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Transforming A School's Culture Through Collaboration, Relationships, And Shared Values: A Change Leadership Plan

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TRANSFORMING A SCHOOL'S CULTURE THROUGH COLLABORATION,
RELATIONSHIPS, AND SHARED VALUES: A CHANGE LEADERSHIP PLAN

Robert S. Tomic

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirement of

Doctor of Education

In the Foster G. McGaw Graduate School

National College of Education

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This document was created as *one* part of the three-part dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership EdD is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership Plan
- Policy Advocacy Document

For the **Program Evaluation** candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the **Change Leadership Plan** candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the **Policy Advocacy Document** candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

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A THREE-PART DISSERTATION:

THE IMPACT OF AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: A
PROGRAM EVALUATION

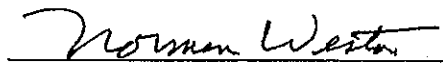

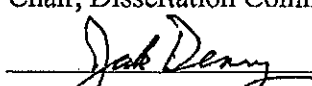
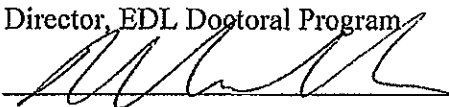
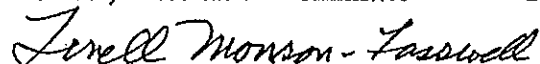
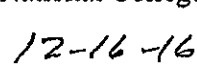
TRANSFORMING A SCHOOL'S CULTURE THROUGH COLLABORATION,
RELATIONSHIPS, AND SHARED VALUES: A CHANGE LEADERSHIP PLAN

ASSESSING A DISTRICT'S CULTURE THROUGH AN ANNUAL SCHOOL CULTURE
AUDIT: A POLICY ADVOCACY DOCUMENT

Robert S. Tomic

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

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 _____ Member, Dissertation Committee	 _____ Dean, National College of Education
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ABSTRACT

The change leadership paper centers around transforming a school culture with the focus being on collaboration, relationships, and shared values among its stakeholders. Building trust among staff and administration while making daily decisions based on the same value system is necessary to enact an effective transformation. Tools used to collect data included the School Culture Triage Survey and the Teacher Belief Survey. The staff completed the School Culture Triage Survey to establish baseline data and then completed the survey a second time with the results confirming growth in the three main categories: professional collaboration, collegial relationships, and self-determination. Correlating and comparing these results with those from the Teacher Belief Survey (also completed by staff) helped paint a clearer picture of how classroom culture is connected to building-wide culture. The change leadership plan also involved analyzing the roles and structures that are in place by utilizing Wagner and Kegan's (2006) "as is" and the "to be" change leadership model. The change leadership model helped guide the staff in building structures (procedures, student behavior code), confirming administrative roles and responsibilities (becoming self-sufficient and independent), developing strong lines of communication (content and leadership team meetings and communications), and creating core values.

PREFACE: LEADERSHIP LESSONS LEARNED

Transforming a school culture is a methodical process that needs close attention at the leadership level at all times. All levels of communication—verbal, written, visual, and expressions— need to be absorbed and evaluated to determine if they are constructive or regressive. Utilizing a research-based annual audit tool such as the School Culture Triage Survey offers critical information about the direction in which the school should be moving. With the leadership paying attention to detail, they are be able to make corrective actions in collaboration with the staff during the school year. This allows the building-level administration to control and lead the building at the local level as well as minimize the involvement of district-level administrators who are not present in the building on a full-time basis.

The staff’s role in helping to reshape and guide the culture of a building cannot be underestimated. They play an essential role due to their daily contact with all stakeholders. Their actions and decision making are direct reflections on the values and beliefs of the leadership and the culture of the school as a whole. Establishing a vision, mission, and core values that all stakeholders help develop will begin the process of uniting an entire staff and guiding everyone in making consistent decisions based off of the same value systems. When administrators understand the critical role of the staff and give them a voice to offer feedback, they help staff become vested and have ownership in the school, taking their commitment to another level.

Relationship building among all stakeholders becomes the foundation of not just co-existing, but making significant change and progress in a school setting. Trust is at the root of all authentic relationships. When there is trust, individuals can have open and

honest discussions. When there is trust, individuals can work through adversity and times that require resolutions or corrective actions. Building these trusting relationships does take time; it's a process that needs to be nurtured. The nuts and bolts of changing a school culture involve addressing the internal structures, lines of communication, and building procedures. All of these items can be changed quickly or efficiently. The true foundation is how we work together and collaborate within the structures that we put in place. This dictates the direction that we are headed in and how quickly we get there.

The other significant element from a leadership perspective involves knowing and understanding the difference between technical and adaptive change. This allows the leadership the ability (or foresight) to anticipate the challenges that might occur when guiding the staff through a change process. There's a significant difference between helping the staff resolve a technical change versus an adaptive change. Technical change requires a hard skill development, while an adaptive change requires changing an internal value system of individuals or an entire staff. This needs to be understood by leadership in order to be proactive and calculated with the type of support necessary for staff to be successful. This will help the entire building go through those learning curves successfully and reshape the school culture in an efficient manner.

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the past ten years I've been a school administrator at Yorktown School District. Currently my role is building principal of Campton Middle School. I've also held the position of principal for seven years at Yorktown elementary school that feeds into Campton Middle School. This change leadership plan was set in motion by being transferred over to Campton Middle School.

Statement of the Problem

In the Chicagoland area lies Campton Middle School. The school's enrollment consists of 570 seventh- and eighth-grade students, with approximately 50 staff members along with five administrators: the building principal, two assistant principals, and two deans. There are two elementary schools housing 4th through 6th grade that feed into Campton Middle School. Both feeder schools are efficiently managed with collaborative environments that involve consistent buy-in from all stakeholders. When the students from the respective feeder schools are promoted to Campton Middle School, their educational experience changes not only because of the middle-school environment, but also because the school culture is quite different. The experience changes from a high-spirited and supportive environment at the feeder schools to one that is "reactive" by staff and administration at Campton. Additionally, internal structures are not well established at the middle school, which results in confusion and frustration by all stakeholders.

The current culture within the staff and administrative team at Campton Middle School can be described as one of low staff morale, poor collaboration, and lack of established building-wide procedures and school values. As a result, Campton Middle

School has a negative perception with some of its stakeholders. Peterson described school culture as the following:

School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make-up the “persona” of the school. These unwritten expectations build up over time as teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together, solve problems, deal with challenges and, at times, cope with failures. (as cited in CISC, pp. 10–14)

Having a similar belief system and established values allows for consistent and productive decision making at both an individual and collective (i.e., staff-wide) level.

