. Whereas Anderson students' mean reading scores improved over the five-year period, their rate of gain was not at the same rate as the other two schools. From previous analysis, it was also evident that the nonWeed and Seed students' scores did not contribute to the overall improvement. Further investigation should be considered to determine how to maintain the improvements of Weed and Seed students and reverse the recent trend of nonWeed and Seed students' decreased scores. In addition, exploration of the gains recently documented by Central could provide some insight about possible strategies to employ.

Math NCE Scores

A comparison on the mean NCE math scores revealed a similar pattern to the reading scores. All three schools have improved their scaled scores on the math portion of the TCAP. Anderson began the five-year period ahead of the other two schools and still has the highest average. However, Central has made significant gains and most recently is ahead of Fairmount, although the two have traded positions in 2000-2001 and 2002-2003.

Anderson's math score profile relative to the other schools mirrors the reading score comparison. Anderson started ahead of the other two and finished the five-year period with a higher mean score but has not improved at the same rate. Similar to the reading scores, Central

made the most dramatic improvement. For Anderson, also similar to the reading scores, previous comparisons of the two subgroups revealed that the Weed and Seed students' gains were responsible for the overall improved math mean score for Anderson by the end of the five-year period.

Research Question #4: Educators' Perceived Impact of Weed and Seed Project

An analysis of the survey data was used to draw conclusions regarding educators' perceptions of Weed and Seed initiatives in order to answer research question #4: What is the perceived impact of Weed and Seed initiated coalition efforts by faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary?

Weed and Seed Initiatives

On the first section of the Weed and Seed Coalition Survey (see Appendix E), participants were asked to rate 17 Weed and Seed initiatives that had been implemented since 2001. Using a five-point Likert-type scale, faculty and staff members rated these items from a high of "5" indicating their perception was that the activity had been extremely helpful and/or meaningful for students to a low of "1" indicating their assessment was that the activity had been detrimental and/or lacked any real value for the students. All mean ratings fell between 4.0 and 4.96. Following is a grouping of the initiatives rated most helpful, meaningful, or of value for the students:

- (1) King College Coats for Kid Project (4.96)
- (2) Windsor Presbyterian School Supply Drive (4.92)
- (3) Boys and Girls Club "Safe Haven" (4.83)
- (4) America's Promise Mentoring Program (4.83)
- (5) King College Tutors (4.79)

(6) Book Fair Coupons (4.71)

The first six highest-rated items all provide direct support to Anderson students and it is not surprising that Anderson faculty and staff hold them in highest regard. The first two as well as the last one all attempt to fill gaps due to economic circumstances that could impact educational achievement: clothing, school supplies, and books. The others provide ongoing relationships with caring adults through after-school supervision and activities, mentoring, and tutoring.

The next group of highest-rated initiatives clustered around community commitment and support of school programs. They included strategies to engage the community in helping the school such as the “School of Promise” effort that identifies community partners to help provide the Five Promises to Anderson's youth, character recognition from community leaders, establishment of a summer computer camps, installation of a climbing wall in the gym, and raising awareness regarding community resources for Anderson's youth and families at the annual picnic.

(7) Bristol “School of Promise” Initiative (4.68)

(8) Climbing for Character Awards (4.61)

(10) Summer Computer Camp (4.48)

(11) Installation of Climbing Wall (4.61)

(12) Resource Fair/Picnic (4.39)

The WorkCamp Home Repair Project (4.57) ranked 9th and served a number of Anderson Elementary School's families as well as other Anderson Neighborhood residents providing minor home repair by high school youth from all over the country. Occurring over a week in the summer, the home repair not only provided visual improvements throughout the neighborhood but also the visiting students served as impressive role models interacting positively with Anderson's youth and families.

The final group of items was primarily related to Community Policing. It should be noted that during the first three years of the Weed and Seed Project, the school enjoyed the presence of the same experienced officer. During this past year, that officer accepted a position outside the department. Because of his departure and the military activation of several other officers, the police department was understaffed. Consequently, the Weed and Seed position was left vacant throughout the fall and only recently filled at the time the survey was administered. The new officer was in the process of developing relationships with the students and staff. The data should be interpreted with the knowledge that new faculty would not have any past reference regarding the community policing efforts based on the vacancy. In addition, returning faculty may have compared the lack of services to the past level of service by an experienced officer. For more accurate ratings, these community-policing initiatives should be re-evaluated after the new officer has had time to be fully oriented. However, even though they received relatively lower rankings, the mean ratings were all above 4.0, indicating they were somewhat helpful, meaningful, or valuable.

