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The Effective Educator: Reshape the Quality of Teachers' Instructional Practices with the Implementation of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching

Lisa Michelle Marion-Howard

THE EFFECTIVE EDUCATOR: RESHAPE THE QUALITY OF TEACHERS'
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARLOTTE
DANIELSON'S FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

Lisa M. Marion-Howard

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment

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A THREE PART DISSERTATION:

THE EFFECTIVE EDUCATOR: RESHAPE THE QUALITY OF TEACHERS'
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARLOTTE
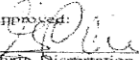DANIELSON'S FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER: RESHAPING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SCHEDULING PRACTICES WITH AN IMPLEMENTATION OF A PARALLEL
BLOCK SCHEDULING SYSTEM AS A MEANS TO EFFECTIVELY AND
EFFICIENCTLY REACH SCHOOL OUR GOALS
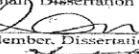
CONNECT THE DISCONNECTED: ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING
WITH AN IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LESSON
PLANNING PRACTICES WHICH IMPROVE INSTRUCTION, SCHOOL CLIMATE
AND ACCOUNTABILITY DATA

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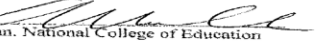
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2

Abstract

This school's dismal data indicated that there were major issues related to the quality of teaching and learning. Excuses/refusals to own the data indicated that teachers experienced difficulty making the critical connection between their instructional practices and its impact on students' learning. Danielson's Framework for Teaching was implemented to determine if improvements in this school's accountability data would occur if teachers gained an understanding of their professional responsibilities and improve instructional practices. A combination of a qualitative and quantitative research design which included observations, data collections/document reviews, and interviews were utilized as the research methodology to determine the success of this implementation. In June 2015, this school had the highest academic gains in the core subjects in its region.

Preface

According to Knowles (2005), adult education is a process in which learners develop an awareness of significant experiences. The recognition of the importance of experiences provokes adults to make evaluations and inadvertently create meaning. Adults learn when meaning accompanies experience. Adults learn best when they know what is happening, and how what is happening impacts their being. They are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that only learning will satisfy. Their orientation to learning is usually life-centered; therefore, providing real-life hands-on experiences are usually the richest resources for adult learners. Adults learn best when they engage in educational activities that are self-directing and provide opportunities to engage in a process of mutual inquiry.

I learned as I worked to complete my performance evaluation that most adults do not learn in the same manner and/or reasons as children; and their primary purpose for learning is centered on a need-to-know basis. This knowledge helped me to recognize that I needed to create urgency for the need for teachers to reshape their instructional practices and improve teaching/learning by utilizing real data. A clear plan for training for this initiative had to be organized with an established timeline for implementation to ensure expectations and mutual understandings. All professional development offerings were hands-on, self-directed, and open-ended and required teachers' to consistently reflect on their professional practices. It was important to establish a clear system of accountability, provide feedback and be consistent. Expectations for this implementation and performance objectives had to be fair and made clear to ensure buy-in/participation. Additional resources and support had to be provided for teachers who struggled.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the most significant people in my life: my sons (Brandon and Holase, Jr.), brothers (Robert, Brian and Desmond), parents (Julius and Sharon), nephews (Demetrius, Desmond, Daelen and Dallas), niece (LaNyla), cousin (Melvin), best friends (Tanyialisa, Martha and Charm), Goddaughters (Alexa and Iyanna), principal coach (Beverly), muses (Victor, Mark and Claude), cooperating superintendent (Linda), staunch supporter (Karen), classmates (Amaeshia, Carletta and Reshunda) Engleburg Elementary School (staff, students and parents), editors (Wendy and Wanda) and the memory of my favorite aunt and uncle (Helen and Milton). Most importantly, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my Lord and Savior whom due to his goodness, grace, mercy and favor have blessed me with the intellect, stamina, perseverance, and resilience to complete this work.

Although unplanned and perhaps even unexpected, my birth was no mistake or mishap; and my life was not a fluke of nature. I learned very early that God created me for a reason, a season and with a purpose; and in accordance to his intricate plan for me, He strategically ordered my steps by placing angels along my life's path to inspire and guide the work that I needed to do in order to fulfill the purpose for which I was created to achieve. It is with great humility and a humbled heart that I respectfully dedicate this dissertation to the most influential angels in my life. Without your unconditional love, encouragement, support and understanding along my educational journey this work may have remained just a sequestered dream. Thank you.

Table of Contents

Section One: Introduction

According to information found on the Danielson Group Website, Charlotte Danielson was an economist, who was recognized as an expert in the area of educator effectiveness. She specialized in the design of teacher evaluation systems, which ensured teacher quality and promoted professional learning. She was known to advise many state departments, national ministries, and departments of education in both the United States of America and overseas. Her credentials included a Bachelor of Art Degree in History from Cornell University, Master of Art Degree in Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University, and a Master's Degree in Education Administration from Rutgers University. She was often requested to serve as a keynote speaker for both national and inter-national conferences. Charlotte Danielson was considered to be one of this nation's top educational leaders.

Danielson's career path included a wide variety of experiences in the area of education. She taught all grade levels ranging from kindergarten through college. She served as an administrator, curriculum director, and a staff developer. During this time, she worked as an educational consultant that she founded, the Danielson Group, which was based in Princeton, New Jersey. She specialized in teacher quality, evaluation, curriculum planning, performance assessment, and professional development. Her works included training practitioners in instruction and assessments, the design of performance instruments, and procedures for teacher evaluations. In addition, she was the author of several books for both teachers and administrators. As a well-known educational consultant, she had worked in hundreds of schools, universities, agencies, and state departments of education in almost every state (Danielson, 2007, p. 200).

Overview and Purpose

Danielson (2007) made the claim that if schools implemented her framework for teaching with fidelity, the teachers in those schools would improve their instructional practices and student learning by defining what they should have known and been able to do in the exercise of their profession. Danielson's Framework for Teaching was a framework that described the aspects of a teacher's professional responsibilities, and defined in detail, what "good teaching" looked like. It was developed with the use of empirical studies and theoretical research, which had shown to have been effective in the improvement of student learning. These practices and responsibilities helped to define what teachers should have known and been able to do in their teaching professions.

Danielson designed her framework for teaching to include four major domains, twenty-two components and seventy-six elements. In essence, the four domains served as the heart of teaching, while the components and elements served as the support system that strengthened each domain. The four domains were as follows: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. The purpose of the twenty-two components that were incorporated throughout the four domains was to define distinct aspects of each domain. Each component had two to five elements, whose sole purpose was to describe each component in depth. All of the components and elements were closely related to the four domains and shared common themes. The domains, components, and elements were correlated to provide a comprehensive framework with the purpose of creating improvements of teachers' instructional practices (Danielson, 2007, pp. 1-2).

The purpose of this implementation was to introduce the teachers to a fresh look at their professional practice by demonstrating the effectiveness of Danielson's Framework for Teaching with fidelity. After I conducted a preliminary review of the assumptions, features, and noterity associated with this framework, coupled with the results of my school's needs of assessment, I decided that this implementation was exactly what my teachers needed at that time. My teachers needed to strengthen their understanding, knowledge, and expectations of good teaching in an effort to began to re-build the foundation of their instructional practices. I believed the road to any continuous school-wide improvement efforts should have begun with the most important people in the school… the teachers. Danielson's teaching framework offered teachers a common language for professional conversations, a structure for self-assessments, and opportunities to reflect on practices. I believed a traditional framework for good teaching was exactly what the teachers at my school needed to begin their journey toward improving our school's overall climate, attendance, behavior, and academic achievement.

Rationale

I selected to examine Danielson's Framework for Teaching to research for my performance evaluation for several reasons. The first reason I selected to implement this teaching framework as part of my performance evaluation was because it was a districtwide initiative that all schools had to implement for the first time during the 2013-2014 school year. Like all other principals employed by the district, I was required to implement Danielson's Framework for Teaching at my elementary school and ensure that it was executed with fidelity. As part of my professional responsibilities, I had to ensure that all of the teachers at my school received the required trainings, gained an

understanding of the expectations related to their instructional practices, and served as active participants in this implementation process. To my knowledge, the district selected and chose to implement Danielson's Framework for Teaching as its educator effectiveness model because it was to later become a statewide mandate. Its implementation was believed to have had the potential to strengthen teachers' instructional practices resulting in improved student achievement.

The second reason I selected to evaluate the effectiveness of Danielson's Framework for Teaching as my performance evaluation was because I wanted to deepen my explorations of this framework's assumptions, features, usages and noterity. I wanted to learn how or if its implementation had the potential to help improve teachers' instructional practices, students' learning, and the overall conditions of my school at that time.

Since the beginning of my principal career, I had always been fascinated with the effectiveness of various school-wide reforms; and someday wished to develop and market my own school-wide reform model. In preparation for my future work, I actively researched and implemented various programs, instructional designs, teaching strategies, and other methodologies in an effort to improve both my own professional skills as an educational leader/change agent and those of others. I believed the knowledge that I would gain from the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching would have helped me achieve my current and future endeavors at that time. I believed this knowledge would positively affect helped me to serve as a more effective principal by providing me with the guidance that I needed to better assist my teachers to improve their instructional practices.

The last and most important reason I chose to evaluate Danielson's Framework for Teaching as my performance evaluation was because I had a desire to see if teachers developed a clear understanding of their professional responsibilities and improved their instructional practices, would those elements produce the drastic improvements in my school's critical data measures and create a better culture for learning by bridging the gaps that existed between teachers and students, as Danielson had claimed it would.

The implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching was important to the educational community, in particular the staff at my school, because our professional success and renewals of professional contracts were dependent upon the academic growth of our students. During the 2012–2013 school year, the Act 10 Bill became law and caused the local teachers' unions to lose their bargaining power during litigation. As a result, all teachers were placed on one-year contracts and all principals were placed on either one or two-year contracts. This major political shift occurred at a time that threatened the job security and protections educators once enjoyed. The renewals of professional contracts were strictly dependent upon the students' academic results that were or were not produced. Teachers were required to participate in an evidence-based evaluation system to demonstrate their instructional efforts and student academic growth. If principals and/or teachers failed to demonstrate that their students/ schools met their academic goals, then their professional contracts were not renewed.

The political determination to close the various achievement gaps and remedy the low achievement status that our state appeared to be experiencing in many school districts during this time prompted the educator effectiveness evaluation system for teachers to be declared a necessity, and our students' lack of academic success to be

deemed a state of emergency. Students' subpar academic progress had begun to plague many school's state report cards and other critical accountability data sources that were shared with the public. This prompted educator effectiveness to become a priority. It was no longer acceptable to set goals for schools within our district to have students make only one-year of academic growth in order to meet our district's goals. The new focus was placed on closing various academic achievement gaps across the nation. The new state/district's expectancy for students to make at least a year or more of academic growth became the new requirement for teachers' performance to be deemed satisfactory. If students did not make more than a year of academic growth, teachers' contracts were not renewed; therefore, the improvement of teachers' instructional practices to promote student academic growth was very important to parents, districts, the community at-large, and most importantly, the contracted teachers.

Goals

According to the Association of American Educators Advisory (AAE) Board (2014), there were three primary codes of ethics that encompassed the professional responsibilities of effective educators. First, effective educators were expected to strive to create classroom environments that nurtured the full potential of all students. Second, effective educators were expected to act with conscientious effort to exemplify the highest ethical standards; and third, effective educators were responsible and willingly embraced the fact that all students had equal rights to an uninterrupted educational experience. The AAE Advisory Board stated that effective educators were expected to utilize four basic principles to guide their professional practices and guarantee the assurance of students' rights. The four basic principles were as follows:

1. Ethical Conduct Toward Students

2. Ethical Conduct Toward Practices and Performance

3. Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues

4. Ethical Conduct Toward Parents and Community

According to the AAE Advisory Board, effective educators were not only responsible for the assurance of academic instruction, they were equally responsible for teaching students character qualities that helped them to evaluate the consequences of, and accept responsibility for their actions and choices. In fact, The AAE Advisory Board stated, "The professional educator, in accepting his or her position of public trust, measures success not only by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her personal potential, but also as a citizen of the greater community of the republic" (Board, 2014).

The intended primary goal of my performance evaluation was to improve the conditions of teaching and learning within my school, which would improve the overall climate and other critical data measures, by improved instructional practices, incorporated strategies of good teaching, and enhanced student learning. I wanted the teachers who taught at my school to gain a clearer understanding of what they should have known and been able to do in order to function as effective educators. I planned to accomplish my hefty primary goal by focusing on two major elements that I felt served as the foundation for shaping the teachers' instructional practices that would have directly impacted the quality of student learning. These two elements were teacher behaviors and teacher responsibility.