Without core values, decisions are based off personal beliefs that can vary from individual to individual. There are currently no established core values at Campton Middle School, and as a result, decision-making is inconsistent within the staff, individual teams, and the administrative team.

Adding to the confusion and frustration is that there are no established building procedures for staff to consistently enforce throughout the school day. This results in each individual team at Campton Middle School essentially functioning as independent schools within a school. Each team is basically comprised of three seventh-grade classes and three eighth-grade classes.

The purpose of dividing the staff into four teams is essentially for logistical and student scheduling purposes, not philosophical ones. Additionally, because different administrators oversee different teams, communication to individual teams is often inconsistent. The administrative team lacks continuity due to poor administrative structures that divide instead of unite them as a cohesive and collaborative group. The end result is that there is no clear direction for the staff and administration, leading all stakeholders to suffer from frustrating experiences throughout the school year.

Creating core values and building-wide procedures would be an essential foundational piece in Campton Middle School beginning to right the ship. A requirement of making these changes is that the staff as a whole needs to buy in to these core values and procedures. For years staff were allowed to function independently as individuals and teams with inconsistent supervision and leadership. “No one who tries to name or address the dysfunction in an organization will be popular” (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 17). A new building principal faces the possibility that certain individuals will not want to make a change due to being satisfied with the current status quo.

The steps that I take need to be calculated, and there has to be a conscious level of awareness at all times. Moving the building in a cohesive, calculated direction will require staff not to only make technical changes, but also adaptive changes. “Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19). The reality of being the new leader is that time, patience, and persistence is necessary as we methodically begin to collaborate and move in the same direction to transform the school culture.

Rationale

As the former building principal of one of the feeder schools, I’ve been aware and observant of all stakeholders’ perceptions of Campton Middle School. The concerns or questions about the middle school became more apparent with the 6th grade parents whose children were on the verge of promotion to Campton. During district-wide events, the feedback I received from former students and parents varied from constructive to critical based off their experience at Campton Middle School. During my seven-year tenure as building principal at one of the feeder schools, I was very aware of the impact

that a positive school culture had on initiatives and the experiences of all stakeholders. “Evidence from schools and other organizations that have experienced successful change provides encouragement for leaders who know that meaningful change begins with cultural change” (Reeves, 2009, p. 36). As the new principal of Campton Middle School, I must keep my main focus on school culture, as all other initiatives become secondary and may very well be derailed until this is established.

Due Campton administrators’ inability to collaborate and work efficiently as a team, district-level administrators were brought in to assist in the day-to-day management of the building. A district administrator was required to lead a weekly administration meeting at the school to ensure a level of collaboration and direction. The district would also field frequent phone calls to help resolve parent complaints about Campton Middle School. This level of involvement by district administrators was time-consuming and inefficient. The lack of trust and faith by the community has become evident over time as efforts to resolve issues have bypassed the local school administration. Reeves (2009) stated “culture is reflected in the behavior, attitudes, and beliefs of individuals and groups” (p.37). We need to earn the trust of all stakeholders so they have the confidence at the local building level to resolve problems. This frees up time and energy at the district level so they may focus on big picture initiatives that impact the entire district.

Initial Assessment of the Campton School Culture

During the summer of 2015 I had the opportunity to meet with the entire Campton Middle School staff for several hours. In this meeting, I asked them to record positive things that were occurring at Campton Middle School and things that required improvement. Some of the positive responses consisted of the following: teachers work

well together, share ideas, are energetic, have a good rapport with students, and facilitate excellent programs (e.g., science fair, awards night, and music programs). The list of items for improvement was much more extensive: school spirit, established procedures, school-wide discipline policy, communication between staff and administration, knowledge of administrators' roles by staff, efficiency in planning and meetings, and cohesion and support between administrators and staff were all identified as lacking at Campton. Following this meeting and the feedback from the Campton staff, I made the decision to further investigate and determine school culture needs by giving the staff a survey to complete online.

The Campton Middle School staff completed the School Culture Survey based off of their experience from 2014-2015 school year. The survey (Appendix C) is from the Center for Improving School Culture (CISC) and it encompasses the Likert scale with a rating from 1 to 5 points. The questions are categorized under three headings:

1. Professional Collaboration: Do teachers and staff meet and work together to solve professional issues e.g. instructional, organizational or curricular issues?
2. Affiliative/Collegial Relationships: Do people enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included?
3. Efficacy or Self-Determination: Are people in this school here because they want to be? Do they work to improve their skills as true professionals, or, do they simply see themselves as helpless, victims of a large and uncaring bureaucracy? (CISC, p.130)

A total of 28 staff members completed the survey; the staff's total score was 48 points out of a possible 85. The score of 48 placed us in the following category: "41–60 points = Modifications and improvements are necessary" (CISC, p. 133). The overall score reinforced the need to focus on specific components of school culture. The following three questions had the lowest response ratings:

- 1.The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.
- 2.Our schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.
- 3.There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebrations, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment. (p.132)

In all three of these questions, 90% of the staff answered either “sometimes,” “rarely,” or “never.” This is a strong message from the Campton staff that student behavior, communication with staff and administrators, and celebrating successes were areas for change and improvement.

Focusing on the school culture during my first year as building principal of Campton Middle School positively impacted all facets of the building and the district as a whole. When all stakeholders work together with a common vision and core values, the educational experience is a positive and productive one for all. The collaboration and common beliefs play a major role when stakeholders experience challenging times (Peterson, as cited in CISC). The district office can focus on district-wide initiatives and the community as a whole can be proud of having an excellent educational institution in their backyard that brings value and a positive future for their children.

Goals

The overall goal of the change plan is to transform Campton Middle School’s culture. This would involve evaluating and improving how the staff collaborates, focusing on rapport building, and creating shared values including a mission/vision statement. The following are some specific steps and actions that need to take place to begin to transform Campton’s School culture:

1. The staff and administration need to create building-wide procedures that begin with the start of the school day and end when the students are dismissed. This

allows for consistency with each team, staff, and administration. Building day-to-day harmony helps all staff members, administration, and students function efficiently due to consistent procedures.

2. The staff and administration will revise the student handbook and disciplinary procedures to give the staff more authority and decision-making ability. This allows for a level of autonomy and ownership by staff and present the opportunity for the administration to support and partner with the staff.
3. The staff and administration will create core values, along with a vision and mission statement, involving all stakeholders. This allows for consistent decision making by individuals and the staff as a whole.
4. The administration will create a flowchart that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the administrative team, ensuring that staff understand each administrator's role along with knowing who they should be communicating with. This also provides an internal appeal process to minimize district involvement.
5. Establish a line of communication between team leaders and the building principal so there is consistent communication with the staff and administrative leadership. The rationale is to unify the entire building as one team rather than the four teams currently in place.
6. Building principal will establish bimonthly content-level team meetings with the involvement of administration to ensure there is continuity with curriculum mapping, common assessments, grading, and the sharing of ideas regarding instructional strategies. This is a be part of the collaboration-building process with staff and administration.