(13) Community Policing Office (4.35)

(14) Early Truancy Intervention Program (4.25)

(15) National Night Out (4.21)

(16) Relationship with Officer (4.09)

(17) Rotary Basketball Park (4.00)

Weed and Seed Related Objectives

The second component of the survey asked participants to rate 13 related objectives of the Weed and Seed project to determine any changes observed by faculty and staff since 2001. Several new faculty members declined to answer this page, citing their lack of comparative information from 2001. Participants were asked to rate their strong agreement with a high of “5”

to their strong disagreement with a low rating of “1” to statements associated with Weed and Seed Project objectives. All statements were rated between 3.39 and 4.16. The statements are ranked below, beginning with those having the highest rating of agreement:

- (1) Involvement with community partners through new programs has provided increased learning, leadership, and service opportunities for my students. (4.16)
- (2) I have observed a growing level of neighborhood pride and commitment among Anderson students and their families. (4.11)
- (3) My students who attend the Boys & Girls Club report that they receive support with homework and other academic skills. (4.06)
- (4) My students and their families felt supported by the Weed and Seed project and more connected to the larger community. (4.00)
- (5) I know better how to access community resources for my students and their families who have economic needs. (3.89)

The first group of statements, with the highest level of educator agreement, has increased community support as a general theme. According to the ratings, the faculty was seeing evidence of greater community involvement with Anderson families and commitment to supporting the education of their children. The remaining items documented that some teachers had begun to witness levels of parental attitude change about relating to school. Relatively lower ratings were assigned to statements about improved attendance and improved test scores.

- (6) In my interaction with parents, I am hearing more interest in their children’s education. (3.74)
- (7) I have witnessed a greater level of involvement through PTA and other activities. (3.74)
- (8) I personally feel safer in the Anderson Neighborhood. (3.74)
- (9) I seem to have fewer discipline referrals. (3.68)

- (10) More of my students come to school better prepared to learn. (3.58)
- (11) Fewer of my students regularly have stories of criminal activity that they have witnessed in their neighborhood and/or home. (3.53)
- (12) I am seeing better attendance. (3.42)
- (13) I have documented improvements in test scores. (3.39)

Educators' Personal Observations

The final four rated items pertained to the implementation of coalition initiatives on educators' themselves, not upon their students or school. Their observations about the personal implications were measured with statements about the amount of time and effort required, potential for chaos, interference with academic goals, and opinions about leadership. In general, most faculty members did note that community partnerships did require more of their time to organize but they did not consider they contributed to chaos or reduced academic focus. They also were in agreement that effectiveness of such partnership models was related to the principal's leadership style. The ratings are as follows:

- (1) As an educational professional, I find that leveraging community partnerships requires much more personal time and organization. (3.79)
- (2) Being so open to the community often creates additional confusion and chaos. (2.05)
- (3) Community partnerships significantly reduce the time available to focus on academics. (2.16)
- (4) The effectiveness of educational-community partnerships is heavily influenced by the leadership philosophy and style of the school administrator. (4.06)

Open-Ended Responses

Finally, the report of common themes regarding the open-ended component of the survey is listed in Chapter 4. The responses in this section substantiate and elaborate upon the ratings provided in the previous sections of the survey. Consistently with the rating analyzed above, faculty and staff at Anderson Elementary perceived that Weed and Seed coalition efforts have positively impacted their school since 2001.

The highest rated items and the overwhelming themes in the open-ended responses reveal that faculty and staff were most impressed by programs that provide increased resources for their students. This ranged from financial support for meeting basic needs to the social and emotional support of expanded opportunities and relationships. Regarding increased resources for individual student needs, one respondent wrote, “I have less out-of-pocket expenses in attempting to meet students’ basic needs.” Another stated, “I am encouraged in my leadership with a feeling of support and confidence that needs can be met.” There were also many responses about the various programs that provide relational stability and support for students; among them were the King College tutors, the America’s Promise mentoring program, and the Boys & Girls Club after-school program. Comments included, “The King College students are great with the kids!” “The after-school mentoring program has been a highlight! I hear wonderful stories about how excited the children are with such great opportunities,” and “Many of my students are dependent upon the Boys & Girls Club after school program.”