According to Stronge (2014), the author of the article entitled, *Qualities of Effective Teachers,* the positive and negative behaviors that teachers demonstrated while

working with their students served as the key determinant of their effectiveness in the classrooms and on the impact of their students' academic achievement. Stronge (2014) stated in his article that there were six characteristics of teachers' responsibilities and behaviors that directly contributed, either positively or negatively, to teachers' effectiveness and their instructional practices:

- ✓ Classroom Management and Organization

- ✓ Plan and Organize for Instruction

- ✓ Implement Instruction

- ✓ Monitor Student Progress and Potential

- ✓ Professionalism

According to Stronge (2014), teachers were responsible for both their content areas and schools. How they represented themselves left a lasting impression with their administrators, colleagues, parents, and students. Stronge (2014) stated that students were the first to be affected by their teachers' impressions. He stated that students typically linked the way they learned content/subject matter and set their individual preferences for learning by the way their teachers taught them. Teachers who taught with enthusiasm and competence transferred those feelings of enthusiasm and competence onto their students. Stronge (2014) stated that how teachers related to their students, impacted their students' behaviors and experiences in class. Stronge (2014) pointed out that teachers' personalities were one of the first set of characteristics that was looked for in effective teachers. He stated, "Many aspects of effective teaching can be cultivated, but it is difficult to effect change in an individual's personality" (Stronge, 2014, p. 1).

My secondary goal was for the teachers at my school to learn that there was an unspoken public moral and ethical obligation and expectation associated with their roles as classroom teachers. As such, I wanted them to develop an understanding that, in addition to the expectation to teach as part of their ethical obligations, they were also expected to put forth constructive efforts to protect their students from the conditions that had the potential to be detrimental to their learning, health, and/or safety. I wanted my teachers to learn that they were directly responsible, and would be held accountable for both their students' and their own performances. I wanted them to understand that they were required to plan for instruction regularly in an effort to continuously strive to reach levels of proficiencies. They had to become more culturally proficient and serve as culturally responsive teachers, who understood, accepted, and respected the values and traditions of the diverse population of students that parents entrusted in their care. They were expected to deliver instruction that was void of distortions, bias, and/or personal prejudices; and they were to participate in professional development in an effort to continue to grow as professionals (Board, 2014).

I had a desire for the teachers at my school to display the professional behaviors which were consistent with the positive qualities that Stronge discussed in his article, *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. According to Stronge (2014), when teachers behaved in a responsible manner, they assumed ownership for their classrooms, their students, and their schools as a whole. They demonstrated that they understood students' feelings, admitted their mistakes, and corrected their mistakes immediately. They showed their students that they were human and quite often used personal experiences to provide real-world examples of teaching to enhance student learning. They thought about and

reflected on their practices regularly, then used their reflections to plan and re-teach the skills that were not mastered. They taught with enthusiasm, enjoyed learning, and ensured that their students also enjoyed learning. They listened to their students attentively, responded with respect, spoke to students with an appropriate tones/volume, developed rapport and promoted positive teacher to student interactions. They communicated high expectations regularly, kept students actively engaged in learning, and maintained their professionalism at all times (Stronge, 2014).

In conclusion, I believed the goals of this performance evaluation would help to improve student learning. First, it helped to build strong levels of confidence in teachers by giving them opportunities to view their careers in teaching as valued professionals in their communities. I believed as teachers began to fine tune their instructional skills and continued to grow professionally, their students, parents, colleagues, and other community members would have begun to notice, comment, and imitate. Second, this framework defined what "good teaching" looked like. It gave teachers opportunities to self-reflect, evaluate, monitor, and revise their individual practice to improve teaching and learning for their students. Third, the use of this framework encouraged teachers to get to know their students by building relationships with their students and their families. Research had shown that positive working relationships served as the primary component that was needed in order to adequately capture students' interests and inspire them to learn. Fourth, the implementation of this framework encouraged shared responsibility for teaching and learning between teachers and students. Danielson shared in her description of distinguished teachers that these teachers' efforts appeared to be seamless (Danielson, 2007). The students took just as much ownership and responsibility in the full operation

of the classrooms as their teachers. Lastly, teachers were expected to learn and grow professionally inside, as well as outside, of their schools. Teachers were encouraged to collaborate with colleagues and share their instructional struggles and effective resources/interventions with other colleagues. This implementation promoted a strong sense of teamwork for teachers to work collectively to meet their students' needs. I believed this framework for teaching was bound to improve student achievement, if implemented with fidelity.

Research Questions

Based on the results of my classroom observations, I identified three critical areas that were in desperate need of improvement: creating classroom environments with foundations of respect and rapport, establishing cultures for learning, and engaging students in their own learning. In an effort to drive my evaluation research to ensure its validity, I developed two overarching primary questions and several secondary questions. My overarching primary questions were: "Will the full implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching with fidelity and emphasis on planning and preparation help to improve teachers' delivery of instruction and promote noticeable improvements in students' overall academic achievement? Will a focus on Domain Two, The Classroom Environment, help teachers to begin to build authentic relationships with their students, which leads to positive improvements in our overall school climate, student attendance, and positive behaviors?" The following were the secondary questions that I used to drive my evaluation research:

- Was this framework for teaching effective and deserving of the national recognition and notoriety it received thus far?

- Did the implementation of this framework for teaching actually help teachers to become more culturally responsive teachers?

- What impact did it have on reshaping my school's overall climate/culture?

- Did it help to build positive relationships between teachers and students? If so, did the positive effect of these relationships help to create classroom environments that were built on foundations of respect and rapport, and created positive culture for learning within the classrooms?

- Did this framework for teaching effectively engage students and motivate them to want to be in school learning, as evidenced by increased student attendance and reductions in disciplinary office incident referrals and/or suspensions?

- Was this framework for teaching worth the time, effort, and additional resources that were sacrificed as a result of its full implementation with fidelity?

- Was this framework for teaching worth the cost that the district paid for its implementation?

The explorations and findings of the answers to these questions, as well as others, were used to complete the work for my performance evaluation and helped me to validate some unexpected conclusions.

The answers to my primary and secondary questions were important to me and the educational community because many students who were enrolled in my school at that time and other schools across the nation were losing valuable educational opportunities due to a lack of teacher preparation. There were many factors that contributed to these losses, and educator ineffectiveness was near the top of that list. The sad reality was that some students while in school, particularly those of color, did not like

school and did not experience the successes that were needed to fully embrace and enjoy their school experiences. As a result, many students were not motivated to learn and did not see futures for themselves and/or the value of learning. This was evidenced by the various achievement gaps ranging from social economics, race, gender, and special education vs. regular education, etc. This sad reality was further evidenced by the low achievement scores that many students received, particularly students of color. These students oftentimes had the intelligence to learn, but either refused to learn, lacked the motivation to learn, and/or were not expected to learn. Our school district invested millions of dollars in the purchase of this framework implementation, which had proven to be successful across the nation since its inception. I chose to evaluate Danielson's Framework for Teaching as my performance evaluation because I believed it was important for the community at large to see if the investment from the district was worth the cost.

<div align="center">Section Two: Literature Review</div>

Introduction to the Literature Review

In this literature review, I hoped to accomplish four goals. First, I planned to share the rationale that Danielson rendered as to why her framework should be adopted by school districts across the nation. Second, I planned to highlight the features that Danielson claimed set her educator effectiveness model apart from the other educator effectiveness models. Third, I planned to provide an overview of other educator effectiveness models and compare their features to those found in the Danielson's model. Lastly, I planned to explore what a few of Danielson's critics had to say about her educator effectiveness model.

Why Use a Framework?

Danielson (2007) stated that similar to other professions, such as medicine, accounting, and law that have professional frameworks with well-established definitions of expertise and procedures to certify novice from advanced practitioners, teaching should be recognized as a professional practice and have its own framework that recognizes the differences between basic and distinguished educators. Danielson developed her framework for teaching to help place the teaching profession on the same level as other professionals. She wanted her framework to convey a message to the public that the members of the teaching profession hold themselves and their colleagues to high standards of practice similar to the other professions who were previously mentioned. According to Danielson, this framework made a statement to the community that we (educators) were members of a professional community. If implemented correctly and with fidelity, Danielson (2007) claimed that her framework could serve as a national framework that had the capabilities to meet the diverse needs of novice teachers as well as enhance the dynamic skills of veteran teachers. It could have been used an efficient tool to help prepare new teachers, a guide for experienced teachers, and a structure for focusing improvement efforts, because it was an educational road map centered on a common and shared understanding of teaching (Danielson, 2007, pp. 2 - 17).

Common language.

Danielson stated that there were several features that set her framework for learning apart from others models that could be used as professional interventions. She stated that her framework provided educators with a common language to guide professional conversations. Danielson stated that every profession established a common

language. (Danielson, 2007, pp. 5-6). This was true for doctors who utilized complex medical terminology in their daily practices to diagnose illnesses or write prescriptions; or police officers who utilized various codes and acronyms to communicate among colleagues, dispatch officers to scenes, or write tickets for various offenses. Danielson believed that the common language of any profession should capture important concepts and understandings and be shared by members within that profession. She believed her framework provided educators with a common language in which to communicate about excellence in teaching. Danielson stated that during professional conversations about teaching practices, teachers were given opportunities to learn from one another and enrich their own teaching practices. She stated, "It is this joint learning that makes the conversations so rich and so valued" (Danielson, 2007, p. 6). It was these conversations that validated the components and their elements. This framework provided opportunities for structured conversation among educators about exemplary practices.

Structure for self-assessment and reflection.

Danielson (2007) stated that professional conversations could be used as a powerful tool for improving teaching practices, self-assessment and reflection. She believed that professional conversations could have led to improved teaching practices. She stated that clear descriptions of practice enabled teachers to consider their own teaching practices as they related to the statements provided to them through the use of this framework. When statements were shared with alignments of descriptions and the level of performance indicated, Danielson reported that it was almost impossible for teachers to fail to reflect on their own instructional practices. When teachers read clear statements related to their own practices, based on evidence directly related to them and

how their actions appeared, they became very willing to engage in professional

discussions, especially if they were not performing well. These professional

conversations begun to ignite the teachers' thought processes and forced teachers to

return to the descriptors to gain a clearer understanding of their professional obligations.

As a result, it encouraged teachers to self-assess, reflect and move forward with

improvement efforts (Danielson, 2007, p. 6).

The Four Domains of Teaching

Domain 1: planning and preparation.

Danielson included four domains in her Framework for Teaching. The first

domain, Planning and Preparation, described how teachers should organize the content

that their students were to learn. This domain addressed the instructional design. This was

the area where teachers were expected to develop a deep understanding of content,

pedagogy, appreciation of students, and the skills the students brought into the

classrooms with them (Danielson, 2007). Danielson stressed in her work that merely

understanding the content was not enough. Teachers had to be effective in the delivery of

that content to students. All elements of instruction, including learning activities,

materials, and strategies, had to be appropriate for the students, and all must be aligned

with goals in order to be effective.

Assessments were important in Domain One: Assessments and assessment

techniques had to be deeply embedded in the content and process. These were strong

factors that were included in this domain. Assessments had to be reflected in the

instructional outcomes and serve as documentation of students' progress. Teachers had to

be mindful of how the assessments were used and that they could provide diagnostic

opportunities for students to demonstrate their level of understanding during the instructional sequence. Based upon assessment results, teachers would adjust their instruction accordingly.

Domain 1 required teachers to take time to plan and arrange for learning. It was made clear that it was the teachers' responsibility to ensure that students learned. Teachers had to design learning activities that informed students that this content was important. Teachers who excelled in this domain designed instruction that reflected an understanding of the disciplines they taught. They detailed the important concepts and principles within that content, and described with ease how the different elements related to one another. This was called scaffolding. Teachers understood and accepted their students' backgrounds, interests, and skills. Their instructional design was coherent in its approach to topics and was differentiated to meet the various academic ranges of the students in their classrooms. Success in Domain 1 potentially led to success in Domains 2 and 3.

Domain 2: the classroom environment.

The second domain, The Classroom Environment, described the aspects of classrooms that were conducive to learning. These aspects were not related to the content areas, but they did describe how the stage for the content presentation should have been set. The components of Domain 2 promoted a comfortable and respectful classroom environment that cultivated a culture for learning. It created a safe place for students to take risks without the aftermath of ridicule or shame. Danielson described the classroom atmosphere as "business-like" with non-instructional routines and procedures being handled efficiently. Student behaviors were cooperative and non-disruptive. The physical

environment supported the instructional purposes. Danielson acknowledged that when students remembered their teachers years later, it was often for their work in domain two (Danielson, 2007). Teachers who excelled in Domain 2, created an atmosphere about the importance of learning and the significance of the content. In other words, they made learning fun, meaningful, and relevant for their students. They cared deeply about their subject matter and they invited their students to share in their excitement about teaching and learning.

Danielson believed teachers, who enjoyed teaching and possessed a genuine concern for the students they served, treated their students like real people with feelings and emotions as part of Domain 2 (Danielson, 2007). Teachers acknowledged their interests in students with genuine concern. They routinely asked questions to get to know their students better. They engaged in conversations with their students regularly to learn about their families' traditions, cultures, values, core beliefs, and even their sorrows. They acknowledged their students' intellectual abilities and potential. In return, students begun to humanize their teachers. They began to perceive their teachers as people who cared and were concerned about them. Students viewed their teachers as individuals who valued them as individuals. When this happened, and only when this happened, students began to make commitments to the hard work of learning. They generally did so with a great sense of pride and willingness.

Domain 2 also promoted the idea that teachers had to remember that they were professionals, the adults in charge; therefore, this was not a promotion to become students' friends. Teachers were mindful at all times that they were the natural authority with students, and this authority was grounded in knowledge and expertise in their roles

as educators. Teachers were in charge, but students should not have viewed them as drill sergeants, but as their protector, a challenger and/or someone one who would not permit any harm. The skills emphasized in Domain 2 were demonstrated and evidenced through classroom interactions among students and teachers. These skills were the skills that the administrator captured during classroom observations and became a part of the teachers' summative evaluation. It also served as an indicator of the success level of Domain 3.