7. The administrative team will have daily briefings and weekly meetings to ensure that the lines of communication are strong and sustainable.
8. Administration and staff need to create a positive and nurturing environment for all students by setting high standards and motivating them to do their best. This involves building-wide incentives and celebrations recognizing student and staff accomplishments.
9. Rapport building amongst all stakeholders is a focus for the entire school year.

With implementation of all the above-mentioned actions we can begin to focus on setting high standards and provide a positive support system for all stakeholders. There will be professional development scheduled with an outside consultant on a quarterly basis that focuses on rapport building, understanding the importance of relationships, and connecting everything to our core values. Depending on staff need, skill development (e.g., classroom procedures), classroom design and structure, student motivation, and individual student behavior change will also be a focus.

Demographics

Campton Middle School is part of Campton School District and is located in Campton, Illinois. The suburbs that feed into Campton Middle School are Pear Tree, Olive Tree, Yorktown, and Campton. The school serves a population of 570 students in seventh and eighth grades. The demographics consist of the following: 91% African-American, 3% Caucasian, 4% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and 2% multiracial. The student attendance rate is 94% with the mobility rate at 13%. The percentage of students that are classified under Title I is 72%, 1% are English Learners, 15% have disabilities, and 3% are homeless. The students' ISAT results from 2014 were 48% meets and exceeds in

reading and 48% meets and exceeds in mathematics. The teaching staff is experienced, with an average of 12 years' experience, and there is a low turnover rate.

SECTION TWO: ASSESSING THE 4 Cs

In assessing Campton's school culture, I used Wagner's (2006) Change Leadership Model consisting of the 4 Cs: context, competencies, conditions, and culture. Each component was used to evaluate the intricacies of the building's structure and systems. This would involve the structuring of all staff into four teams, the efficiency and roles of the administrative team, the lines of communication throughout the staff, collaboration within the staff, building-wide procedures, planning methods of content teams, the core values of the building, and relationships within the staff and other stakeholders. Each component of Wagner's 4 Cs have offered a unique perspective that helps assess and transform Campton's school culture.

Context

Wagner et al. (2008) defined context as the "larger organizational systems within which we work, and their demands and expectations, formal and informal" (p.104). At Campton Middle School, with its approximately 50 staff members and 5 administrators, the larger organizational structure actually functioned like four schools within a school. Different administrators oversaw each team, resulting in inconsistent communication. The administrative team has not worked efficiently, and as a result a district-level administrator was brought in to run weekly meetings in an attempt to keep the team on track. The district office administration assisted in resolving the day-to-day problems, and as a result the community perception toward Campton Middle School is not favorable. When the building-level administrators cannot collaborate to manage day-to-day operations or resolve problems as they occur, then their overall effectiveness is diminished. Each level of Campton Middle School's organization has affected each

system of the organization. All of these factors begin to affect every function of a public school along with negatively impacting staff morale.

Competencies

Wagner et al. (2006) defined competencies as “the repertoire of skills and knowledge that impacts student learning” (p. 99). A common theme with competencies with regards to Campton Middle School is the minimal amount of direction and information that staff and administrators need to work collaboratively and make consistent decisions that can positively impact all students. Without building-wide procedures, the staff and administrators cannot reinforce consistent expectations. Daily decisions must be based off of the school’s belief system; core values can help make that happen. Additionally, without established vision and mission statements, expectations for staff and students can vary greatly due to the personal beliefs of each individual making a decision. The lack of direction and a belief system for a school will negatively impact student potential and growth.

The administrative team’s ability to work efficiently within a team concept has impacted the overall effectiveness of how Campton Middle School functions. Knowing individual roles and lines of communication positively impacts the administrative team. Having an administrative flowchart should not only help the administrators but also the staff so they understand everyone’s role. Without understanding one’s role and how a person fits within a team, you function on a day-to-day basis and your role becomes reactive instead of proactive. This is the cause for the increased level of involvement by the district-level administration team. As a result, all stakeholders have a level of frustration due to the lack of organizational structure within the administrative team.

A lack of common direction and the existence of poor organizational structures negatively impact rapport building and collaboration with all stakeholders. All of these factors compound, becoming a domino effect in how individuals work within an organization. Without direction and leadership, individuals will do what they need to do to survive and co-exist. The full potential of the organization does not come to fruition, because the priority is just getting by each day.

Conditions

Wagner et al. (2006) defined conditions as “the external architecture surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources” (p.101). Campton Middle School is divided internally within four teams for organizational and scheduling purposes. Over time this organization format has evolved into essentially four mini-buildings within a school building. They communicate with different administrators and are given a level of autonomy that is not consistent building-wide. Another reality is the current schedule does not allow content teams any time to plan together as a department. The lack of collaboration has negatively impacted consistent curriculum coverage, common assessments, and the sharing of instructional strategies across the four teams. Other current conditions that negatively impact the school culture and contribute to the confusion are the lack of core values, procedures, clear administrators’ roles, and efficiency from the administrative team.

Culture

“Culture refers to the invisible but powerful meanings and mindsets held individually and collectively throughout the system” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 102). The relationship between the staff and administrative team as a whole is poor, due to an

unsupportive environment, unclear roles, and inconsistent lines of communication. The administrative team has challenges working together and needed a district administrator to lead building administrative meetings. The four teams within the building co-exist and function at times as separate buildings within one school building, a result of not having core values and a common vision for the school. The staff and administration are in a more reactive role versus a proactive role with stakeholders. All of these factors have impacted the culture of Campton Middle School and how all stakeholders interact and co-exist. “School’s culture significantly determines the degree of success an improvement strategy will realize” (Ezen, 2014, p. 3). Without a trusting school culture, all other facets or building initiatives become secondary. The mindsets held at Campton Middle School will only change when structures are put in place, collaboration is the force behind decision making, and rapport building is a top priority among all stakeholders.

SECTION THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is a mixed method approach with both quantitative and qualitative data being collected. Both forms of data were beneficial in attempting to gain a better understanding of the Campton School Culture. As Wagner et al. (2006) suggested, statistical data provides objective information while qualitative data offers personal interpretations of the current state of affairs. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection helped achieve a balanced approach to the research. Staff anonymously offered feedback through surveys and then had the opportunity to discuss the results and current state of affairs openly with the entire staff. “It requires all individuals in schools and districts to stay purposefully focused on the same work, be engaged in a thoughtful and deliberate manner, and work collaboratively toward common ends” (Wagner et al., 2006, p.138). This allowed staff to feel comfortable in being completely honest with their perspectives, and gave them an opportunity to openly and constructively have discussions with other staff members to ultimately achieve a level of ownership.