The next common theme to emerge in both the rated items and the open responses pertained to school and community pride, as evidenced by more community involvement at Anderson. This increased involvement seemed to work both ways: the community was more connected to the school and the school saw itself as a key part of the community. Several participants spoke of the greater level of parent participation and improved attitudes toward teachers and school. One respondent observed “higher levels of PTA participation” and another

reported, “The school is experiencing more cooperation from parents.” There were multiple comments about observations of increased pride: students exhibited pride “in themselves,” “in their school,” and “in their service to others.” Other comments were that families demonstrated more pride “in their neighborhood” and “in their homes.” Teachers reported “a sense of pride being part of such a great service” and “pride in the school and what it has to offer the community.”

Limited observations were made pertaining directly to academic improvements related to Weed and Seed efforts. However, one respondent noticed a difference in classroom leadership, observing, “More time is spent on learning and less on discipline.” Several referenced the additional academic support provided by the King College tutors in their classrooms, noting, “Extra one-on-one academic help is critical for the students.” However, most comments were more directly related to the primary goals of the Weed and Seed project that involved building community capacity and partnerships.

The consensus regarding questions about the potential impact upon Anderson Elementary when the Weed and Seed designation expires was one of concern about maintaining the gains and sustainability of current programs. One respondent stated, “Hopefully, the community will not return to pre-2001 status, but I am afraid things could start to go downhill.” Another expressed a similar concern, saying, “It will leave a huge void. Teachers cannot fill the void to meet all the needs of the children.” Others conveyed their hope that programs could be sustained through community commitment, leadership, and strategic planning to leverage additional resources.

The final open-ended question pertained to the respondents’ perception of leadership challenges for their principal in forging community partnerships. The majority of comments did not focus on leadership issues within the school or even within the school system. The comments were also focused upon the leadership they were expecting in the future. Two primary

themes emerged regarding the principal's ongoing and upcoming leadership challenges. The first was their perception that their principal was in a unique role to provide leadership to the community in making education a priority, primarily with parents and families within the Anderson community. One respondent observed that the Anderson community exhibited a "lack of regard for educational excellence" and that "Education doesn't seem to be a high priority with a large number of our families." Several others agreed, "Parental involvement in my child's education is a definite challenge." Another suggested that the principal should continue to focus upon "encouraging parents' self-esteem, helping them realize they are an important part of our school as a whole." The second leadership theme identified by the survey participants was the challenge faced by their principal regarding the constant need to leverage additional resources, financial and otherwise, and secure commitments from outside the school to make education for Anderson families a priority. In reflecting upon the leadership concerns for their principal, one respondent identified "keeping the sense of community and the funding going after the grant dollars are gone" as a significant challenge.

Research Question #5: Leadership for Effective School-Coalition Partnerships

A semistructured interview of the principal at Anderson Elementary, Ms. Dixie Bowen, was used to draw conclusions pertaining to leadership in order to answer research question #5: What are the most useful leadership strategies and skills to cultivate when building successful school partnerships with community coalitions? Based upon the interview data, Ms. Bowen has implemented leadership strategies that were documented earlier in the literature review as crucial to successful community coalitions. Early in the process, she became a "champion" for her students, and she reported that she was encouraged by her administrators to do so. She became the primary connection between the common goals of the school system's newly adopted philosophy of "maximizing student success" and the Weed and Seed strategy. Her leadership

role has expanded from school principal to educational community coalition leader as a “champion” for her students, their families, and their neighborhood.

Principal support and vision are well-documented ingredients for successful educational coalition partnerships (Sanders & Harvey, 2002) and without Ms. Bowen’s willingness to proceed, the Weed and Seed plan to partner with Anderson Elementary would not have been possible. As recommended by Gardner (1995), as an effective leader, she had already established an inclusive, shared leadership model within her school. She relied upon team decision-making and problem solving by “pulling together as a community” or perhaps as a “village.” Evidenced by her comments about her faculty’s “experience and wisdom,” her leadership style was already based upon respect for their areas of expertise and a willingness to operate from a less hierarchical model. In addition, pertaining to leadership regarding her students and families, she discussed “the mutual respect that permeates all that surrounds our school. Parents know that we respect their ideas and invite their input.” These leadership strategies prepared her and she had prepared her staff and even her students’ families, for the demands of community partnerships. Consequently, Anderson Elementary was ready when approached by Weed and Seed and the “excitement from the get-go” and the “smooth-sailing” were actually the result of strong foundational leadership at Anderson Elementary.

Ms. Bowen reported that the primary skill she relied upon throughout the coalition building process was listening. She pointed out, “From the beginning, I knew it was going to be important to listen, listen, and then listen more.” She had learned that through listening, she was also building the credibility she needed to be heard. Facilitating open communication among all the stakeholders and communicating respect for all partners was key to establishing and maintaining the partnership. She noted:

There was cohesiveness from the beginning, and much respect between and among committee members. If I had an idea or a rationalization for why perhaps something

wouldn't work, they would listen. We would sometimes resolve the issue, and sometimes start from square one brainstorming new ideas.