Domain 3: Instruction.

The third domain, Instruction, described the heart of teaching. This domain focused on student engagement in content. This domain encompassed the primary rationale for schools, which was to enhance student learning (Danielson, 2007, p. 29). The intention of this domain was to unify the vision of students' development of complex understandings and participation in a community of learners. Basically, it looked closely at the distinct aspects of instructional skills, in particular, the implementation process of teachers' delivery of their written lesson plans. It answered the questions: Are students engaged in meaningful work? Do the learning activities presented carry significance beyond the next test? Do the skills required to complete the activities promote the knowledge that is necessary for answering important questions or contributing to important projects?

Teachers who excelled in Domain 3 had a plethora of effective researched-based best practiced strategies in their knowledge banks that they had fine-tuned over the course of their careers. Danielson described their work in their classrooms as being fluid and flexible. Teachers could shift with ease from one approach to another when the present approach did not appear to be effective. They could link cross curricular content

to further embed deeper understanding of ideas and concepts. They could integrate these explanations, related knowledge, examples, and what students just learned about to previous lessons learned to make learning relevant for their students.

Teachers who did well in Domain 3 were attentive to the differences of the students in their classrooms. They were aware when students were not thoughtfully engaged in the activities at hand. When inattention was observed, it was addressed immediately. Most importantly, there was a consistent system of checks and balances in place. Teachers consistently monitored students' understanding during instruction and made mid-course shifts as needed.

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities.

The fourth and final domain, Professional Responsibilities, addressed the roles assumed outside of and in addition to those in classrooms with students. These activities were not viewed by students, but were sometimes viewed by parents and administrators intermittently. These professional responsibilities were critical to the preservation and the continued development of all educators' crafts. Danielson noted that this was a major contribution to this framework and one of the many components that set it apart from other models (Danielson, 2007). This domain was included to send a clear message that the work of professional educators extended beyond their work in the classrooms. It was probably one of the most important indicators that distinguished one level of teaching from the next, the basic from the proficient. Danielson noted that when teachers presented evidence of their work, they were often surprised by the extent of their professional engagement (Danielson, 2007).

Domain 4 consisted of a wide-range of professional responsibilities practices/ components. These practices/ components included self-reflections, professional growth plans, participation in professional communities, and contributions made to the profession as a whole. These practices/components also included interactions with families of students, contact with the community, record maintenance, accuracy of other paperwork, and advocacy for students (Danielson, 2007). This domain, similar to the other three domains, encouraged teachers to be culturally responsive by actively engaging in their school communities/surrounding areas, and truly learning about and getting to know the students they worked with daily.

According to Danielson, Domain 4 captured the essentials of professionalism. It demonstrated to the public at-large that teachers were a part of teaching profession and they were committed to its enhancement (Danielson, 2007). Teachers who excelled in Domain 4 tended to be highly regarded by parents and colleagues. They could be depended upon to serve the students' interests, be active in professional organizations, and be active in their schools. These were the educators who were known for going beyond all of the technical requirements of their jobs and contributed to the general well-being of the schools they were part of (Danielson, 2007).

Components and Themes

As previously mentioned, each domain had five to six components which further described their importance. The components were expected to be addressed simultaneously along with their domains. They were not meant to be viewed or implemented in isolation because teaching was viewed as holistic. The components consisted of seven common themes. These themes were as follows:

1. Equity

2. Cultural Competence

3. High Expectations

4. Developmental Appropriateness

5. Attention to Individual Students, including those with Special Needs

6. Appropriate Use of Technology

7. Student Assumption of Responsibility

Again, the components were arranged in seven themes to provide in-depth descriptors for each domain.

The first theme was equity. Danielson acknowledged that many schools, especially those of elite status in the United States of America, had served select students well. They had accomplished these efforts by their offerings of high quality courses and graduations which led to higher educational studies; however, many public schools had fallen short when it came to educating students of color, students living in poverty in urban areas, and female students in science and math. Danielson pointed out that this reality had been growing since the segregated school movement which began before 1954 (Danielson, 2007). She stated a commitment to excellence was not complete without a commitment to equity. She went on to state that this equity must encompass two things: equal opportunities for stimulating academic achievement for all with opportunities for college and career readiness; and additional support for students who tend to be underserved. These opportunities assisted students to overcome both personal and societal doubts about their abilities to succeed. In these schools, expectations were high, and the students who attended these schools rose to meet those expectations.

The second theme was cultural competence. Many students reported to schools daily with traditions that were different from and may had even conflicted with their teachers' cultures. Danielson pointed out that teachers needed to be sensitive to the cultures of their students. Some of the components assisted teachers with making these aware nesses and endeavors. Teachers who were culturally responsive took particular care in their communication with families. They demonstrated acceptance of differences and respect their students' cultural beliefs. Schools had a moral and professional obligation to help students recognize the fact that in a democracy, no one and or no cultural group, was marginalized (Danielson, 2007).

The third theme was high expectations. Danielson stated that high expectations equated to high levels of academic achievement. Effective educators believed that all students were capable of high standards of learning and they taught accordingly. They connected their expectations to their students' reality and did not fall prey to self-fulfilling prophecies. High expectations were reflected in many components of this teaching framework. These expectations were grounded in the standards for achievement. These components were embedded with a culture of hard work and perseverance. Danielson pointed out the fact that skilled teachers did not accept sloppy work or work that was not reflective of sincere efforts. The notion of simply submitting an assignment, just because it was perceived to be complete, was not acceptable. Skilled teachers taught students that quality work required concentration, intellect, and attention to details. The practice of just allowing students to "blow it off" was not unacceptable. Accepted student work mirrored the teachers' expectations and efforts (Danielson, 2007). If teachers

wished to collect quality work, then they set and maintained high standards of expectations.

The fourth theme was developmental appropriateness. Learning activities should have been reflective of the students' intellectual development. Teachers should have been mindful of their students' patterns of development and constructive views of learning. According to Danielson, the way students learned was reflective of their cognitive structures at their time of learning. Attention to developmental appropriateness was represented in many of the components of this framework. It was important that teachers knew their students and reframed from intellectually overwhelming them (Danielson, 2007).

In the fifth theme, attention to individual students, including those with special needs, Danielson explained that every classroom included students with various academic levels and needs. This was why she incorporated components that helped teachers with the challenges of organizing student groups, while at the same time paying attention to students' individual needs. Teachers knew which students learned quickly, which students needed extra time to process information, which students worked best independently, and which students worked best in a group. Paying attention to students' developmental needs influenced all four domains. Teachers were expected to demonstrate respect for the developmental appropriateness of their students by assigning developmentally appropriate learning activities, asking developmentally appropriate questions, and providing constructive feedback in ways that provoked further thought, but that did not intellectually overwhelm students (Danielson, 2007).

The sixth theme was appropriate use of technology. Many schools in the United States had a plethora of technological equipment at their disposal in schools. These items included, but were not limited to, computers, calculators, LCD Projectors, SMART boards, etc. Proper use of, knowledge of, and incorporation of these technologies, were very important responsibilities of teachers today. Teachers knew how to use these tools to enhance student learning. If teachers had hesitations related to the use and implementation of these technologies in their daily practices, Danielson strongly encouraged them to seek professional development opportunities immediately. She also encouraged teachers who were "tech savvy" to remain abreast of the latest technologies, because they were being upgraded almost daily (Danielson, 2007).

The seventh and final theme was student assumption of responsibility. Danielson reminded teachers that small children directed their own learning with great energy and commitment. Children were naturally curious about the world around them. They actively looked for ways to learn and understand it; however, Danielson acknowledged that by the time students' reached twelve years old, they tended to become aloof about the completion of their schoolwork. The components that made up this theme focused on student responsibilities. These components described the expectations for students' work, the physical arrangement of the classrooms, and students' participation in purposeful learning communities. Teachers were still expected to be in charge of the learning environment, but ownership of the environment was shared between the teachers and the students. The teachers set the agenda for the day and the students, through cooperation and collaboration, ensured that the agendas were carried out. The teachers took on the role of commander and ensure that an environment was created for productive learning.

The teachers promoted a strong sense of learning communities, where the lines between teachers and students became somewhat blurred. The community members navigated daily to get their work completed without relinquishing responsibility (Danielson, 2007).

Evaluation Process

Danielson's Framework for Teaching was complete with an evaluation system for teachers, and an observers' competency examination for the administrators who were responsible for the construction of data, which was used to develop teachers' summative evaluations. These evaluations were based on the evidence collected throughout the school year. There were four levels of performance found in Danielson's evaluation system. The four levels of performance included:

1. Unsatisfactory
2. Basic
3. Proficient
4. Distinguished

Danielson pointed out the fact that as teachers remained in the profession, gained experience, and developed expertise, their performance tended to become more polished (Danielson, 2007). She also acknowledged that teaching was very complex work, and teachers who were new to the profession were initially overwhelmed with responsibilities. Their intended plans would sometimes go awry. It was for these reasons Danielson developed an evaluation system to accompany her framework for teaching that consisted of defining the expertise of teaching, and how it manifested and could be acquired by novices. The higher levels of performance (Proficient and Distinguished) represented greater experience and increased expertise. As teachers' performance moved to higher levels, they were more effective in their work and incorporated many of the

features found in this framework. Danielson expressed that the performance levels were levels of teaching, not of teachers. These levels of performance were written to promote conversations between teachers and their mentors, coaches, or principals, and to suggest to teachers further areas for learning. Danielson strongly urged the prohibitions of using this system as a "gotcha" system, despite the fact that it was used as part of the teachers' summative evaluations.

Levels of performance.

unsatisfactory level.

As mentioned above, Charlotte Danielson rated teachers' professional skill performance in one of four levels. She noted that these levels reflected performance of teaching, not of the teachers. Unsatisfactory was the lowest level of the four. Danielson described this level as being similar to a non-swimmer. The teacher was thrown in the deep end of the water and was drowning. The teacher could manage to dog paddle at times, but nothing happened. At this level, the teachers had yet to develop an understanding of the concepts underlying the components. These teachers were still working on the development of their fundamental practices. They performed below the license standards and should have been first priority for coaching.

basic level.
The basic level was one step above the unsatisfactory level, but with only slight differences. Danielson compared teachers at the basic level to the non-swimmer with some experience. Teachers at this level could get across the lake, but may be swamped if any waves came up. Teachers at the basic level understood the underlying components and attempted to implement its elements; however, implementation was sporadic, intermittent and unsuccessful. Teachers at this level needed additional readings,

discussions, visitations to effective classrooms, and work with a mentor. Teachers at the

basic level displayed characteristics of a student teacher or a teacher new to the

profession. For these teachers, improvement was likely to occur with experience. No

harm was done to the students and students did usually make progress (Danielson, 2007).

proficient level.

The proficient level was the level that the majority of effective teachers were

rated and maintained. Danielson described this teacher as the skilled swimmer. These

teachers had command of a number of different strokes and the knowledge of when to

use which. The proficient swimmer clearly understood the underlying components and

implemented them well. These teachers performed at levels viewed by others as

experienced professional educators. They thoroughly knew their content, curriculum,

students, and possessed a broad repertoire of strategies and activities to use with students.

They could easily plan alternative lessons if deemed necessary. They had "eyes in the

back of their heads." Their routines of teaching became automatic. They possessed a

sophisticated understanding of the classroom dynamics and were alert to the events that

did not conform to the expected patterns. They mastered the work of teaching while

continuing to practice their art. They could serve as a resource to other teachers.

distinctive level.

The distinctive rating was the highest performance level. Danielson described the

distinctive teachers the same as the skilled swimmers. These teachers were proficient, but

were also comparable to a competitive swimmer, who perfected his strokes. Teachers at

the distinctive level were master teachers who made contributions to the field, both inside

and outside of school. Their classrooms operated at a qualitatively different level than the

other classrooms. These classrooms were considered to be a community of learners with

students highly motivated and engaged in assuming responsibility for their own learning. These classrooms appeared as if they were running themselves and the teachers were not doing a thing. Danielson described it as being seamless. (Danielson, 2007). Students knew what to do and got right to work. When novice teachers observed these classrooms, they were not aware of what they were seeing. They could clearly see at the end what the teachers had created. Unfortunately, novice teachers had a very difficult time seeing how the master teachers accomplished these missions. Students' performance was very high in these classrooms. Danielson pointed out that some teachers never reached this level of performance. She also noted that some teachers reached it, but had a difficulty maintaining it. Most teachers said that the distinctive level was a nice place to visit, but do not expect to live there; however, the distinctive level should have served as the goal for all teachers, regardless of how challenging it may have been in any particular set of circumstances.