The Campton staff was asked to complete the survey(s) online using the program called SurveyMonkey. When the staff completed the survey(s), they were not asked to identify themselves, in keeping with the goal of soliciting honest feedback by providing anonymity. Following completion of the surveys, the results were shared with the staff, and then small and whole-group discussions were followed to allow for interpretation and a more in-depth understanding of the school’s culture. A critical role of a change leader is the ability to collect and decipher all pertinent information to paint a clear picture.

Change leaders are well positioned to enter the enacting phase once they’ve built a solid foundation on a clearer definition of problem, greater urgency for change,

increased clarity about the desired outcomes, and a beginning sense of what this work entails (Wagner et al., 2006, p.153).

As the building principal, this offered me reinforcement of the current “as is” status and what direction we should go in to create the “to be” phase (Wagner et al., 2006).

Staff were asked for their feedback on our current school culture, thus enabling us to identify how to begin creating a collaborative environment that involves rapport building. “Respectful and trusting relationships are essential if educators are expected to take the risks involved in change, to learn from each other, to remain deeply committed to their students and their community, and to share responsibility” (Wagner et al., 2006, 135). The process of the data collecting not only reaffirmed the need for change and the direction that we should take, but it also inadvertently began the process of molding the staff into a professional learning community.

Participants

The Campton staff was the key participants for the data-collecting piece for this study. “Horizontal accountability often arises through the kinds of ongoing discussion and problem solving that characterize communities of practice” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 135). The staff gave critical information in affirming the current status of Campton Middle School. Allowing them to give information anonymously allowed for honest, constructive feedback that is essential to determine the “as is” status. They were also given the opportunity to discuss and confirm the direction and steps that need to be accomplished to get to the “to be” phase following the survey results (Wagner et al., 2006).

Data Collection Techniques

Teacher Survey

Data collected included two separate surveys that followed up with presenting and discussing the results with the Campton Middle School staff.

School Culture Triage Survey.

The Campton Middle School staff completed the School Culture Triage Survey as a pre- and post-measuring assessment. The first survey was completed on SurveyMonkey in July 2015. The survey was completed based off of staff experiences from the previous school year. The results of this survey were communicated to staff and served as a baseline for the current school culture status in the 2015–2016 school year. In spring 2016, the staff completed the same School Culture Triage Survey, and it was based on their current school year experiences. Both surveys were compared and contrasted to gauge growth and to determine our current school culture strengths and weaknesses. This is discussed in depth in the data analysis and interpretation section. The survey (Appendix C) is from the Center for Improving School Culture (CISC) and it encompasses the Likert scale with a rating from 1 to 5 points. The items are categorized under three headings:

1. Professional Collaboration: Do teachers and staff meet and work together to solve professional issues e.g. instructional, organizational or curricular issues?
2. Affiliative/Collegial Relationships: Do people enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included?
3. Efficacy or Self-Determination: Are people in this school here because they want to be? Do they work to improve their skills as true professionals, or, do they simply see themselves as helpless, victims of a large and uncaring bureaucracy? (CISC, p.130)

Teacher Belief Survey.

The Campton Middle School staff completed the Teacher Belief Survey (Appendix D) in October of the 2015 school year. “This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create challenges for teachers” (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The survey questions are grouped in three main categories: classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. All three of these issues encompass school culture by impacting climate, motivation, and student performance. The Teacher Belief Survey also helps drive our professional development initiative that involves bringing in a consultant to assist in various school culture topics: classroom management, rapport building, procedure focus, and communication. The survey helps narrow the focus and provide information on our teacher’s strengths and areas that can be improved on. The Campton Middle School staff completed this survey online using the program called SurveyMonkey.

Staff Response from Survey

The Campton Middle School staff was presented with the results and findings of the School Culture Triage Survey and given the opportunity to provide feedback through small-group discussion and whole-group sharing (Appendix E). This gave the staff the opportunity to discuss and share their feelings openly with their colleagues. At the end of the session, staff completed an exit slip (Appendix F) that asked for individual feedback on the direction the building is heading, as well as the person’s fears and goals for the school year. This process was completed at the beginning of the 2015–2016 school year. The Campton Middle School staff participated in a similar process in August 2016 by being presented the comparison of both sets of survey results from the School Culture

Triage Survey. They were asked to give feedback by discussing the results in small groups and answering specific questions, such as what was surprising and not surprising, what were areas of concern, and what are the obstacles to get to a score or rating of a 5 (Appendix E)? The results and discussions of the survey are presented in the data analysis and interpretation section.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collection and analysis of the data continued throughout the duration of the study. Our initial survey, the School Culture Triage Survey, was completed in the summer of 2015 and has already been shared and discussed with the staff to determine our current school culture position. The strengths, weaknesses, and themes have already begun to develop and continue to evolve in real time as we use this information for our school improvement plan and to mold our school culture. Deciphering and determining themes are ongoing through the collection and analysis of survey responses, group and staff responses, and exit slips. The process of determining themes is a shared responsibility among the staff in offering feedback through individual and group responses to determine the strengths and areas that need improvement. The utilization of the Likert scale on the School Culture Triage Survey allows for descriptive statistical analysis. “Statistical analysis techniques aid the discussion of characteristics inherent within and between sets of data” (Buckman, James, & Milenkiewicz, 2008, p.101). The comparison of the two School Culture Triage Survey results allowed for statistical analysis to determine progress in the three separate categories (professional collaboration, affiliative/collegial relationships, and self-determination/efficacy) and overall growth.

SECTION FOUR: RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction

Transforming a school culture is a dynamic proposition that involves many facets. Williamson and Blackburn (2009) defined school culture as “a complex set of values, traditions, assumptions, and patterns of behavior that are present in a school” (p.60). Another perspective on school culture focused more on the human aspects: “shared experiences both in and out of school, such as traditions, celebrations, and sense of community, family, and team” (Delisio, 2006, p. 1). Both the characteristics of school culture and the members that make up the staff of a school are just as important when determining the culture of a school building.

The mark of a healthy school culture is one that draws its values, beliefs, and traditions from the staff as a whole. Reeves (2009) stated that “culture is reflected in the behavior, attitudes, and beliefs of individuals and groups” (p. 37). This holistic approach in the guiding of a staff allows for ownership by all and “determines how everyone does business” (CISC, p.129). An important method in achieving harmony and growth with a staff is consistent collaboration. Fullan (2012) suggested that “schools characterized by collaborative cultures are also places of hard work and dedication, collective responsibility, and pride in their school” (p. 113). The power of collaboration could potentially promote considerable growth by individuals, groups, and the staff as a whole.