The most pressing leadership challenges for Ms. Bowen involved time management and allocation concerns. Personally, she faced choices regarding her participation in a broad array of school, neighborhood, and community functions. More significantly, she also had to guide programmatic choices and discern which programs were the best uses of time as a resource. She explained:

Time management is always a concern. Neighborhood meetings, steering committee meetings, landlord coalition meetings - - they are all important, but must be integrated into the schooling schedule of PTA, teacher workshops, book fair nights, parent/teacher conferences, and so on. Many good things are happening, and it is challenging to make the right decisions on what should/should not occur and then when/ where. The management part mostly is a cinch. Thinking through what is most important for children is more challenging and of course so much more impacting on the precious lives we encounter.

As her faculty identified for her, she agreed that her future leadership challenges involve sustainability of the programs and gains established through the Weed and Seed coalition efforts. However, her interview responses indicated that she was already thinking proactively, thinking in terms of a team approach for the next implementation phase. She stated, "Having a plan for who will be responsible for certain duties would be helpful. When we no longer have a W&S budget, who will write grants or talk with area businesses for funding?" In her interview, she exhibited the leadership quality identified by Neck and Barnard (1996) as "a pattern of thinking that sees opportunities instead of obstacles and constructive ways of dealing with situations" (p. 24). Her ability to look past barriers to consider solutions helped revitalize the vision for those she leads and as revealed in the survey, her staff appears to be looking to her to continue to do so. Concerning funding, she reported, "I do believe that if we cultivate and create new partnerships, the funding might not be of such a concern. It will take dedicated time and energies to continue with the partnerships." Her commitment to serve alongside her followers, and in spite of future

obstacles, illustrated key characteristics of what Robert Goldleaf called a “servant leader” (as cited in Owens, 2004). In order to effectively provide leadership for this partnership, Ms. Bowen has implemented several effective leadership strategies and skills developed by postmodern leadership theorists.

Also as a student of Educational Leadership, Ms. Bowen was familiar with leadership theory and stated she would like to become a “transformational leader.” Her leadership at Anderson through the Weed and Seed project has provided evidence that she may have already achieved that goal. According to James MacGregor Burns, the one who developed “transformational leadership” (as cited in Owens, 2004), such a leader is one who by his/her leadership brings transformation to the organization, followers, and ultimately experiences personal transformation. The findings of this study support that the organization of Anderson School has been undergoing transformation. There was also evidence of transformation among students, families, and faculty as well as in the larger community. Finally, Ms. Bowen identified personal transformations through the leadership process:

Principals, and perhaps CEOs and most other leaders, tend to “want things their way.” They have a clear vision for what they want to see accomplished. I still “want things a certain way,” but know that there are many people around me (teachers, parents, community leaders, and children) who know what the accomplishments should be better than I. They have taught me to truly be mindful of the perspectives of others.

Effective leaders are defined by multiple names such as “champions,” “team-builders,” “problem solvers,” “visionaries,” “listeners,” “optimists,” “realists,” “time-managers,” “decision-makers,” “servants,” and “transformers.” Ms. Bowen had been called all of these terms during the partnership between Anderson Elementary and Weed and Seed. She carried out these multiple roles with faithfulness, humility, and a sense of humor. However, her own observation regarding her contribution was simple, “It is easy to be transformational when the change you see taking place is awesome!”

Executive Summary

Improvements at Anderson Elementary

Attendance rates, as measured by days absent, had not improved over the five-year period since Weed and Seed coalition efforts have been implemented at Anderson Elementary. However, discipline referrals, as measured by disciplinary visits by students to the principal's office, have improved. In addition, both reading and math NCE scores on the TCAP have improved. Third-grade reading grades improved over a three-year period; however, third-grade math grades declined over the same three-year period.

Differences Between Weed and Seed and NonWeed and Seed Students

Weed and Seed students had more days absent and more disciplinary referrals for each of the five years than nonWeed and Seed students. The Weed and Seed students also had lower reading and math NCE scores and grades than nonWeed and Seed students. However, over the five-year period, the Weed and Seed students began to close the gap between the two groups for most of the variables measured. Of particular note was the fact that the reading and math NCE scores were significantly different at the beginning of the five-year period, but were not at the end of the time frame under study. However, the smaller difference was also because of a reduction in the nonWeed and Seed students' scores.