Section Three: Methodology

Hypothesis

Based on my preliminary thoughts, I believed the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching at my school, and throughout my school district, was very beneficial and well worth the time and cost associated with its implementation. Danielson's Framework for Teaching, in my opinion, met high expectations. I believed it would clearly define for teachers the characteristic behaviors of highly qualified effective educators. It would define what effective teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession. I believed the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching would help to transform our teachers into effective educators who could build

authentic relationships and begin to move toward a more effective delivery of quality instruction in our classroom environments that are conducive to learning. I believed if implemented with fidelity, this framework would promote improvement in students' academic achievement, attendance, and behaviors. I believed it would encourage students to want to be in school learning daily. I believed it would encourage teachers to collaborate more with colleagues and reflect on their personal teaching practices. I believed these practices will be evident by teachers' review of students' data, lesson plan revisions, and re-teaching un-mastered skills in responsible, respectful, safe, warm and caring learning classroom environments. Teachers would begin to create classroom atmospheres that promote a culture for learning. Expectations for learning and behaviors will be clear and abided by all. Students would value the importance of content and take pride in their learning and finished projects.

I believed as a result of the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching, teachers would become more culturally responsive, and relationships between teachers and students would begin to develop and grow stronger. Teachers would take time to talk to and get to know their students better. There would be an increase in student attendance and a decrease in the number of behavior infractions that led to office incident referrals and/or suspensions because students would want to be in the classrooms with their teachers learning.

Bell-to-bell instruction and students' time on task behaviors would be maximized. Teachers' growth toward becoming more culturally responsive would be evident by the consistent ratings of "Yes" on four questions found on our classroom walkthrough tool. The four questions are:

1. Is an educational activity taking place?

2. Are the students actively engaged in the learning activity?

3. Is the learning activity relevant and rigorous?

4. Did the classroom interactions between teachers/students and students/students, demonstrate a polite, respectful, safe, and warm and caring place for learning?

These ratings would serve as indicators to me that authentic connections/ relationships between teachers and students were being made.

Students would be interested in learning because teachers would put forth genuine efforts to establish cultures for learning by creating environments of respect, rapport, and making conscious efforts to build positive relationships. I believed the implementation of this Framework for Teaching would encourage teachers to sufficiently manage students' behavior by setting clear expectations, establishing daily routines, following classroom procedures, consistently monitoring students' behaviors, and responding quickly to students' misbehavior. A combination of all of these elements would lead me to confirm my hypothesis and conclude that the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching with fidelity did exactly what it is intended to do, which was to define what teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession, thus improving students' academic achievement, behaviors, and daily attendance.

A Traditional Elementary School

In an effort to ensure that this research study yields accurate and valid evidence, void of and/or influenced by my persuasive biases, interpretations and/or assumptions, I planned to solicit the feedback for my finding from multiple people and data sources. I planned to conduct this research at the school where I serve as principal in conjunction

with assistance from my leadership team, learning team, and staff at-large. The elementary school that I have chosen to conduct my research study at was classified as a traditional neighborhood elementary school, which was a part of a large urban school district. It currently served approximately four hundred and fifty students, from four-year old kindergarten through fifth grade.

Research Overview Design

My school district required all principals to implement and use Danielson's Framework for Teaching and its related assessment tools, Teachscape, for the first time for teachers who were being evaluated during the 2013 – 2014 school year. I was required to follow all guidelines and program requirements with fidelity. I was required to attend all train-the-trainers sessions, return to my school, and conduct all required professional development sessions for my staff. I planned to work closely with my leadership and learning teams to identify additional professional development that was needed to enhance teachers' understandings. As the school's principal, I planned to conduct the mandatory required formal and informal observations utilizing the pre-conference and post-conference observation process that was outlined in the program. I planned to provide constructive feedback, which consistently opened with positive comments. I planned to follow-up with teachers on recommendations and provide teachers with adequate support to the best of my ability. I planned to seek assistance from the district level as needed to ensure that the implementation and its processes were consistently and effectively serving their intended purpose.

I planned to use a participatory approach to conduct this research study. I planned to use evidence collections from my classroom observations and evaluations of my

teachers to determine some of the findings of this research study. For the purpose of providing a reasonable and fair sampling for this research study, I planned to only include documentation from evidence statements and artifacts from what I actually saw and heard. I planned to only use the professional documentation of three teachers who were selected to serve as the focus group for this research project; however, I planned to include my school's overall academic, attendance, and behavior data to evaluate the impact of Danielson's Framework for Teaching on the overall school-wide accountability data results. Then I planned to abstract the classroom data of the teachers in the focus group, and individual classroom results would not be reported. Their data contributions (part) will be reported as part of the whole. I planned to collect the qualitative data documentation related to the implementation and interviews as each component has been completed. I planned to retrieve the quantitative data from my school's state report card, which was classified as public records.

Based on my personal understanding and notes from a class that stated, Educational research is the systematic application of a family of methods that are employed to provide trustworthy information about educational problems, I planned to use a combination of the Qualitative and Quantitative Research Method in this research study. I planned to use the Qualitative Research Method to evaluate the quality of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. I planned to gather this data to generate a deeper understanding of the quality and effectiveness of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. I chose this research methodology because according to the guidelines distributed in class, it is a particularly useful approach to studying educational problems that require developing an understanding of complex social environments and

the meaning that individuals within these environments bring to their experiences. My primary focus was to evaluate the quality of this program based on teachers' perceptions. My philosophical roots would be based upon a constructivism view. The primary goal of this research study would be to provide a deeper understanding of and a description of my findings related to this framework's effectiveness as claimed by Danielson. The design characteristics were flexible, evolving and emergent. The data collection process would not include me, the researcher, as an instrument. I planned to be an active participate and collect the teachers' documentation and school's data and assist with the implementation tasks along with and for the teachers in the focus group teachers; however, I would be present as an observer during the proceedings.

I believed the uses of this methodological approach would help me to answer my primary and secondary questions because the participants would participate on a voluntary basis and the outcome of these findings should be as beneficial to them as they were to me, the researcher; therefore, ownership would be relevant and mutual. The members of this focus group would possess a willingness to be honest and thorough as they participate in the implementation of the framework and this research study. There would be absolutely no benefit for the participants to provide any dishonest responses, thus enhancing the credibility of these findings.

The validity of this qualitative research would consist of proving the conformability of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. I would like to confirm that the implementation of this framework actually produces the results as claimed by Charlotte Danielson. I would utilize the following strategies to ensure the validity of this research:

- Prolonged Engagement

- External Auditor

- Member Check

- Triangulation

- Rich, Thick Descriptions

First, the teachers involved in this focus group would participate in a prolonged engagement during the implementation process. Throughout the school year, teachers would participate in several trainings, classroom observations (all components), and summative conferences at the end of the first year of implementation. Second, I would serve as an external auditor. Despite the fact that I would conduct this research study at my school, the perception data that would serve as the basis of the findings would come from other teachers, not me. The trainings would be a shared responsibility, but the completion of classroom observations (and associated components), the development of the written final evaluations, and hosting the summative conferences with teachers, who served as the focus group, would all be conducted by me. Third, teacher checks would be conducted two times during announced and unannounced post observation conferences. Teacher checks would also be conducted during follow-up sessions after all training sessions. Fourth, the triangulation of data would take place when various data sources were compared and improvements were validated based on the findings as a result of the implementation. Lastly, a rich and thick description of the final results would be provided in narrative form in the findings section of this research project.

Participants/ Sampling

In an effort to provide different perspectives, I would try to select a variety of participants from various grade levels and diverse settings from within this school to volunteer to participate in a focus group. The key participants in this research study would consist of professional adults. They would be teachers who were employed by our local school district and have job assignments at a traditional neighborhood elementary school. The demographics of the participants would possibly consist of one male and two female teachers. In order to gain a variety of these perspectives, the composite of the focus group would consist of one new teacher, one regular education teacher, and one special education teacher.

Teachers would be asked to volunteer to participate in this research study. A list of potential candidates would be created. Teachers would be placed according to a first come first served basis. The names of additional teachers who express an interest in participation would be placed on a wait list and chosen later in the event that a chosen participant elects to withdraw his/her participation prior to the end of the study. Consent forms would be distributed and collected from all candidates prior to conducting the study. All participants' identities, use of work samples, and interview responses would be anonymous. There would be no retribution or reprimands if participants chose not to participate in this research study.

The participants would be chosen because they were active staff members who had teacher assignments at the school where the research study would be conducted. The selected teachers' instructional practices and daily reactions to/interactions with students partly contribute to the overall school climate and students' academic achievement data.

They were participants in the full implementation of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching and would be evaluated at the end of the 2013 – 2014 school year.

Data Sources

There would be a number of data sources used to validate the findings of this research study. The data sources would consist of a combination of teacher and student data. The teachers' perception data would be used to validate their opinion of the effectiveness of the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching on the quality of teachers' instructional practices, and would include the participants' educator effectiveness plans, pre and post conference notes, classroom observations, artifacts, summative conference documentation and interview responses. Student data collections would serve as evidence of the effectiveness of the instructional practice exposures the students received as a result of the teachers' instruction. The student data resources would include information from our school's state report card, both academic and behavioral. It was believed that a combination of these data sources would provide a thorough account of the potential findings of this research study.

Data Gathering Techniques

I planned to use both qualitative and quantitative data to conduct the research for this performance evaluation. My qualitative data collection would include a focus group, observations, accountability data reviews, and interviews. My quantitative data collection would include student achievement, academic growth, attendance, and behavior. The data collection documentations used to develop my final written report of my findings would be a combination of summative data reflective of my school's overall performance in accordance with the accountability data and the participants' interpretation of their

personal experiences as implementation participants. There would be no inclusion of the researcher's biases, assumptions, and/or interpretations reflected in the participants' statements and/or responses. The findings of this research study would be valid and credible because the participants would be allowed to review and validate their contributions to this performance evaluation prior its final submission. Most importantly, the students' academic progress monitoring, which could reflect notable improvements, would serve as concrete evidence that Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching claims were true and worthy of its national recognitions.

Focus Group

I would serve as the administrator who conducted some of the participants' classroom observations, generated their observation reports, and completed their end-of-the-year evaluation summaries. I planned to gather information from their initial effective educator plans, notes from their pre- and post-conference observation questionnaires, face-to-face conferences, and evidence statements from classroom observations, classroom walkthrough, and face-to-face summative conferences as part of my progress monitoring tools. In addition, I planned to monitor the focus groups' continuous improvement efforts toward becoming effective educators as a result of Danielson's Framework for Teaching by regularly monitoring the academic, attendance, and behavioral progress of their students throughout the school year. I planned to access and reference these findings using generalities in my final report, but not quote my findings of these results directly due to district policy restrictions. According to the district's policy related to the reporting of student and/or school data, researchers were only

allowed to report data that was released to the public by the district and/or state Department of Education.

At the end of the first year of implementation, I planned to review my school's state report card, which includes school demographics, attendance, behavior, student achievement, student growth, progress toward gap closure, on track/post-secondary readiness, and student engagement indicators. In addition, I planned to monitor the attendance, behavior, and academic progress data at least once per month, then include a summary of these progress monitoring findings in my final report. I planned to include my school's accountability data sources because the purpose of this implementation would be to help teachers become more effective educators who deliver quality instruction that promotes the development of authentic relationships and develops positive cultures for learning. I believed the true indicators of success would consist of improvements in attendance, behavior, and academic success.

I planned to conclude the final report of my findings with the perception data that I collected from the participants of the focus group during their summative interviews. I planned to conduct these interviews at the end of the first year of implementation. I planned to solicit the perception of the focus group members' interpretations related to their participation, learning, and beliefs of the impact/ benefits that this implementation had on reshaping the overall quality of their professional behaviors and instructional practices. I planned to specifically include their personal reflections related to their professional practices, opinions of their students' progress, and behavior based on the delivery of their intended instructional practices. I planned to record the interviews and summarize them in written form utilizing the participants' responses in their natural

language. I planned to quote them often and refrain from interjecting my personal biases, interpretation, and assumptions into their responses.

Observations

I planned to conduct at least one announced and one unannounced classroom observation each semester. Prior to the announced classroom observations, the participant would be required to participate in a pre-conference with the observer. During the pre- and post-observation conferences, the participants would be required to serve as leaders of their own conferences. During the pre-conferences, I would invite the participants to share the unique features of their students and classroom environment. They would have opportunities to set the stage for the anticipated observations. They would be given opportunities to share their lesson plans and any other artifacts they planned to use to support the observed lessons. They would be given opportunities to highlight key "look-fors" for the observer. They would be allowed to negotiate the best day and time for their announced classroom observations; however, all unannounced observations would be conducted at the observer's discretion. Each participant would be observed unannounced at least three times each semester. I plan to use all observation documentation evidence and notes associated with the observation process as needed to help solidify the validity of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching and its contributions to teaching and learning. I plan to use this documentation because it is a vital component of the framework and is key to the implementation process with fidelity.

Documentation Review

As mentioned previously, I planned to record this school's academic achievement, growth, attendance, and behavior data, which directly impacts the quality of teaching and learning, by reviewing and collecting this quantitative data from our district's data warehouse. I also planned to collect and record the results of teachers' classroom based

assessments during my regularly scheduled collections. I planned to keep anecdotal notes pertaining to student work samples and report causes of behavior infractions. I plan to monitor the overall school climate and keep anecdotal notes regarding observed changes and noticeable improvements. These documentation reviews would also be used to solidify the effectiveness of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching.