Collaboration

The old saying that there’s strength in numbers is a clever metaphor for professional collaboration. The school culture triage tool defined professional collaboration as “teachers and staff meeting and working together to solve professional

issues e.g. instructional, organizational or curricular issues” (CISC, p.130). A critical element is that one person cannot sustain growth over time for an organization. Brown and Moffett (1999) suggested that “in trying to go alone, the hero can easily become a martyr or an egomaniac” (p. 17). The other downfall of consistently making independent decisions is that teacher buy-in can become a question (McLester, 2014). Fullan and Hargreaves (2012) defined the benefits of collaboration for teachers as the following:

They accumulate and circulate knowledge and ideas, as well as assistance and support, that help teachers become more effective, increase their confidence, and encourage them to be more open to and actively engage in improvement and change (p. 114).

With the potential of being isolated throughout a school day and week, teachers require time to collaborate with others to grow professionally as educators.

When a staff gets together there needs to be a focus for the meeting, or it can become an exercise in futility. “Our research suggests that when the adults in a school continually engage in dialogue and inquiry to support student learning, a re-culturing takes place” (Deuel, Kennedy, Nelson, & Slavit, 2011, p. 23). Having a keen focus that centers around student achievement allows staff to discuss and strategize the expectations for all students. “Collaboration meetings were focused on an examination of student work and a collective determination of what the word proficiency really means” (Reeves, 2003, p. 9). Having a focused approach to collaborative meetings allows for efficiency and growth for all stakeholders. Fullan and Hargreaves (2012) also suggested that a collaborative school culture is a systematic process that evolves over time, with patience being a key virtue in its development. The value of relationship similarly cannot be ignored or neglected in creating a positive school culture.

Relationships

Having positive and constructive relationships among all stakeholders is a key element to improve and sustain a school culture. “Without investment in underlying relationships, collaboration will be stilted, forced, and even damaging” (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2012, p. 114). There needs to be camaraderie and a level of caring for others to move forward. “The single factor common to every successful change initiative is that relationships improve” (Fullan, 2001, p. 1). When relationships improve, there’s a more open mindset to listening and understanding another person’s perspective. Additionally, when relationships improve there’s a higher level of trust that allows for growth even through times of challenging decision making.

If there is a common thread to creating a positive school climate, it is the importance of relationships – student to student, teacher to student, teacher to family, administrator to staff, school to community...The development of strong and sustainable relationships will contribute more to a healthy and safe school than metal detectors ever will, and our ability to teach our students how to develop supportive relationships of their own is as essential a skill as math and reading. (Noonan, as cited in Keiser & Shulte, 2007, p. 74).

Establishing sound structures and procedures throughout a complex organization such as a school environment is essential, as are productive relationships with all stakeholders. However, the ability to apply procedures and work within established structures and to help build relationships requires building-wide core values and common vision.

Core Values

Establishing core values for all a school’s stakeholders is a critical piece in getting everyone moving in the same direction. This assists in giving staff guidance in making independent decisions that are consistent with the staff’s core beliefs. “Core values are personal, ethical, and ideological guidelines that set the standard for every aspect of

business operations, from hiring to decision making to strategic planning” (Brox, 2013, p. 1). Simply put, when a staff makes a decision holistically or independently, the decision should be consistently applied and based off of the same core values.

The next step to guiding and ensuring that all staff and stakeholders are heading in the same direction is the school’s vision statement. “The vision helps people understand how you hope others will view you, and describes some of your highest priorities” (Center for School Change, p. 1). The vision statement is a short statement that describes a big-picture perspective of where the school is going. Additionally, Farmer and Gabriel (2009) stated that a “vision is your school’s goal, where you hope to see it in the future” (p. 2). Without a vision statement and core values, the staff is making decisions based off of their own personal belief systems, which can vary drastically. When a vision statement is created, the next step is to create the mission statement. “The mission provides an overview for the steps planned to achieve that future” (Farmer & Gabriel, 2009, p. 3). This also includes “describing your school to others” in a way that gives its unique characteristics and outlines steps that will be taken for the school’s betterment (Center for School Change, p. 2). All stakeholders need to be involved in the process of creating the core values, vision, and mission of a school so there’s buy-in and ownership.

Hope

When stakeholders understand and know the direction of a school, the “shared vision truly inspires an organization to hopefulness and success” (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005, p. 163). There needs to be that feeling that something special is happening to encourage all involved to keep moving forward. “Hope is driven, we believe, in part by the belief that the desired image of the future (the dream) is possible” (Boyatzis &

McKee, 2005, p. 164). Knowing and understanding that image and demonstrating it through your actions on a daily basis becomes infectious throughout an organization. Barr and Gibson (2015) stated that “schools that create a culture of hope support students’ social and emotional needs” (p.24). As a result, students “develop positive attitudes” which enable them to persevere through challenging times (Barr & Gibson, 2015, p. 24).

Creating the environment that allows students to feel a sense of belonging and ownership adds to the state of hope. “Teachers focus on creating an atmosphere in which it is emotionally safe to make mistakes” (Inlay, 2003, p. 70). In doing so, students can feel safe to express themselves and allow for those learning moments to occur. Schaps (2009) suggested that “students come to care about their school when the school effectively cares for them” (p. 11). This notion goes back to having established core values for a building so staff is constantly applying the school’s beliefs. “In schools that embody a culture of hope, the energy of optimism is electrifying and uplifting. It’s contagious” (Barr & Gibson, 2015, p.27). All of these elements—ownership, safety, and respect—add to creating an environment of hope.

Principal Role

The principal plays a prominent role in transforming a school culture. “The relationships that shape the culture and climate of the school are strongly influenced by the principal” (Dernowska & Tlusciak, 2012, p. 217). This begins with the principal collecting information so he/she can begin to determine the current state of the school. “A cultural audit can help principals assess current culture and develop a shared commitment to a high-quality educational experience for every student” (Blackburn & Williamson,

2009, p. 62). By auditing the school through informational gathering methods (e.g., surveys and staff meetings) the principal can establish the strengths and weaknesses of the building, and most importantly, address the focus for improvement. “The isolated charismatic hero or heroine can bring about change that lasts only as long as he or she does” (Brown & Moffett, 1999, p. 17). To maintain sustainability and buy-in in an organization, there needs to be collaboration and ownership by all stakeholders.

Reeves (2009) described the transformation of change through his four imperatives of cultural change: “1. What we will not change, 2. Organizational culture will change with leadership actions, 3. Use the right tools, 4. Relentless personal attention and scut work by the leader” (p. 38). All four imperatives play important roles to changing the culture of a school. Reinforcing what the school will not change adds emphasis to positive things that are currently occurring. The second and fourth actions reinforce the saying that actions speak louder than words. The principal’s level of involvement through modeling and monitoring determines the level of commitment by staff as a whole. The term “scut work” literally means to be side-by-side with staff as you model and actually participate in what you expect the staff to do.