Comparison of Three Bristol, Tennessee, Title I Schools

Anderson began the five-year period with the poorest attendance rates and remained behind Central and Fairmount throughout the five-year period. Anderson began the same period with the highest number of suspensions but had the greatest reduction of all. For both reading and math NCE Scores, Anderson began with higher scores and finished the five-year period with

higher scores. However, the other two schools made larger gains than Anderson did during the period under study.

Educators' Perceived Impact of Weed and Seed Efforts

Through the Weed and Seed Coalition Survey, the faculty and professional staff at Anderson Elementary gave the highest rating to those coalition initiatives that provided direct support and services to their students. Survey participants rated programs that met students' financial needs and those that provided relational support most helpful. Regarding evidence of changes since 2001, the respondents had the highest level of agreement for those objectives related to increased community involvement both on the part of the community with the school and the school's role in the community. In general, most faculty members stated that community partnerships did require more time to organize, but they did not consider they contributed to chaos or reduced academic focus. They also agreed that effectiveness of such partnership models was related to the principal's leadership style. Many open-ended responses identified increased pride as a noticeable difference at Anderson since 2001 and this included pride at a variety of levels: in students, in families, in the neighborhood, and in the school.

Leadership for Effective Educational Coalition Partnerships

In an interview with the principal at Anderson, Ms. Dixie Bowen, effective leadership strategies and skills were identified. Leadership models developed by postmodern theorists were employed in the implementation of this coalition building process. It was particularly strategic that Ms. Bowen had already established many of these leadership patterns with her staff in preparation for partnering with the community. This not only provided her experience with fewer hierarchical leadership models, but also equipped her staff to function as part of decision-making teams. The most notable characteristics that contributed to this successful partnership

included shared and inclusive leadership, team decision-making, ongoing communication, creative problem solving, and servant and transformational leadership principles. It was evident that the principal's leadership philosophy and style were crucial to the effective formation and sustainability of Anderson's partnership with Weed and Seed.

Recommendations for Further Research

At the conclusion of this study, after addressing all five research questions, there remain unanswered or new questions that warrant further research.

- (1) Both measures of attendance rates indicated trends of initial improvements being made by Anderson students that did not hold over the five-year period. Because one variable present during the time of improvement was the Early Truancy Intervention program with the Weed and Seed community policing officer, a study with that program re-established to ascertain whether improvements occurred again would be indicated and could be easily implemented.
- (2) Improvement in classroom performance could be investigated longitudinally by developing a plan to track grades that remained with the school overtime, even as students transitioned. Further study could then be conducted to evaluate improvements overtime and relationships to test scores.
- (3) The primary unanswered question and unexpected outcome in this study pertains to the decline in nonWeed and Seed students' reading and math NCE scores. This phenomenon requires further investigation and analysis to determine if it is an ongoing trend or an unusual pattern.
- (4) Research to identify effective strategies employed at Fairmount to maintain consistently high attendance rates, even in years of flu epidemics, should be conducted and results should be evaluated for possible replication at Anderson.

- (5) Research to identify the effective strategies employed at Central to secure substantial gains on standardized test scores should be conducted and results should be explored for possible replication at Anderson.
- (6) Because of the evidence beginning to emerge in the literature regarding improved academic achievement and community coalition efforts, future investigation should be considered in spite of the limited quantitative findings of this study. It is possible that similar results may become more evident in Bristol as local community coalitions mature and become more effective in leveraging resources and targeting outcomes.
- (7) Qualitative analysis of perceived impact of Weed and Seed coalition efforts should be extended to Anderson students and families for a more complete investigation.

Implications for Educational Policy and Administrators

As educational administrators and leaders face the challenge to implement policies associated with *No Child Left Behind*, the implication is that they are responsible to leverage every resource available to address the complex intervening variables influencing a child's academic success. When a child enters a classroom, each brings a unique and intricate balance of personal risk and protective factors that contribute daily, either positively or negatively, to that child's ability to learn. Educational leaders know they need as much help as possible to reduce those risk factors and enhance protective factors to ensure children are not left behind. The task is large, really too large for the school alone. It belongs to the larger community and savvy educational leaders are looking for ways to invite the community to share the responsibility, both the successes and the failures.