Interviews

Summative interviews would be conducted to gather the participants' responses to the primary and secondary research question, and to solicit their interpretation of their success as a result of the implementation of this framework. The interviews would be conducted after school hours in order to refrain from the disruption of students' bell-to-bell instructional scheduled time. The interviews would also be conducted after the participants' summative conferences have been held, so participants could receive a clear message, understanding, and confidence that their responses would not in any way affect their summative evaluations. The interviews would be conducted in this manner because I would want to encourage participants to respond to interview questions with open and honest responses to solicit authentic feedback regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the implementation on teaching and learning.

Timeline

This research study would be conducted from June 2014 through June 2015. The personal participation time spent for the teachers in my focus group would be minimal. The majority of the participants' involvement in the activities associated with this research study was a requirement of their normal professional responsibilities. The only portion that would not be a required component and would have exceeded their normal

job professional responsibilities would be the time spent during the two summative

interviews at the end of Year One. The anticipated interview time estimations were as

follows:

2014 Year One Interview   30-45 minutes

Follow-up Questions   10-15 minutes

Therefore, the total time commitment outside of their normal job professional

responsibilities for participation time for participants would have been approximately one

hour, depending upon whether a follow-up interview was needed.

Data Collections

The data collection process would be ongoing and occur at various times

throughout the school year. The data collection window would begin in June 2014, but

the data and documentation would be reflective of the 2013-2014 school year and end in

June 2015. The schedule for data collection would vary in accordance to the types of data

and the availability of the data at the time of collections. The attendance, incident referral

and behavior data would be collected and analyzed monthly, but reported in this

performance evaluation as a compilation of the results for the school years; therefore, the

data collection schedule will vary by data type and collection times.

Data Analysis Techniques

I planned to organize the data by themes and arranged them by sections. For

example, I planned to have an attendance section, an academic section, and a behavior

section. My behavior and school climate section would be combined since they were

closely related and have a similar impact on the school/classroom environments. I

planned to collect some academic, attendance, and behavior data directly from our

school's report card. I will present this numerical data in graph form. However; I will

collect and tabulate, by hand, students' proficiency data. These data sources will consist

of classroom-based assessments (CAB), report card data, and student work samples. This

data will also be presented in graph form.

I plan to analyze the data by providing a narrative of the quantitative data. I plan

to make a comparison between the baseline data, progression data, and the-end-of-the-

year data at the end of the first year. At various times during the course of

implementation, I planned to monitor the continuous progress toward improvement of

this research by maintaining handwritten anecdotal notes related to classroom

observations, and the collections of student work samples which occurred throughout the

school year. I planned to organize and analyze the data in order to ensure that it permits a

meaningful interpretation and generates understanding by key stakeholders. I planned to

follow the advice of Ellen Taylor-Powell and associates who stated, "The aim of data

analysis is to synthesize information to make sense out of it" (Taylor-Powell, 1996). I

planned to help others make sense of the data by presenting it in narrative form in a

written report with graphs that attach meaning to the data. My goal was to put the data in

context in an effort to help others draw comprehensive conclusions which mirrors my

findings.

The foundation for the interpretation of the data was to make sense of the results

by comparing them to predefined standards of expected performance for both teachers

and students. The teachers' predefined standards of performance were based on Charlotte

Danielson's levels of performance. The basis for comparison of the teachers' standards

were set by Charlotte Danielson and her research team during their development of the framework for teaching. The predefined standards were generated by their extensive research of best practices based on teachers' effectiveness across America (Danielson, 2007). The predefined standards for students are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These standards are representations of national norms for all elementary age students at various grade levels and were adopted by our school district during the 2010-2011 school year. All results will be evidenced based.

I planned to conduct this research as an independent researcher; therefore, I would be the only individual collecting and organizing all the data associated with this research study; however, I would solicit the assistance of my school's leadership team, learning team and the teachers in the focus group to assist with the interpretation of our school's data. In order to examine the data, gain an in-depth understanding, and avoid interjections of personal interpretations, assumptions, and biases, I planned to, as my district directs, share this responsibility with the aforementioned members of my school. I would use student achievement, attendance, and behavior data from my school district's data warehouse and other data collections as indicators of the effectiveness of the implementation of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. I planned to present my findings in a narrative form. I planned to ensure the validity of my performance evaluation by conducting peer debriefing sessions and allowing members of my focus group to review and approve their contributions to my findings prior to its submission.

Ethical Considerations

I planned to maintain a high level of ethical standards and refrain from violating any laws and/or district policies during the duration of this research study. I planned to

assume all costs associated with this research study, which included the filing fee for the district research application and copies of the documentations. I planned to abstract the data that I need from the various data sources for which I have security clearance and prior authorization as part of my employment benefits within my school district. There is/was a signed copy of my user agreement on file at the district office. I do not plan to make any requests for additional data access for the purposes of this research study from my school district.

Teachers who expressed interests in participation in this research study would be given a consent form to participate. I planned to collect the consent forms and provide each teacher with a copy for their records. Upon acceptance to participate, I planned to verbally reiterate the expectations of their participation and remind them once again that they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time without reprimand of any type.

There would be no work related monetary compensation, other than my gratitude, for teachers who volunteer to participate in my focus group; however, as a show of my appreciation for their participation, I planned to give teachers a traditional thank you card at the end of year one along with a gift card. Therefore, the participants' involvement in and responses to this research study should be genuine and authentic. All participants' identities, usage of work samples, and interview responses would be anonymous. There would be no retribution and or reprimands implemented if participants choose not to participate. Participants would be offered opportunities to withdraw from participation at any time without any type of penalty.

Plan for Reporting the Participants, the School and the District

All information collected and reviewed would be reported anonymously in a written report and submitted to my dissertation chairs. The school and/or school district would not be referenced by name. The school would be referenced as "an elementary school" or "my school" and the district will be referenced as "the school district" or "my district." The teachers who volunteered to participate would be assigned a letter such as A, B, C, and referenced as Teacher A, Teacher B, and Teacher C. All collected information would be kept in a secured location at all times.

Security Plan

My data security plan consisted of utilizing computers that were armed with firewall security protections. I had a locked filed drawer inside my office at school that I used for storage of confidential information. At home, I had a locked security box that I kept all of my personal and confidential information stored. This box was kept in a secure location away from guests. I would be the only individual who physically handled the components of my research. I would, from time-to-time, transport information from school to home, and vice-versa, in my personal vehicle. When this happened, I placed information in my workbag in the trunk of my car and promptly removed it as soon as I arrived at home/school; however, the bulk of my work would be conducted at my school after school hours and on weekends. If, for any reason, information needed to be destroyed, I would place this information in the secured locked shredder bin at school labeled Iron Mountain for a secured disposal. As mentioned previously, the data that I planned to collect for this research study was data that I typically would have collected as part of my normal professional responsibilities associated with my position as an

elementary principal with in my school district. I planned to only review the data that was public knowledge and/or directly related to my school, and literally my job performance as a principal employed by my school district.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I believed my research methodology and data sources were reliable. The uses of the Qualitative Research Method was the recommended methodology for evaluating the quality of a framework. One of my goals was to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of this framework and its effectiveness; therefore, I anticipated that my findings would reflect the quality of the framework. I utilized more than one data source to provide a thorough account of it and to cross-validate my findings. My data collection process consisted of continuous data monitoring throughout the school year. My data sources were not contingent upon a single summative assessment results, but a variety of data sources. It was believed that this approach would be best to validate and lead to thorough findings.

I was hopeful that the implementation of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching was the tool that my school needed to improve teachers' instructional practices and subsequently affect student learning by defining what teachers should have known and been able to do in the exercise of their profession. I was hopeful that these efforts would accelerate improvements in my school's overall climate, academic achievement, attendance and behaviors data. I was hopeful that there is some truth to Charlotte Danielson's claim and global notoriety that if this framework was implemented with fidelity, than similar to many effective educators in the nation, my teachers would also gain a clearer understanding of what "good teaching" looked like and then used this

knowledge to create positive classroom environments that were conducive to learning where students were actively engaged in their own learning journeys. Upon the conclusion of this research study, if there was validity found in Danielson's claims, in my opinion, it would be evident in our continuous improvement in our academic, attendance, and behavior achievement progress. Furthermore, if my school began to achieve continuous improvement, then I would share my findings and improvement plans with other principals in hope of creating a positive district impact on the overall achievement levels.

Section Four: Findings and Interpretations

Findings

Year one.

In an effort to gain clarity regarding the effectiveness of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, I interviewed three teachers, who were assigned to teaching positions at my school, where Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching was implemented with fidelity for the very first time during the 2013-2014 school year. Of the three teachers who participated in my research study, one teacher was a new, primary, regular education teacher, Teacher A, with two years of teaching experience. The second teacher was a regular education intermediate teacher, Teacher B, with fourteen years of teaching experience. The third teacher, Teacher C, was a multi-categorical special education teacher with seventeen of years of teaching experience in both the primary and intermediate grade levels.

Each teacher selected to participate in this study had various teaching experiences at this particular school and were chosen in an effort to provide different perspectives and

opinions from multitude points of view. It was a known fact that this was a relatively small sampling of teachers and their personal beliefs, opinions, comments, and/or suggestions may not be a true reflection of the greater educational society; however, surprisingly, all three teachers, even though they were interviewed separately and on different dates, shared very mixed responses and personal opinions regarding Danielson's framework during their one-on-one interviews, despite the fact that they shared similar exposures produced by the same administrator in the same manner with the use of the same content matter throughout the school year.

After interviewing three teachers and consolidating their responses, I was able to confirm most of Danielson's claims. All three teachers agreed that the first year of implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching with fidelity did positively impact their teaching practices because it did provide them with an understanding of what they needed to know and be able to do in order to become more effective educators. During my interviews, Teacher A stated, "I feel that it has improved my instructional practices. It has made me accountable to reflect on my teaching and to assess what I am doing, as well as, how it is working; and if not, what I can do to improve my teaching strategies." Teacher B stated, "I do believe the Danielson framework has helped me in my instructional practices. Focusing on the four domains will keep me more organized and keep me focused on the certain components of each domain." Teacher C stated, "I agree that participating in Danielson's Framework for Teaching has improved my instructional practices. When I plan my lessons for instruction, I look at the four domains and plan accordingly."

Although teacher B agreed that this implementation did positively impact her overall teaching practices, she stated that she felt it did not make her a better teacher. This was evident when she asked what I thought was a rhetorical question, "Do I believe it made me a better teacher?" Then she answered her own question by stating, "I would say no. But it does help me to stay focused throughout the school year to continue to reflect on my instructional goals. I do believe if there is one framework that every teacher is using teachers will be held accountable for the same practices."

During the discussion regarding the question, "Has your participation in this implementation helped to improve your students' academic achievement growth?" the teachers' responses were different. All three teachers reported that they witnessed some type of growth in their students' academic achievement at the end of the first year of implementation, but none of the teachers would attribute this growth as a result of this implementation. Teacher A voiced some agreement when she stated, "As a teacher, it has always been my goal to stretch my students and have them to reach their fullest potential in the year they spend with me. The framework helps in examining if this is, in fact, happening. The feedback and thought process always focuses and centers on the students." Teacher B voiced disagreement when she stated, "I do not believe the implementation of Danielson's Framework has improved my students' academic achievement growth. My students made significant growth in all areas this year, but many are still not proficient. I do not blame the implementation and/or give it credit for the growth that I have seen." Teacher C demonstrated that she had mixed opinions of the implementation's effect on her students' academic growth when she stated, "I teach special education students and have always looked at their IEP goals and their present

levels of functioning. I have always started instruction at their levels and base my instruction according to their academic growth. I have seen some academic achievement; however, more academic achievement will be needed to close the achievement gap the students are facing."

During the discussion regarding the question related to the impact that the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching had on building positive relationships between their students, families and themselves, the teachers shared differing opinions. Teacher A stated during our interview, "I can't say that it has helped me build a relationship with parents. I do feel that really getting to know my students and developing respect and expectations have always been a part of my teaching goal." Teacher B stated, "I do believe that participating in the implementation has positively impacted my relationships with students and parents. I implemented a weekly newsletter to better communicate this year and added a texting app/program. The newsletter was extremely helpful to the families, but the texting program had little impact due to the fact I already have daily communication with all parents. The texting program was unnecessary because I already have constant communication." Teacher C stated, "I have always known that building positive relationships with students and their families are important. Danielson's framework is a reminder that it is important to build relationships and rapport with students and their families. I do have positive relationships with my students and their families. I get to know what my students like and what they do not like personally and academically. We set up rewards together to celebrate accomplishments. I make positive calls and send positive notes home. Parents feel free to contact me at any time and or come to visit the classroom, which many of them do."

During the discussion regarding the question related to the impact this implementation has had on helping teachers to teach in a more culturally responsive manner, the teachers' unanimously disagreed that this implementation has not assisted them with becoming more culturally responsive teachers. Teacher A stated, "No, I have always considered individual personalities, and students' backgrounds and schema." Teacher B stated, "I do not feel using the framework has helped me teach more culturally responsive. I am not saying it may not help other teachers, but I do not believe that the framework changed my cultural awareness." Teacher C stated, "I believe that it is very important to know who you are teaching in order to teach effectively. I respect my students and teach in a culturally responsive manner. I do not believe the implementation of this framework has helped me improve in this area."