When collecting and analyzing information about the current status of a building (or school culture), confirming whether the problem to be corrected is an adaptive or technical element is a critical piece for success. “Adaptive challenges are difficult because their solutions require people to change their ways” while technical changes require an individual to acquire new skills or complete a task differently (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 69). When creating new building procedures or discipline protocols, the technical piece involves the staff knowing and understanding the

procedures, and the adaptive piece involves the buy-in and belief in the new procedures. Being able to discern the two elements allows you to make corrective action plans.

Transforming a school culture is a process that needs to be analyzed and discussed among all stakeholders. “It takes time and patience to shape school culture, but doing so is one of the most powerful ways a principal can improve his or her school” (Williamson & Blackburn, 2009, p. 60). McLester (2014) suggested that “It takes five years for a principal to get traction and to see real change” (p. 10). A plan can be created and implemented, but it takes patience to monitor and see the plan through in real time. Fullan (2001) called the implementation dip a period during which an unexpected problem arises and needs to be addressed by the leader in some fashion. The principal cannot anticipate all the possible issues until the new plan is observed and analyzed in real time.

SECTION FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This section consists of the results of the surveys that were completed by the Campton Middle School staff: the School Culture Triage Survey and the Teacher Belief Survey. Results from the two iterations of the School Culture Triage Survey are presented first, followed by those from the Teacher Belief Survey. The results of both surveys were presented to staff by myself in a large open setting. The purpose was to receive their feedback on the results and to allow for discussion. The interpretation given for each table in this section includes the survey results, comments from staff, and from the discussion that took place during those meetings.

School Culture Triage Survey

The first School Culture Triage Survey was completed in the summer of 2015 and was based on the Campton Middle School staff experiences from the 2014–2015 school year. The second School Culture Triage Survey was completed in the spring of 2016 and was based on the staff's experiences from the 2015–2016 school year. The survey results were compared and contrasted to determine the progress that has been made from the summer of 2015 to the spring of 2016 with regards to the Campton Middle School culture.

The survey (Appendix C) is from the Center for Improving School Culture (CISC) and it encompasses Likert scale questions with a rating from 1 to 5 points. The items are categorized under three headings:

1. Professional Collaboration: Do teachers and staff meet and work together to solve professional issues, e.g. instructional, organizational or curricular issues?
2. Affiliative/Collegial Relationships: Do people enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included?

3. Efficacy or Self-Determination: Are people in this school here because they want to be? Do they work to improve their skills as true professionals, or, do they simply see themselves as helpless, victims of a large and uncaring bureaucracy? (CISC, p.130)

Twenty-eight staff members completed the survey in the summer of 2015. The results of this survey were presented and discussed with the staff during a faculty meeting in August 2015. Staff were given the opportunity to respond to the results with their collective thoughts in a small group format. Afterward, they recorded their individual thoughts through an exit slip. All survey and exit slip responses were kept anonymous throughout the entire process of collecting feedback from the Campton Middle School staff.

Thirty-four staff members completed the survey during the April 2016 faculty meeting. Before completing the survey, it was reinforced with the staff that their responses should be based off of their experience during the 2015–2016 school year. It was also reinforced that all responses remained anonymous and that their honest and candid feedback was needed so that corrective measures could be taken as needed. It should also be noted that during this faculty meeting there were staff members of Campton Middle School that were already aware of their non-renewal status for the following school year. As a result, some of the staff members who completed the survey were not being rehired for the following school year, meaning their perceptions could have been counterproductive.

The items are categorized into three sections (professional collaboration, affiliative/collegial relationships, and self-determination) with the results from both the summer 2015 and spring 2016 surveys included for comparison.

Each table consists of the total number of staff members who completed the

survey, the distribution of responses in quantity and percentage form, and the weighted average that represents the overall average response by the staff to that particular item.

The highest weighted average that can be attained is a 5.00, since the items are being rated with a Likert scale format with a rating from 1 to 5 points.

Professional Collaboration

Table 1

Item number one: Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	3 10.71%	10 35.71%	12 42.86%	3 10.71%	3.54
April 2016	34	0	1 2.94%	10 29.41%	22 64.71%	1 2.94%	3.68

Time for staff to collaborate and discuss strategies and curricular topics is critical for professional growth. The July weighted average was the second-highest average response, comparatively speaking, with the July survey results. There was still positive growth when you compare the July 2015 (3.54) to April 2016 (3.68) results (+.16). When you combine the “often” to “always or almost always” categories, the number of staff in those two positive categories increased from 54% to 68%, a quantitative staff increase of eight staff members (from 15 to 23). This can definitely be attributed to the addition of our bimonthly content team meetings for English language arts and mathematics. Also, both social studies and science staff are invited to these content meetings that involve discussing curriculum, instructional strategies, and student data.

Table 2

Item number two: Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	7 25.00%	14 50.00%	6 21.43%	1 3.57%	3.04
April 2016	34	0	2 5.88%	9 26.47%	19 55.88%	4 11.76%	3.74

Survey item 2 showed the most significant increase in the weighted average score in the spring survey by increasing from 3.04 to 3.74. When combining the “often” and “always or almost always” categories, number of staff increased from 7 to 23 and the percentage increased from 25% to 68%. This considerable positive increase is as a result of all the planning that occurs on a weekly basis during team leadership and teacher team meetings.

Table 3

Item number three: Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	1 3.57%	6 21.43%	12 42.86%	6 21.43%	3 10.71%	3.14
April 2016	34	0	4 11.76%	7 20.59%	21 61.76%	2 5.88%	3.62

Survey item number three shows another significant increase in the weighted average score, improving the number by .48 from 3.14 in summer of 2015 to 3.62 to spring of 2016. The “often” and “always or almost always” categories combined saw an increase from 9 to 23 staff members, an increase of 36%. When you look at items two and three, they involve staff collaborating and making decisions on how we schedule and utilize materials and resources. The collaboration occurs during team leadership meetings, weekly teacher team meetings, the addition of bimonthly content level team meetings, and a variety of committee meetings that were incorporated during the 2016–2017 school year (e.g. school culture committee and awards committee). The principal was the one constant administrator to attend most of the meetings to assist with consistent information and feedback. This is in contrast to the revolving administration participation in the previous year.