Community coalitions do require additional time and effort but because they are constructed to promote positive change, they are moving, active, and rarely boring. Owing to their diverse make-up, they provide the perfect model for cross-disciplinary and multisector

support for educational strategies. The issues that can potentially interfere with academic progress are rarely one-dimensional; therefore, coalitions provide problem solving with a variety of perspectives. As coalitions emerge and develop, it appears they will likely become more effective at producing their desired outcomes. Because of their favor with several funding sources, they have also become effective in leveraging resources. With evidence beginning to emerge in the literature associating coalition efforts and improved academic achievement as well as other positive results for schools, proactive educational administrators are creating policies that support the development of educational partnerships with community coalitions.

Although this study produced limited evidence of improved measures associated with academic achievement, there was evidence that slight academic improvements were beginning to occur since the implementation of multiple strategies at Anderson school. In addition, there was evidence of many other improvements, as documented in the study, that are indirectly associated with academic progress: increased pride and parent participation as well as increased student resources and relational support, tutoring, and after-school programs. The implications are clear: there is sufficient evidence in this and other studies to justify educational administrators' consideration of the value of such partnerships for their students and the policies needed to facilitate their development.

These partnerships can take a variety of forms and could range in intensity from opening the school to coalition partners on a periodic basis to creating something as structured as a full service community school offering a range of partner services out of the school building after hours. There is ample information available on coalition development and program strategies in addition to funding opportunities. Each community coalition, or even neighborhood coalition, will develop its own character as it responds to the needs of its community.

Much of that coalition's character will be shaped by its leadership as was demonstrated in the literature and in this study. When schools are involved, that leadership will likely include the

principal. Most principals' training programs have little leadership preparation for forging community coalitions; perhaps when considering the emergence of more coalition models, educational leadership programs should consider this component. Educational leaders who are by temperament and training more postmodern in their leadership style preferences may be more energized by coalition work than leaders who prefer more structured “top-down” models of leadership. However, because the coalition process is about growth and change, there is a final implication for educational administrators to consider. Regardless of temperament or preferences, educational leaders who choose to venture into community coalition work are likely to be transformed in the process.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter of Approval for Research



615 Edgemont Avenue ♦ Bristol, TN 37620
(423) 652-9451 ♦ Fax (423) 652-9238 ♦ www.btcs.org

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Rick McInturf, Ed.D.
Supervisor, Federal Programs

September 29, 2004

Mary A. Rausch, Ed.S.
City of Bristol
P.O. Box 1189
Bristol, Tennessee 37621

Dear Mary,

Please acknowledge this letter as my full support and encouragement in your efforts to complete your dissertation at East Tennessee State University. Community collaborations, is certainly a timely and important topic in education.

I am confident that Dixie Bowen will do everything possible to help you achieve your goals. The students, the staff, and the community of Anderson continue to realize the benefits of your dedication and hard work.

Thank you for all you do and please contact my office if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve".

Steve Dixon, Ed.D.
Director of Schools

Appendix B

Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed Demographics

Anderson Neighborhood, Bristol, TN



Summary

Site Summary

Demographics	
Population	2,382
Males, Age 18 and Up	901
Females, Age 18 and Up	1,034
Males, Age 17 or Less	234
Females, Age 17 or Less	212

Race/Ethnicity	
White	94.0%
Black	3.4%
American Indian/Eskimo	0.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7%
Other	0.6%
Hispanic Ethnicity	1.6%

Education	
Adult population without a high school diploma	38.0%

Geography	
Area, sq. mi.	0.95

Family Structure	
Total Households	1,059
Households with Families	591
Households with Children	258
Single Parent Families with Children	95
Non-Family Households	560

Income/Housing	
Per Capita Income	\$15,678
Median Household Income	\$21,898
Percent Renting	43.5%
Percent Lived in Residence for Less than Five Years	0.6%

Community Policing Characteristics
Foot Patrols
Bike Patrols
Substations
Crime Watch
Police Participation in Community Meeting

Safe Haven Characteristics
Academic Tutoring
Anti-Drug Education
Boys and Girls Club
Community Police Co-Located
Community Projects
Dispute Resolution and Training
Mentoring
Performance/Applied Arts Program
Prevention Education
Recreation/Athletics
Summer Day Camp
Youth Leadership Training

Community Capacity Development Office
(Formerly the Executive Office for Weed and Seed)

Source: Retrieved February 25, 2005, from
<http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/sitedetail.aspx?sitekey=321S0>

Appendix C

America's Promise: Presidential Summit Proclamation

April 21, 1997



Source: Retrieved from <http://www.americaspromise.org/about/pdfs/SummitDeclaration.pdf> on February 25, 2005.