When we discussed the question related to how the knowledge that they have gained from their participation in this implementation influenced their classroom environment, the responses from the teachers varied. Each teacher opted to reflect on and share their opinions of their personal preferences. None of their responses was identical. Teacher A chose to comment on the knowledge that she gained in the area of assessments. She stated, "I'm using my assessments to improve my instruction and tailoring it more specifically to individual students and small groups." Teacher B did not directly reference the impact that her new knowledge had on her classroom environment, but instead chose to comment on how her newly gained knowledge impacted her professional practices and her work in Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities. She stated during our interview, "The implementation of Danielson's Framework has made me more cognizant of all the teachers' responsibilities. Keeping binders made me take

time to document and reflect on my teaching. Constant reflection on my work and instructional practices will make me a more competent teacher. Any teacher who takes time to reflect on his/her methods is and will be a better educator. Danielson's Framework gives you the components you need to reflect on." Teacher C shared yet another perspective. She chose to comment on the knowledge she gained as a result of her work in Domain 2: The Classroom Environment. She stated during our interview, "The classroom environment is important. Rules and learning intentions need to be known. The classroom needs to be a safe and respectful environment. The seating arrangement needs to be set up so all student learning styles are met." One again surprisingly, none of the teachers opted to answer this question directly.

During the discussion of the question related to the impact the implementation has had on students' classroom behaviors and motivation levels, the teachers' responses varied. Two of the three teachers stated directly that their students' behaviors and or motivational levels were not influenced by the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching. Teacher A stated, "My student's love learning and are engaged due to the supportive learning environment that has been created." Teacher B stated, "My students knew my expectations this year due to me looping with them. Looping is when the teacher move up a grade with his/her students. Their behaviors and motivation levels. are moderate to high. The majority of the students wanted to succeed and put in the effort for success. I do not believe the framework dictated their motivation levels." Teacher C, however, believed the implementation of this framework did positively impact her students' classroom behaviors and motivation levels. She triangulated her beliefs by attributing the implementation of this framework being the cause for her

students' improved classroom behaviors and heightened motivational levels. She stated, "The behaviors have improved. I have not written a referral this year. The students are motivated to learn. This makes teaching easier for me."

During our discussion regarding the question related to the framework's effectiveness and deserving the national recognition it has received thus far, the teachers' opinions were similar in nature. They all agreed that this framework was not deserving of its positive national recognition. Teacher A stated, "There needs to be a more manageable way (loss time constraints) to achieve the outcomes and still remain efficient in what we do. The observation and evaluation process consumed too much time. I feel more time and emphasis should be placed on allowing teachers time to just teach, not participate in a lot of meetings." Teacher B stated that she did not believe the framework was deserving of its notoriety when she stated, "No, I do not believe the framework should have received national recognition thus far. It is simply a guideline for teachers. Having a district that aligns their teachers and uses the same terminology will help the educators to know what is expected of them without confusion." Teacher C stated, "I believe this program helps remind teachers what they need to do each day. I believe effective teachers deserve the national recognition, not a framework. This framework merely informs teachers of what they should have been doing all along. Its message is not very different from all of the other messages I have heard over the years."

During our discussion regarding the question related to the school-wide implementation and its impact on the school's overall climate and culture, the teacher responses were inconsistent, yet one point became very clear. The implementation required a lot of work and, at times, that work was very stressful for teachers. This point

was further solidified when Teacher A stated, "The teachers seemed very overwhelmed at the amount of work and the demands of the district requirements. It seemed as though there was less time to teach and plan well; therefore, I feel this implementation has had a negative impact on the overall school climate and culture." Teacher B displayed mixed opinions when she stated, "Implementing the framework school-wide to many of the staff was very stressful, but it definitely made people aware of what was expected of them this year. The staff knew what needed to be done to keep documentation of what they were doing in their classrooms. Many of the staff took initiatives to better their methods, and took it upon themselves to learn more about the Danielson's Framework in an effort to better understand what was expected in their professional portfolios. Staff also came together to collaborate on their findings and help each other, which helped with communication among everyone." Teacher C stated, "At first, I felt it was not well received and it was perceived that it would add so much more work to an already overwhelmed staff. Now I believe that everyone has calmed down, and the staff is able to implement the framework in their teaching. Although the results are not evident at this time, I do believe, in time, we will begin to see positive results."

During our discussion of the question regarding the teachers' thoughts related to the cost to implement the framework district-wide and whether it was a worthwhile investment for the district, the teachers' thoughts were once again mixed. Teacher A stated, "I think it was useful and meaningful; however, it was very time consuming. The time it took to strive to become proficient, let alone distinguished, seemed unrealistic. For these reasons, I say…. No, it was not worth it." Teacher B stated, "No, I do not believe the cost of the program was worth it to the district. There are so many other things and

programs our district needs to help our children, but with this program was not one I would have chosen. Keeping documentation of instruction and evidence of methods being used are definitely a must. Using Common Core State Standards and making sure all teachers are in compliance is beneficial to our district." Teacher C stated, "I do not know what the cost was for the district. I do know that it was important to have a framework for teaching, so everyone knows what is expected and to keep everyone striving to meet the needs of all the students."

At the close of the interviews, when the teachers were given an opportunity to share any additional information that they deemed important regarding the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching at the end of the first year of implementation, they willingly shared their closing thoughts. Teacher A shared, "The modules were very comprehensive; however, due to the time restraints on teachers (and their families) it was a lot to deal with!" Teacher B shared, "Danielson's Framework was a good guideline with clear and concise components for educators to follow. The concepts were beneficial for teachers to make sure that they were responsible for the whole aspect of teaching. Using the four domains and their components should help educators to focus on their own areas in need of improvement. I do not believe it will help all teachers. Some teachers will follow the framework, while others will pick and choose what they find appropriate for them. That is where the real problem will be when evaluations are done only every three years. I believe when the staff is being evaluated is when they will put forth their efforts to work on the Danielson's Framework." Teacher C shared, "I believe it was a good implementation. I look forward to seeing the academic growth that I believe this framework will create at the end of the next school year."

I learned during this implementation that Danielson's Framework for Teaching did clearly define and demonstrate what good teaching looked and sounded like. In my opinion, I believe Danielson did master this tremendous task with her in-depth knowledge, research, and the development of the four domains: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibility. First, she demonstrated in Domain 1: Planning and Preparation that it was vital for teachers to identify what was important for students to learn. After this identification occurred, she stated that it was equally important for teachers to use this information to design coherent instruction that allowed students to achieve their learning goals. During this process, Danielson stated that teachers would possess a deep understanding of content, pedagogy, and the students they serve daily. It was confirmed that this process entailed a deep understanding of the students' knowledge, skills, interests, and most importantly, cultural backgrounds. According to most of research, these components had been deemed critical to teaching and learning.

Based on the purpose of and rationale for this framework, the implementation of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching did exactly what it was designed to do, which was to improve teacher behaviors toward teaching and learning. This was evident by my research findings, some of the teachers' responses of my interest group and the slight improvements in the students' behavior data, such as increased attendance, decreased suspensions, and reports of positive relationship building. Despite the fact that teachers somewhat disagreed, the implementation of this framework did appear to contribute positively to the overall improvement in building strong relationships, student behaviors, and boosting motivation levels, which attributed to positive effects in the

classrooms, school climate, and culture. Its impact on student learning, however, related data, such as students' academic growth and achievement, was not as promising. There was minimal overall growth and improvement shown in this area. In addition, this implementation appeared to have no real impact on building strong positive relationships between teachers, students, and parents, nor did it assist teachers to become more culturally responsive teachers.

Needless to say, the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching did address the "What" teachers should know and be able to do in order to perform as effective educators; however, it failed to address the "How" to deliver good teaching through their instructional practices in order to promote continuous improvement with the students' academic growth and achievement. The framework successfully addressed the behaviors the teachers should demonstrate, but it did not address how teachers could acquire the skills that were needed to actually deliver the instruction. Some teachers simply needed more guidance and instructions related to how to fulfill the requirements of Danielson's framework that could not be found in the framework resources; therefore, the use of Danielson's Framework for Teaching as the sole change agent to create schoolwide improvement was not merely enough to create the major impact that was needed to promote continuous improvement at my school. My school needed much more than what Danielson offered. I learned, as a result of this implementation, that schools should look for a variety of frameworks and program models that are tailored to meet their specific needs, and change their approaches as their individual school needs changes.

Interpretations

According to my school's accountability data, there was a slight improvement in my school's student attendance, behavior, and/or academic growth/achievement as a result of the implementation of Danielson's Framework for Teaching. There was a slight increase in the students' attendance data over the past two years. During the 2012-2013 school year, the overall student attendance rate was 91%. During the 2013-2014 school year, the overall student attendance rate increased from 91% to 92%. The district and the state's attendance expectation was 93%. Our school did not meet its attendance target for the 2013-2014 school year.

According to students' 2013-2014 Wisconsin Knowledge and Skills Concepts Examination WKCE Results student enrollment at the time of the assessment administration, 4% of our students met their reading proficiency level while 96% did not. According to their math results, 12% of our student met the proficiency level while 88% percent did not. According to students' English Language Arts results, 39% of our students met their proficiency level while 61% did not. According to students' social studies results, 49% percent of our students met their proficiency level, but 51% did not. According to students' science results, 21% of our students met the proficiency level, but 79% did not. Overall, many of the students at my school did not meet their academic proficiencies on the WKCE according to their grade level standards.

Three times during the school year, (October, January, and May), students in kindergarten through fifth grade are administered the Measurement of Academic Progress Assessment (MAP). The MAP assessments serve as a benchmark assessment for reading and math at the beginning of a new school year, an academic growth/progress indicator

throughout the school year, and a college readiness indicator for the ACT college entrance examination. The results of these benchmark assessments are considered to be a national average of students' performance across the nation at each grade level. Students whose results are comparable to the national average are believed to be on track to score at least a twenty-four on their ACT during their junior or senior year of high school. The MAP results are color-coded and reported according to students' performance toward meeting the targets associated with college readiness. The colors used are blue, green, yellow, orange, red and white. The color codes indicate the following:

Blue – Significantly/ Above Target

Green – On Target

Yellow – Below Target

Orange – Well Below Target

Red – Significantly Below Target

White – Untested

The results are reflections of students who were enrolled in my school at the time of testing. Needless to say, teachers and students aim to achieve either blue or green coding.

According to my school's 2013-2014 MAP results, many of the students are not on track for college readiness. During the fall assessment MAP window, my school tested approximately three hundred and fifty-five students in reading throughout the school year. Our fall reading MAP data indicated that 6% of our students were on target for college readiness, but 84% were not. Our winter reading MAP data indicated that 19% of

our students were on target for college readiness in reading while 81% were not. Our spring reading MAP data indicated that 21%of our students were on target for college readiness and 79% were not. According to the MAP Data, there was a 15% increase of students on track in reading for college readiness from fall to spring.

During the fall assessment window, my school tested approximately three hundred and fifty-five students in math. According to our fall math MAP data, 18% of our students were on target for college readiness and 82% were not. Our winter math MAP data indicated that 23% of our students were on target for college readiness while 77% were not. Our spring math MAP data indicated that 24% of our students were on target for college readiness and 76% were not. According to the MAP data, there was a six percent increase of students on track in math for college readiness from fall to spring.

According to our school's discipline data, there was a significant improvement in the area of suspensions. During the 2012-2013 school year, our school issued one hundred and seven suspensions. Of these thirty-four suspensions, 75% of them were for personal/physical safety violations, 24% were for disruptions of the learning environments, and one 1% was for weapons violation. During the 2013-2014 school year, there was a significant decrease in suspensions. There were ten suspensions issued. Of these ten suspensions, none were related to weapons, 40% were related to the threat of personal/physical safety, and 60% were for disruptions of the learning environments. Of the ten suspensions issued, one suspension was not served, four suspensions were issued to non-special education students and four were issued to special education students. The majority of the suspensions issued were issued to students in third grade (8%) and fifth grade (10%). The others were issued to students in second (2%) and fourth grade (6%).

Students in three year kindergarten through first gade did not receive any suspensions. The impact of the implementation with an emphasis on teachers' behaviors appeared to have had a positive impact on the improvement of students and decreased suspensions.

According to the office disciplinary referral data, the number of office disciplinary referrals increased slightly compared to the year before. During the 2012-2013 school year, there was a total of four hundred seventy-seven office disciplinary referrals written and submitted. During the 2013-2014 school year, the number of office disciplinary referrals decreased by fourteen, from four hundred and seventy-seven to four hundred and sixty-three. Of the four hundred and sixty-three office disciplinary referrals submitted and processed, twenty-two students received only one referral, eighteen students received two to five referrals, seven students received six to ten referrals, and one student received more than eleven referrals. Needless to say, there were no significant improvements in the reduction of student incident infractions that resulted in a decreased need for teachers to write, submit, and process office disciplinary referrals. Although the change in teachers' behaviors may have led to a decrease in suspension, it appeared to have had minimal impact on the improvement of students' overall behavior infraction, and the need to put students out of class and submit office disciplinary referrals.

In conclusion, based on my preliminary findings at the end of the first year of implementation, I was able to conclude and confirm that Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching provided a shared standardized process for conducting classroom observations. This standardized process was proven to help reshape teachers' behaviors. This framework did provide teachers with a clear explanation and view of

what good teaching looked (and sounded) like. It did create a common language which was simplistic enough for all educators to comprehend and follow regardless of experience levels. This was evident by the meaningful conversation among teachers during the various professional community meetings about good teaching. These commonalities also strengthened teachers' behavioral practices and improved the overall school climate. This was evident by the increased attendance and decreased behavior incident/suspension data. This was also evident by the reports from teachers which confirmed that their relationships with their students and families were more positive and productive. Teachers reported havin, for the first time, real partnerships with parent, and working collectively with families to ensure compliance among students.