Table 4

Item number four: The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	1 3.57%	60.71% 17	28.57% 8	3.57% 1	3.57% 1	2.43
April 2016	34	3 8.82%	16 47.06%	8 23.59%	7 20.59%	0	2.56

Survey item number four was the lowest-rated question in both the July 2015 April 2016 surveys. There was improvement with the overall weighted average with a .13 increase going from 2.43 to 2.56. When combining the “often” and “always or almost

always” categories, the percentages increase by almost 14% and members increased from two members to seven. Almost 80% of the staff still felt that this was major problem at Campton Middle School. One staff member commented that “there is not enough collaboration regarding the discipline plan and the student behavior code between staff and administrators.” One of the most planned for and discussed topics has been school culture, which includes building-wide procedures, discipline protocol, the student handbook, and behavior contracts. All of these topics have been extensively discussed and confirmed by staff and administration.

Additional staff comments were “discipline is rarely followed through with” and “information has not been disseminated in any meetings taken place, nor has information been passed on regarding the evolution of our disciplinary process.” In November of this school year the discipline protocol for administrators was audited and revised. These revisions were shared with team leaders and staff. One area of improvement that needs to be addressed is the communication and follow-up with staff by administration when dealing with a student disciplinary issue that specifically involves a teacher. Another comment from a staff member is “consequences for discipline often lack follow-through from the deans.” That follow-up is part of the collaboration process that needs to be initiated by all administrators to ensure staff is aware of what actions have taken place and to eliminate the perception of lack of follow-through on discipline expectations.

Table 5

Item number five: The planning/organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	7 25.00%	12 42.86%	7 25.00%	2 7.14%	3.14
April 2016	34	1 2.94%	2 5.88%	14 41.18%	15 44.12%	2 5.88%	3.44

For survey item number five, the weighted average score has increased by .30 (3.14 to 3.44). The staff went from approximately 32% in the “often” and “always or almost always” categories in July 2015 to 50% in those categories in April 2016. These gains are correlated to the number of meetings taking place on a weekly and monthly basis within the leadership team, as well as the variety and level of meetings (i.e., team meetings, committee meetings, content meetings, and staff meetings). These meetings serve not only to disseminate information, but also to foster discussion and planning. This participation increases staff’s ownership.

Collegial Relationships

Table 6

Item number six: Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school’s values.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	5 17.86%	15 53.57%	8 28.57%	0	3.11
April 2016	34	0	6 17.65%	9 26.47%	17 50.00%	2 5.88%	3.44

The first item of the collegial relationships section saw an increase of the weighted average score from 3.11 to 3.44. The combination of “often” and “always or almost always” had an increase of 27% (from 28.57% to 55.88%). The total number of staff that selected these two categories went from 8 to 19, a considerable increase. The implementation of daily student recognition awards, monthly recognition of excellent attendance and behavior, and monthly recognition for staff attendance contributed to this gain. Additionally, the creation and incorporation of the Campton Middle School core values, which allow to staff make more consistent daily decisions, helped increase this score.

Table 7

Item number seven: Our school reflects a true “sense” of community.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	7 25.00%	17 60.71%	4 14.29%	0 0.00%	2.89
April 2016	34	0	7 20.59%	15 44.12%	9 26.47%	3 8.82%	3.24

The staff’s response on the existence of a sense of community showed progress from the summer of 2015 to the spring of 2016 by an increase of .35 (2.89 to 3.24). There was an increase of eight staff members who selected the “often” and “always or almost always” sections, which resulted in a 21% increase. There is still considerable room for improvement as approximately 65% (20.59% + 44.12%) remain in the “sometimes” or “rarely” options. The incorporation of core values, the continual effort of merging the teams as one school under one roof through building-wide initiatives, consistently working on daily collaboration amongst staff and administration, and the addition of a variety of committees have all had a positive impact in this area and need to be continued for future growth.

Table 8

Item number eight: Our schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	14 50.00%	12 42.86%	2 7.14%	0	2.57
April 2016	34	1 2.94%	6 17.65%	18 52.94%	8 23.53%	1 2.94%	3.06

The 2015–2016 school year demonstrated many opportunities for staff to communicate in formal and informal settings on a daily and weekly basis. The weighted average results reinforce this, with an increase from 2.57 to 3.06. The combination of the “often” and “always or almost always” options increased by 20%, with nine staff members selecting one of the two options. Additionally, the “rarely” category decreased to six staff members after seven shifted up to “sometimes,” another improvement. One of the comments from the staff stated there were “no social studies or science paid content team meetings.” This is something that has been addressed in the 2016–2017 school year with a recommendation to have both content teams meet bimonthly.

Table 9

Item number nine: Our school supports and appreciates sharing of new ideas by members of our school.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	9 32.14%	14 50.00%	1 3.57%	4 14.29%	3.00
April 2016	34	0	5 14.71%	11 32.35%	15 44.12%	3 8.82%	3.47

Item nine showed solid growth by increasing the average weighted response by .47 (3.00 to 3.47). The “often” and “always or almost always” categories increased by 35% because of an additional 14 staff members selecting one of these two options. Another positive change is the lowering of both “rarely” and the “sometimes” options by four and three staff members, respectively. Gains have resulted from initial staff surveys, time devoted to staff discussions of survey results, and the request for additional input and continuing dialogue as the entire staff assisted in molding many of the new initiatives of the 2015–2016 school year.

Table 10

Item number ten: There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebrations, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	1 3.57%	9 32.14%	15 53.57%	3 10.71%	0	2.71
April 2016	34	0	5 14.71%	15 44.12%	11 32.35%	3 8.82%	3.35

The final item in the collegial relationships category showed considerable growth, as the weighted average response increased by .64 (2.71 to 3.35). The “often” and “always or almost always” categories increased by 30%. This increase was due to an impressive decrease in the final three categories (never, rarely, sometimes), from about 90% in the summer of 2015 to 59% in the spring of 2016. The increase in staff and student recognition throughout the year and the celebration of goals and achievements have positively impacted these results. Recognizing student achievement through quarterly straight A lunches and acknowledging staff during faculty meetings for perfect attendance are some examples of our celebrations. One of the staff comments reinforces that while it’s been a good start with the new initiatives for recognizing achievement, the school still needs improvement on unifying the staff and continuing to add additional ways to recognize student and staff success.

Process or Self-Determination

Table 11

Item number eleven: When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	11 39.29%	13 46.43%	3 10.71%	1 3.57%	2.79
April 2016	34	0	11 32.35%	16 47.06%	6 17.65%	1 2.94%	2.91

The process section of the School Culture Triage Survey deals with how staff work together in predicting and resolving problems, and then moving forward in a constructive fashion. For item number 11, the overall increase for the weighted average score was .12 (from 2.79 to 2.91). While three more staff members selected the “often” response, three more selected the “sometimes” option as well. The weighted average results for item 11 are the second-lowest in the entire survey, next to item number four, which highlighted the discipline and behavior code. Both of these items work hand in hand, because when you work with student behavior issues or school culture in general, collaboration with staff and administration is not just helpful, but critical. “Support from and communication with colleagues led teachers to have greater confidence and certainty about what they were trying to achieve and the best ways to achieve it” (Fullan and Hargreaves, 2012, p. 111). On one of the exit slip responses, a staff member said that a fear is “a lack of honesty and trust.” The only way to overcome this fear is to open the lines of communication and begin to develop a collaborative environment based on

rapport building. Both items 4 and 11 need to be looked at further with a focus on improving the current status so the school culture may continue to grow.