Appendix D

Anderson Faculty/Staff Letter

January 2004

Dear Anderson Faculty and Staff,

As you know, you and your professionalism at Anderson Elementary School have made the school a key partner in the implementation of our Weed and Seed efforts here in the Anderson Neighborhood. Since 2001, you have helped implement, supported or referred youth and families for many of the initiatives that make up the Weed and Seed strategy. The willingness and open doors of Anderson Elementary to participate in this community coalition on behalf of Anderson students and families has been significant in the success of Weed and Seed.

However, although we are hoping that Weed and Seed has contributed positively to the school, the required goals of the Weed and Seed effort are directly tied to crime reduction and neighborhood restoration. No specific measures of educational outcomes were included in the original project design. So as part of the evaluation of the Weed and Seed project and for my dissertation research, I am investigating whether there are improvements in measures related to academic success for Anderson students since the onset of the Weed and Seed effort in 2001. But, even if the data reveals any measurable improvements, we will not be able to draw "cause and effect" conclusions from the quantitative analysis regarding relationships between academic success and the implementation of community-based initiatives. You know better than most that there are many variables that impact academic success. But, we can evaluate whether any improvements have occurred in the same time frame that community strategies have been implemented.

In addition, your professional opinion regarding Weed and Seed efforts as they relate to your students and your school will provide important data for further evaluation of any relationship between academic success and community coalition efforts at Anderson. And since you have been crucial to the project, any evaluation of Weed and Seed would be incomplete without your observations. I would appreciate not only your impression regarding programs that have served your students, but also your thoughts about whether partnering with the community has supported you professionally. Another important component of this research is the type of leadership challenges for school administrators to effectively partner with the community.

Would you be willing to complete the attached survey? Your responses will be handled confidentially and only reported as part of group measures. Your time and thoughtful participation will assist our effective evaluation of Weed and Seed and the completion of my dissertation! And hopefully, the outcome of the research can be helpful to other schools that may consider forging partnerships with community coalitions as Anderson has pioneered here in Bristol!

Sincerely,
Mary Rausch

Appendix E
Weed and Seed Community Coalition Survey

Faculty and Staff Survey
Weed and Seed Community Coalitions
Anderson Elementary School

Please rate your professional assessment of the following initiatives regarding their effectiveness in serving Anderson students:

- 1 – Detrimental and lacking any real meaning or value
- 2 – Unhelpful and possibly a negative experience for some
- 3 – Not significant either way
- 4 – Somewhat helpful, meaningful and/or valuable to the students
- 5 – Extremely helpful and/or meaningful to the students

- _____ Community Policing Office based at the school
- _____ Student Interaction / Relationship with Community Policing Officer
- _____ Early Truancy Intervention through Community Policing and Courts
- _____ King College Student Tutors
- _____ King College Coats for Kids
- _____ Resource Fair / PTA Spring Picnic
- _____ Book Coupons for PTA Book Fair
- _____ Boys & Girls Club at Anderson Street Methodist
- _____ Summer Computer Camp in Anderson Computer Lab
- _____ Installation of Climbing Wall
- _____ “Climbing for Character” Awards
- _____ Windsor Presbyterian Back to School Supply Drive
- _____ National Night Out – Back to School Celebration 2003
- _____ “Keeping the Promise” Mentoring Program
- _____ Anderson “School of Promise” Initiative
- _____ Rotary Basketball Park adjacent to school
- _____ Group Work Camp (Summer 2004 Home Repair)
- _____ Other

Faculty and Staff Survey
Weed and Seed Community Coalitions

Please rate your professional opinion of the following statements regarding any Anderson Elementary since 2001, prior to implementation of Weed and Seed:

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – No opinion or no evidence
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly agree

- _____ I am seeing better attendance.
- _____ I seem to have fewer discipline referrals.
- _____ I have documented improvements in test scores.
- _____ I have observed a growing level of neighborhood pride and commitment among Anderson students and their families.
- _____ I have witnessed a greater level of parental involvement through PTA and other activities.
- _____ In my interaction with parents, I am hearing more interest in their children's education.
- _____ More of my students come to school better prepared to learn.
- _____ I know better how to access community resources for my students and their families who have economic needs.
- _____ My students and their families feel supported by the Weed and Seed project and more connected to the larger community.
- _____ My students who attend the Boys & Girls Club report that they receive support with homework and other academic skills.
- _____ I personally feel safer in the Anderson Neighborhood.
- _____ Fewer of my students regularly have stories of criminal activity that they have witnessed in their neighborhood and/or homes.
- _____ Involvement with community partners through new programs has provided increased learning, leadership and/or service opportunities for my students.
- _____ As an educational professional, I find that leveraging community partnerships requires much more personal effort and organization.
- _____ Being so open to the community often creates additional confusion and chaos at Anderson.