Although Danielson claimed that professional conversations should serve as the mechanism in which teaching and learning should improve, I discovered that school-wide improvement required much more than a simple reshaping of teachers' professional behaviors. Real school-wide transformation which promotes effective, continuous growth and improvement in student academic achievement requires a focus on effective scheduling practices, an implementation of unified systems of operations, ongoing discussions related to strengthening instruction to positively transform classroom instruction, professional development for the adult learners, consistent practice of progress monitoring, data driven decision making based on results, and a regular celebration of small wins. I learned as I conducted my research that Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching does not address these vital components.

Section Five: Judgments and Recommendations

Unlike Danielson's Framework for Teaching, in this section I would like to make several recommendations that I felt school leaders could implement which could demonstrate the "how" they can transform their low performing schools within their districts into high achieving schools without wasting valuable time on fruitless efforts on unproductive programs and ineffective implementations. I recommend that this endeavor begin by informing school leaders that the use of a variety of researched-based frameworks, which are closely aligned to the specific needs of their schools, should be considered when they are attempting to create a positive systemic change in an effort to promote continuous improvement and academic achievement. Typically, there are a number of factors that usually contribute to the reasons schools are low performing, and as such, the use of a variety of methods are often necessary. Similar to the results of the saying, "One size fits all," the use of one framework to correct a school with a number of issues will rarely work. As Teacher B stated during her interview," Using one program for one year will not show the growth we need to see. We may need to use a number of programs in an effort to see real results later down the road. It will require implementation for several years." I agreed with Teacher B's sentiment. School leaders, when trying to promote school-wide improvement, need to explore with their professional learning communities a number of options, and develop realistic action plans using their data sources and researched-based best practices. After plans have been agreed upon, then they should strategically and intentionally implement their plans. Teachers should continuously monitor their progress regularly and revise their plans based on data results.

Prior to creating viable school-wide action plans that are effective and guaranteed to produce positive results, there is prerequisite work which includes an evaluation of their school's needs assessments that must be completed. First, I recommended that school teams evaluate their needs related to their culture for learning by utilizing Tony Wagner's Four Cs: conditions, context, competency and culture. It is vital that there is a clear understanding and acceptance of the results of their needs assessment. As Wagner stated, it is important to relate the parts to the whole. He said, "A system is a perceived whole whose elements hang together because they continually affect each other over time and operate towards a common purpose. Systemic thinking is about trying to keep the whole in mind, even while working on the various parts" (Wagner, 2006, p. 97). The states of these four areas in schools have a direct impact on the quality of the teaching and learning that takes place in schools.

Wagner stated that while school teams conduct their needs assessments and address their areas of change, they should begin by conducting an examination of their competencies. Wagner defined the competencies as the repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning (Wagner, 2006). The competencies need to be developed regularly through ongoing professional development opportunities. Wagner stated that competencies are most effective when they are focused, job-embedded, continuous, constructed, and collaborative. According to Wagner (2006), during this work, school teams begin to answer questions such as "How well do we think… strategically, identify student learning needs, gather and interpret data, collaborate, give and receive critiques, productively disagree, reflect, and make midcourse corrections? Wagner stated, "… this

type of professional development necessarily implicates many parts of the system" (Wagner, 2006, p. 100).

After the examination of the competencies, Wagner suggested that school teams examine the conditions in order to ensure that opportunities to further develop and effectively use the competencies are not undermined by the conditions. Wagner defined the conditions as the external architecture that surrounds student learning. The condition include the tangible time, space, and resources. According to Wagner, during this work school teams begin to answer questions such as, "How well do we create and maintain time for problem solving, learning, and talking about challenges? How well do we create and maintain relevant and student friendly data, agree upon performance standards, clear priorities, and focus for work? How well do we build leveled support?" The conditions include all of those components which directly affect teaching and learning for both the teachers and the adults (Wagner, 2006).

After the examination of the conditions, Wagner suggested that school teams examine their school culture. Wagner defines culture as the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality of relationships within, as well as, beyond the school. According to Wagner, during this work, school teams begin to answer questions such as, "How would we characterize our level of expectation for all students' learning? How are the adult relationships with each other? How effective is the communication tactics between the district and the school leaders? Most importantly, how do the adults view their responsibility for all students' learning? Wagner describes

culture as the invisible, powerful meanings and mindsets that are held by the members within the school communities (Wagner, 2006).

After the examination of the culture, Wagner suggested that school teams examine the context. Wagner defines the context as the skill demands all students must meet to succeed as providers, learners, and citizens. He states that these are the aspirations, needs and concerns of the families and the school communities (Wagner, 2006). Wagner describes this stage as the stage where school teams began to develop an understanding of global, state, and community realities. According to Wagner, this is the stage where school teams begin to re-envision what all students need to know and then create action plan to address these needs. During this work, school teams begin to answer questions such as, "How well do we understand and work with our students' families? How well do we see clearly the core competencies students will need for work, citizenship, and continuous learning?" Wagner stated, "We need to understand all this contextual information to help inform and shape the work we do in order to transform the culture, conditions and competencies of schools and districts" (Wagner, 2006, pp. 104-106). After school teams have conducted their needs assessments, I believed their next task should be to ensure that teachers and students have effective scheduling practices in place which allow them ample opportunities to use their time wisely.

Second, I believed school leaders should ensure the conditions for work productivity and maximized instructional time to improve learning are doable by allowing that ample time allotted throughout the school day for teachers, as well as students, to actually get their work completed in a timely manner without suffering undo pressures. This feat could be accomplished with the implementation of an effective

school scheduling system. According to Canady and Rettig, the authors of the book, *Elementary School Scheduling: Enhancing Instruction for Student Achievement,* schools today are under tremendous pressures to increase student performance, raise student assessment scores, and are subjected to an heighten level of accountability (Canady and Rettig, 2008). I believed school leaders needed to find ways to help teachers within their schools to work smarter, not harder. I believed this could be done by taking a closer look at their scheduling practices.

Canady and Rettig stated that both maximizing instructional time and available resources are critical to major school reform efforts. They stated in their book that schools could enhance their instructional time and improve learning for both the adults and the students with an implementation of schedules that effectively use time, space and resources (Canady and Rettig, 2008). They said that the implementation of an effective school schedule can:

- ✓ Improve the quality of school time

- ✓ Reduce problems associated with various pull-out programs

- ✓ Decrease class size during critical instructional periods

- ✓ Allow for temporary, flexible instructional groups based on what and who is being taught

- ✓ Provide an adequate time for students to learn based on their individual needs

Although Canady and Rettig believed that effective school scheduling could serve as a significant factor in determining how successful teachers work with students between bells, it would not provide a guarantee that it would automatically increase student

attendance; however, an ill-crafted schedule could cause fragmented and frequent interrupted instructional time, wasted time, inadequate use of resources, and unnecessary stress for both students and teachers (Canady and Rettig, 2008).

Canady and Rettig highlight that the problems with today's schedules are vast. They stated that ineffective school scheduling usually include issues, but are not limited to, an inconsistent allocation of time, or fragmented instructional times. They stated that most elementary school schedules consistently reflect inadequate structuring of times for intervention, enrichment, and special educational services. Schedules lacked common planning time for teachers to meet during the school day to actually discuss teaching and learning. According to Wagner, teachers needed time to meet about the work. They needed time to analyze data, plan together and develop shared visions of good teaching and student results. Canady and Rettig also stated that there were usually mismatches between needs and resources and mismatches between professional teaching skills and teaching assignments Canady and Rettig, 2008). If the conditions in which to get the work done are not sufficient due to ineffective scheduling systems, then work productivity will be stifled and student progress could be hampered.

Canady and Rettig stated, what they believe are the causes of elementary school scheduling problems. They stated in their work that a lack of a master schedule and scheduling core instruction appears to be the primary culprit for problems with scheduling practices. They stated that scheduling effective time for special education services and encore instruction are problematic areas as well. They stated that most scheduling structures are designed for self-contained classrooms where teachers are responsible for teaching all of the core subjects. In these classrooms, the individual

77

teachers are responsible for scheduling the amount of time they spend teaching each subject and may or may not spend sufficient time teaching the subjects that have the greatest needs. They share that the individuals who construct these schedules oftentimes fail to consider a school-wide view of the overall school priorities. They stated that most schedules are drafted based on the preferences of the adults, and students oftentimes receive fragmented service delivery as a result of the adults' decisions (Canady and Rettig, 2008).

Canady and Rettig suggested that schools consider six key principles when designing their school schedules. The six principles are as follows:

1. Focus on the Mission

2. School-wide Scheduling

3. Collaboration

4. Practicality

5. Fairness

6. Efficiency

Canady and Rettig suggested that schools take at least one year to study their current scheduling practices and plan their action plan for a school-wide implementation. They suggested that schools empower a committee to research to the current problems, set goals, and investigate solutions. They reminded us of the importance of staff buy-in in order to promote a smooth transition into the revised scheduling system. They stated in their book, "While one might think the staff would welcome any improvements to the school schedule, the fact is that what one faculty members sees as an improvement, another may view as a disaster (Canady and Rettig, 2008, p. 13).

Third, I believed school leaders, in partnership with their professional learning communities, should research, select, implement, and focus on the implementation of an effective school reform model that they believe will turn their school around. I suggested school teams begin this work by conducting an analysis of the work by Dr. Janice Scott-Cover. Dr. Scott-Cover is best known both nationally and internationally as a "Turn-Around Principal," who has experienced a tremendous amount of success working in urban school systems and improving schools within these districts in record time. Dr. Scott-Cover shares in her book, *7 Insider Secrets: Transform Your Low-Performing Elementary School and Score an A in Record Time,* the steps that school teams can implement to create continuous school-wide improvements. Dr. Scott-Cover shares the seven strategies that she used to transform low-performing elementary schools to high-performing schools in record time. The seven strategies are as follows:

1. Assess the Situation

2. Study the Curriculum

3. Organize Instructional Planning and Collaboration

4. Teach Test Taking Skills and Strategies

5. Continuously Assess and Monitor Progress

6. Lead From the Front

7. Celebrate Achievements

Dr. Scott-Cover believed that if schools implement these seven strategies, they will turn low-performing schools into high-performing schools in record time just as she did.

Dr. Scott-Cover states, "Before a school embarks on a reform process, it is important to know what the current data shows versus what it should be" (Scott-Cover,

2013, p. 21). Scott-Cover, similar to Tony Wagner, although termed differently, suggested that school teams begin their reform efforts with an implementation of "Strategy One: Assessing their Situation." Scott-Cover suggested that school teams analyze and compare their student achievement data, student discipline data, and instructional impact. She states, "The first task tackled was to develop a working knowledge and understanding of the data" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 25). She strongly suggested that the school staffs engage in a series of workshops, which should be presented by the district's experts and members from the evaluation department. She emphasized the use of the word "series of workshops" because she made it clear that the workshop offerings should not serve as a "one shot occasions." Repetitious review is needed in order to solidify clear understanding and acceptance of data.

Scott-Cover suggested that the data be examined in many different ways. She suggests that the data be compared and contrasted, analyzed to examine performance, and assessed to identify strengths and weaknesses. She suggested that school teams intensely examine the strengths and weaknesses in core tested subjects, such as reading, writing and mathematics. She suggested that school teams analyze the performance of all student demographic subgroups and how students across the accountability grades (three through five) are performing over time. She also suggested that school teams examine grade level curriculum expectations and compare student achievement results by classrooms. She stated that this method will help to show the impact of instruction and teacher style. She also suggests that school staff s make similar school comparisons to examine how their school's performance compared to other schools with similar demographics. Scott-Cover stated that once school staffs have a working knowledge and understanding of the state

tests and how to access the data, then they can face the brutal facts about the performance of their students. Teachers knew where their students were, where they should be, and what steps are needed to get them there (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested in "Strategy Two: Study the Curriculum" that school staffs know their curriculum, can diagnose student needs, and develop clear, measureable goals and objectives. She stated that after school staffs possess a working knowledge of students' performance and ability levels, they should turn their focus on the curriculum standards (Scott-Cover, 2013). She suggested that school staffs develop a clear understanding of the standards and related benchmarks for each grade level. She said that this helps everyone about what students should know and be able to do, not just for testing purposes, but for successful progression through school (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover also suggested that school staffs develop clear and measureable goals and objectives that drive their school improvement plan as defined by their course of action, which helps them to remain true to their mission and provides an objective tool when adjustments may be necessary. She noted that the school data shows where improvements and interventions are needed and the standards provide the expectations. She suggested that with this information, schools should be able to design clear, specific, and measureable goals and objectives utilizing the SMART Goal Format: Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested that school staffs prepare and engage all stakeholders. She suggested that this be done by maximizing time on task, collaborate to motivate, use schedules wisely, develop strategic professional development, organize student support, engage non-instructional personnel, set the tone, establish unified discipline processes

and procedures, partner with parents, organize tutorials, and align all budgets. She shared that she accomplished these tasks by valuing and ensuring adequate teaching and learning time by scheduling wisely. She ensured that teachers had uninterrupted time for teaching, re-teaching, and providing feedback by allocating sufficient instructional time and time for student engagement in learning. She stated, "Instructional time should be considered sacred and this should be communicated to everyone" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 38).

Scott-Cover suggested that teachers be given common planning and collaboration time with the school administrator. She stated, "This helped to reaffirm the importance of communication within and across grade levels" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 39). She suggested that in order to make these meetings purposeful, they should include the following:

- ✓ Planned collaboratively

- ✓ Structures with agendas, specific goals, objectives and expected outcomes

- ✓ Staff attendance should be mandatory

- ✓ Discussions at these meetings should be centered on student academic progress and behaviors that are impacting learning

During these meetings, staff members should identify professional development topics. These meetings should also serve as opportunities to build trust among staff and encourage productive dialogue. Scott-Cover suggests that this dialog should expose weaknesses in instruction and classroom management. Scott-Cover states, "The participants should feel safe in order for honest discourse and resolution to take place (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 39).

Scott-Cover suggested the phase "engage all stakeholders" include "all stakeholders. She suggested that school teams engage the non-instructional personnel as well. This includes the paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians and clerical staff. She referred to these staff members as the support staff. She suggested that school teams acknowledge the value they bring to the growth and development of students. She stated that these staff members can be trained as mentors. She said that if these staff members are incorporated properly into the school reform they more than likely will welcome the inclusion, embrace the responsibility, take ownership, and contribute positively to the school celebrations (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested that school leaders set the tone by establishing unified discipline processes and procedures. She stated, "While everyone must be partners in the organization process, school administrators are standard bearers" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 41). She shared that school leaders set the tone and must serve as the constant cheerleaders, trouble shooters, and the consummate leaders of change. They must model at all times flexibility and positive changes in their own communication, behaviors, and attitudes. Most importantly, Scott-Cover suggested that school leaders present a unified front (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 41).

Scott-Cover sternly stated that learning would not take place among chaotic, undisciplined, disorganized, and disrespectful school environments; therefore, school-wide discipline plans, which are developed with input from all stakeholders including students, should be developed and implemented with fidelity. Discipline plans should be displayed, taught, and consistently practiced. The term school-wide symbolized that the plan should be consistently reinforced in all areas of the school, including the classrooms,

playground, cafeteria, hallways, school buses, and extracurricular events. Scott-Cover suggested that parents be encouraged to incorporate parts of the school-wide discipline plan in their home routines. There should be an emphasis placed on cultural competence and building unified school cultures for learning (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested that schools partner with parents to ensure that students view both school and home as a unified front which works to ensure that they receive a quality education. Scott-Cover stated that parents should be viewed as equal partners in the education of their children and treated as partners in the restructuring process. Scott-Cover suggested that this partnership should consist of effective, appropriate and on-going communication and collaborations. She suggested that meeting times should be scheduled with flexibility and at various times throughout the day to accommodate the parents' varying schedules. She also suggested that daily agenda books be used to create two-way communication between school and home and to inform parents of homework assignments. She suggested that school teams require parents to sign the books to ensure receipt of information (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested that school teams organize intervention and tutorial sessions for students who have been identified in need of additional academic support. She also suggested that students be organized to receive tiered support in accordance to their academic performance level. She said that students with the greatest need should receive tutoring early in the school year, while students with the least amount of need receive tutoring closer to the testing cycle. She stated that schools use commercially manufactured supplemental materials and/or computer software, which are not used in the regular curriculum. She suggested that the classroom teachers serve as the primary

tutor. She suggested that teacher tutors be selected in accordance to their students' performance data. Scott-Cover also stated that school leaders must ensure that teacher tutors receive proper training about how to use the supplemental materials (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested that school leaders align all budgets to support their reform efforts. She said that the alignment of a school budget shows where needs exist and where additional materials are needed. According to Scott-Cover, "It will also allow for the early purchase of needed materials, equipment and services outlined in the reform plan (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 43). Scott-Cover stated that all actions taken and decisions made in a turn-around journey should be deliberate and purposeful; however, no action should have a more strategic focus than those that directly impact teaching and learning (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested in "Strategy Three: Organizational Structure" that organized instructional planning and collaborations are key for school reform. She stated that the concentration in this strategy would be on teaching the curriculum, monitoring instructional practices, and the on-going assessment of and for instruction. She suggested that this task be accomplished by establishing a weekly instructional and assessment framework, design and train students on weekly expectations, establish weekly progress monitoring systems, establish chalkboard configuration framework, and strengthen student support. She said that on-going strategic and collaborative planning meetings be held. She suggested that weekly meetings should include brainstorming instructional strategies that could be used to teach the identified benchmark skills for the week. She

shared that the strategies must include activities for enrichment, re-teaching, remediation, and accommodations for students with special needs.

Scott-Cover also suggested that school staffs use required subject content and the benchmark skills to be taught for the week to design formative assessments. During their weekly meetings, teachers should be required to complete two tasks: assessment development and data analysis. During the weekly meetings, teachers should be expected to contribute assessment items based on standards and benchmark skills to their grade level chairperson, so that individuals could create the weekly assessments for students at their grade level. The question types, reading passages, and rigor of the assessments should be closely correlated with the standards and specifications for the state tests. The weekly assessments should be administered to all students at each grade level. Accommodations should be implemented for those who qualify. All students should be expected to score at least eight-five percent or greater on each test, which should be administered on either Thursday or Friday of each week. Assessments results should be ready by the following Monday in time for the weekly meeting (Scott-Cover, 2013).

During the weekly meetings, teachers should conduct an in-depth analysis of and discuss the results of the assessments that were administered. Teachers should conduct whole class and individual student performances comparisons. Teachers should identify and discuss strengths, weaknesses, re-teaching plans, and which strategy had the greatest impact on learning. Teachers who students scored the highest should consider teaching the skills to classes that did not score as high. Teachers may also consider soliciting the assistance of students who scored high to re-teach their classmates as well.

Scott-Cover suggested that student results be graphed to serve as a visual for progress toward goals. Scott-Cover saidd that a very simple bar graph be used. She stated that the graphs should serve many purposes. It should be used as a record to chart growth in core content areas. It also should serve as motivation for students and a tool for the teachers to use with students during data chats. Graphs could serve as a quick snapshot of student progress and provide information related to how to focus the re-teaching strategies. Most importantly, Scott-Cover suggested that students who do not meet their weekly benchmarks take responsibility for their own learning by writing a note which provides an explanation as to why they did not meet the eighty-five percent expectations and how they would improve in the upcoming week. She stated, "Both the progress chart and the students' notes were submitted" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 47). She stated that she then met with the students to discuss their notes and progress. Students who met the eighty-five percent weekly benchmark were entered into a weekly drawing for incentives.

Scott-Cover suggested that schools organize relevant professional development and possibly partner with other schools. She stated that school staffs should receive on-going professional development opportunities to improve their content, standards, and benchmark knowledge. She suggested that school teams solicit the expertise and services of central office personnel, school administrators, and other teachers to provide the needed professional development sessions. She stated that professional development session's attendance should be mandatory and be accompanied by classroom-based follow-up activities. School leaders should observe the skills being taught and the documented lesson plans. Scott-Cover stated, "All professional development activities should directly align to the reform model" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 50).

Scott-Cover suggested in "Strategy Four: Teach Test Taking Skills and Strategies" that school teams identify essential test-taking strategies then teach those strategies to students. She stated that this should be done by focusing intensely on teaching and learning the targeted skills. Teachers should also reduce students' fears by helping students to understand the format of the tests. She said that this will improve their confidence and reduce uncertainties (Scott-Cover, 2013). She suggested that teachers incorporate test taking tips and strategies in their classrooms daily. She said that teachers should set winning goals. She reminded us that "practice makes perfect." She believed if students are taught test taking strategies, then students learn to judge time when responding to state test items (Scott-Cover, 2013).

During the testing window, Scott-Cover believed that school teams should rally the "village." The villagers would be needed to ensure that students clearly understand the significance of the tests they will embark upon. She also suggested that the villagers establish positive testing environments and treat that environment like it is sacred. She stated that students should eat before the test. They should also be taught and encouraged to use relaxation techniques at the onset of anxiety. During the test, students should be encouraged to read and follow the directions carefully. They should be encouraged to use a process of elimination to answer multiple choice questions and skip questions that are difficult to answer at first students can re-read and go back to the difficult questions later. Most importantly, students should be encouraged to remain positive throughout the test (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scoot-Cover also suggested that school leaders should take actions to ensure that the testing environment remains sacred, positive, and undisturbed. She suggested that

school leaders stop all building maintenance activities during the testing windows. She said that school leaders should refrain from making announcements and ensure that the lunch/ breakfast periods begin and end as scheduled. She stated that the school leaders provide breakfast and/or snacks to teachers each day of testing. She said that the school bells be canceled during the testing window. Most importantly, she said that school leaders organize a celebration lunch at the end of each testing period (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested in "Strategy Five: Continuously Assess and Monitor Progress" that school teams compare and contrast data, make adjustments/modifications as needed, and provide intense support for students who were in need. She stated that this task can be accomplished by asking the tough question, "Are we there yet?" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 69). She stated that school teams should seek external help and intensify test momentum. She said that when school teams meet they should articulate students' academic and behavior progress in evidence-based terms. Scott-Cover stated that school teams should check individual student progress, evaluate the stakeholders' feedback, identify the remaining challenges, stay on track with a checklist, ask and answer hard questions, and intensify monitoring and support. She stated that the constant checks should be used to gauge students' endurance and motivation levels. She strongly encouraged the school leaders to build confidence and team spirit. She suggested that student incentives should be used to maintain motivation levels and promote personal gratification. She also shared that teacher incentives and special celebrations would also be implemented to maintain teachers' resilience. She suggested that if school teams can uplift teachers and students, then schools will make the grade that they desire on their school accountability report (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested in "Strategy Six: Lead from the Front" that school leaders set the tone by embracing, promoting, and fostering diversity. She said that school leaders should establish priorities and reward performance regularly. She stated that this can be done by continuously monitoring progress toward goals and communicating effectively. She suggested that school leaders lead with a purpose by creating a vision, being courageous, and continuously learning. Scott-Cover stated that school leaders should hold themselves accountable for ensuring the implementation of viable instructional programs that meet the needs of every student. She suggested that school leaders assign teachers to positions that commensurate with their skills and experience. She stated that school leaders should ensure that teachers' lesson plans reflect instructional strategies for all ability levels and include researched-based instructional strategies that can assist with helping students to reach their benchmarks. Most importantly, she encouraged school leaders to be resourceful, proactive, epitomize integrity, and build trust (Scott-Cover, 2013).

Scott-Cover suggested in her last strategy, "Strategy Seven: Celebrate Achievements," that school leaders should always remember to acknowledge accomplishments. She stated that school leaders should "celebrate to stimulate" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 87). She suggested that school leaders develop a criterion, establish routine procedures, acknowledge achievements, get student input, and engage the community. She stated, "Achievements were celebrated throughout the turnaround year" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 87). Scott-Cover stated that she accomplished this task by accentuating academic achievements and highlighting performance and support staff. She shared that she motivated by using accountability. She believed that when school

leaders operate from a premise that celebrations are linked to achievement, then increased

motivation occurred. She shares that she made the rewards tangible. Scott-Cover stated

that she surveyed individuals to see what rewards interest them. She shared that she

surveyed the individuals by asking one simple, "If you had three wishes, what would they

be?" (Scott-Cover, 2013, p. 89). By gaining knowledge related to their direct interests,

she ensured that the stakes were high enough to capture their attention and maintain

motivation.

Scott-Cover concluded in her book, *7 Insider Secrets: Transform Your Low-Performing Elementary School and Score an A in Record Time,* that she learned a lot of

valuable lessons along her journey as a turnaround principal. She shared her synopsis of

what school leaders should know and be able to do in the course of their work. She stated

that school leaders should know that competent and ethical leadership is critical in a

school's transformation. She said that school leaders should begin their turnaround

journey with the end in mind and that data should drive their plans. She shared that

school leaders should establish safe and orderly school environments. They should

prioritize collegial collaborations and reaffirm that parents are valuable partners in the

teaching and learning process. Most importantly, she reminded school leaders that

standardized test scores do no tell the complete story; and school is not over when the

state test has been completed (Scott-Cover, 2013, pp. 95-103).

In conclusion, Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching has been proven to

be a successful tool that can be used to define for teachers what they should know and be

able to do in the exercise of their professional; however, the implementation of the

Danielson's framework alone is not enough to turn a low functioning school around, as

Dr. Janice Scott-Cover stated, in record time. In order to turn a school around and put it on the road to high achievement, school teams must as, Cotton suggested, ensure that they implement frameworks and programs that include both contextual and instructional attributes. Contextual attributes include a safe and orderly school environment, strong administrative leadership, and a primary focus on learning, maximized learning time, monitored student progress, academically heterogeneous classroom groupings, small class sizes, and a plan to involve the parents (Cotton, 2000). Instructional attributes include careful orientation to lessons, clear and focused instruction, effective questioning techniques, feedback and reinforcement, and review and reteach as needed (Cotton, 2000). Once these instructional attributes become part of the school's educational plan, then school transformation can begin toward reaching greater academic success for all.

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