Faculty and Staff Survey
Weed and Seed Community Coalitions
Anderson Elementary School

_____ Community partnerships significantly reduce the time to available to focus on academics.

_____ The effectiveness of educational-community partnerships is heavily influenced by the leadership philosophy and style of the school administrator.

Please identify the most noticeable differences at Anderson since 2001 that you might attribute to the contribution the Weed and Seed community coalition.

In students:

In families:

In the neighborhood:

In yourself:

In your colleagues:

In your leadership:

In Anderson Elementary:

What do you think the impact on Anderson Elementary will be when the Weed and Seed designation expires in 2006?

What do you hope Weed & Seed accomplishes before that time in 2006?

What do you think the biggest leadership challenges and risks are for your principal as she attempts to forge community partnerships to help enhance your school's educational objectives?

Appendix F

Anderson Principal Interview Questions

Potential Interview Questions Educational Leadership and Community Coalitions

Anderson Elementary Principal – Dixie Bowen Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed

What were your primary apprehensions about beginning a partnership with Weed and Seed back in 2000?

What issues did you encounter among your faculty and staff?

What concerns did you have regarding your administrators?

What feedback did you receive from parents?

How did you develop a plan for answering everyone's concerns?

What leadership philosophy and style did you plan to use in the beginning? What changes in philosophy and style did you make along the way?

What vision did you have in mind when you begin? What did you hope would come of all this?

What have been the most significant leadership challenges? The biggest leadership risks and successes? Any relationships?

What leadership challenges do you face when the Weed and Seed designation expires in 2006?

What do you hope to accomplish in your partnership with Weed and Seed before that time?

You have definitely been a transformational leader throughout this process – what are the biggest transformations that you see? In your students, families, the neighborhood, your faculty and staff, your administrators, your school?

How have you been transformed through this endeavor since 2001?

Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent
Educational Leadership and Community Coalitions Interview

Anderson Elementary Principal – Dixie Bowen
Anderson Neighborhood Weed and Seed

Name of Study

Community Coalitions: Implications for Educational Policy and Leadership
A Study of Anderson Elementary School in the Anderson Weed and Seed Neighborhood

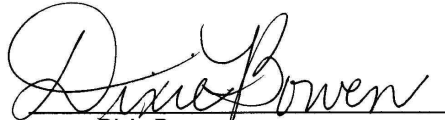
Principal Investigator

Mary A. Rausch

Interviewee

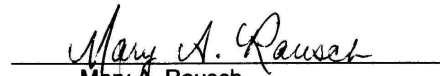
Dixie Bowen
Anderson Elementary Principal

I, Dixie Bowen, Principal at Anderson Elementary School, have been informed of the purposes of this study and give my consent to participate in a semi-structured interview to investigate relevant leadership philosophies, styles and skills for building educational partnerships with community coalitions. I understand that the principal investigator will be using snowballing and chaining techniques in the course of the interview. I also understand that I may decline to answer any interview questions. The principal investigator will also be using member checking as a means of validating my responses so that I may opportunities to clarify any responses after the interview is completed.



Dixie Bowen
Principal
Anderson Elementary School
Bristol, Tennessee

02/06/05
Date



Mary A. Rausch
Principal Investigator
Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

2/6/05
Date

VITA

MARY A. RAUSCH

Personal Data: Date of Birth: March 26, 1956
 Place of Birth: Jacksonville, Florida
 Marital Status: Married

Education: Public Schools, Jacksonville, Florida
 Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, Florida;
 History, B.A., 1977
 Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina;
 Counseling, M.A., 1978
 Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana;
 Counseling, Ed.S., 1992
 East Tennessee State University, Johnson City
 Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, Ed. D., 2005

Professional
Experience: Counselor, St. Thomas More School; Baton Rouge, Louisiana,
 1981-1987
 Counselor, Chapel Trafton School; Baton Rouge, Louisiana,
 1987-1991
 Graduate Student and Departmental Assistant in Counseling,
 Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana,
 1991-1992
 Counselor, Vance Middle School; Bristol, Tennessee,
 1992-1995
 Therapist, Behavioral Health Services; Kingsport, Tennessee,
 1995-1997
 Coordinator, The LINKing Center @ King College; Bristol, TN,
 1997 – 2003
 Coordinator, Bristol Weed and Seed Project; Bristol, Tennessee,
 2003 - present

Honors and
Awards: Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award presented by King College
 2004