Table 12

Item number twelve: School members are interdependent and value each other.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	1 3.37%	11 39.29%	14 50.00%	2 7.14%	3.61
April 2016	34	0	3 8.82%	10 29.41%	18 52.94%	3 8.82%	3.62

The results for item 12 were the highest weighted average response of the July survey at 3.61, but showed only a .01 increase (a 3.62 average) in the April survey. There’s been some gain in the “often” and “always or almost always” sections, with five additional staff members making that selection. Campton Middle School is still structured in the four-team format throughout the seventh and eighth grades. This is highlighted here because as we continue to merge the four teams in different capacities (e.g., content-level team meetings and different school committees), the staff and administration begin to mold additional relationships outside their designated teams. This should only enhance the value that can be developed among other staff members.

Table 13

Item number thirteen: Members of our school community seek alternatives to problems/issues rather than repeating what we have always done.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	7 25.00%	17 60.71%	4 14.29%	0	2.89
April 2016	34	1 2.94%	5 14.71%	18 52.94%	10 29.41%	0	3.09

Table 14

Item number fourteen: Members of our school community seek to define the problem/issue rather than blame others.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	8 28.57%	15 53.57%	5 17.86%	0	2.89
April 2016	34	1 2.94%	9 26.47%	12 35.29%	10 29.41%	2 5.88%	3.09

Both items 13 and 14 center around resolving problems and being proactive in a collaborative fashion. Coincidentally, the July and April weighted average scores are the same for both items (2.89 to 3.09). The combination of “often” and “always or almost always” categories have increased by 15% (29.41%) and 17% (29.41% + 5.88%), for items 13 and 14, respectively. The “never” and “rarely” categories did not see much growth with item 14, adding only two staff members. When looking at the results of

items 12, 13, and 14, there's a connection that centers on how adversity with the staff is handled, and if this adversity is resolved in a constructive fashion. There is definitely room for growth here; this needs to be improved within the staff, within the administrative team, and between all parties. The two topics at the central focus of this adversity involve enforcement of the student behavior code and patience with the change process of a school culture.

Table 15

Item number fifteen: The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	7 25.00%	11 39.29%	10 35.71%	0	3.11
April 2016	34	2 5.88%	4 11.76%	10 29.41%	15 44.12%	3 8.82%	3.38

There was positive growth in item 15, with the weighted average score increasing from 3.11 to 3.38. The number of staff that selected either “often” or “always or almost always” has increased by eight to represent 53% (44.12% + 8.82%) of the staff. The total percentage of staff that selected the top three options (sometimes, often, and always) increased to 82% overall. Adding the bimonthly English language arts and math content team meetings has definitely had a positive impact on the results of this question. Staff bring their own ideas on instructional strategies to these meetings.

Table 16

Item number sixteen: People work here because they enjoy it and choose to be here.

	Total #	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	Weighted average on a 5.00 Likert scale
July 2015	28	0	1 3.57%	14 50.00%	11 39.29%	2 7.14%	3.50
April 2016	34	0	9 26.47%	14 41.18%	10 29.41%	1 2.94%	3.09

Item 16 is the only item out of the entire School Triage Survey that regressed, with the weighted average score dropping from 3.50 in July 2015 to 3.09 in April 2016. Two fewer staff members selected the “often” or “always or almost always” responses. More significantly, the “rarely” option increased from only one staff member in July to nine staff members in April. Item 16 produced the most comments from staff, the majority of which centered on the student behavior code. The following are some of the comments:

Many changes have been made this year, however, there is still much progress to be made. Discipline procedures and consequences must be embraced by the administration; I don’t feel that students receive consequences for bad behavior or being disrespectful to a teacher.

Additionally, “follow-through with discipline is a problem. No detentions, in school or out of school suspensions for certain students. No follow-through when students say they aren’t going to detention.” These concerns, whether factual or based on staff’s perception, are partly or mainly due to a lack of communication between staff members and administrators when there is a discipline infraction by a student. This has been a focus for improvement for the 2016–2017 school year.

School Culture Triage Surveys Compared

Before discussing the results of the two surveys, certain variables need to be mentioned, as they have negatively impacted efforts to improve the school culture and made things more challenging throughout the school year. First, staff overall attendance throughout the school year was low. There were several unfilled teaching positions on a daily basis due to staff absences. As a result, other staff members needed to fill in for the absent ones, which caused a domino effect across the building and impacted staff morale. In addition, administrators and teachers came up with the idea of dividing the students evenly into other classrooms when the school was short-staffed. That resulted in students being in different rooms, which created changes in classroom dynamics. When analyzing the staff attendance rate per team, there was a strong correlation between student discipline issues and staff absence rates.

The other variable that needs to be mentioned is that, along with low attendance rates of some school administrators throughout the school year, one of the administrators was removed from the building at the beginning of the third quarter (February) and not replaced. In the fall of the school year (November), one teacher and the school's social worker were replaced. Lastly, several of the staff members that completed the April 2016 survey were aware at that time that they would not be a member of the 2016–2017 staff.

Twenty-eight staff members completed the School Culture Survey in July 2015, and the total score was 48 points out of a total of 85. The number of respondents increased to 34 staff members for the School Culture Survey in April of 2016, and the total score was 53 points. That increase of 5 points between the two surveys placed us in the following category: “41-60 points = modifications and improvements are necessary”

(CISC, p. 133). With overall improved scores on the survey, there are two items that are the lowest rated and need to be aggressively addressed in the new school year:

4. The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.

11. When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.

These two items are the only two that produced less than a 3.0 weighted average score, and both saw approximately 79% of the staff select the “never,” “rarely,” and “sometimes” options. The first item deals with the student behavior code, and the second deals with how we handle those “implementation dips” in a proactive way (Fullan, 2012). There were many new procedural and discipline protocols that were put in place before the 2015–2016 year and during the school year. The new and modified procedures and protocols were the result of collaboration and ownership by all staff. The staff’s overall frustrations stem from both the application of the new procedures and protocols and the lack of communication and understanding about the decision-making process.

This leads us into the three categories of the School Triage Survey: professional collaboration, collegial relationships, and process or self-determination. Even though item number four is in the professional collaboration section, the category is still the highest-rated average group with a 3.41 weighted average score. The collegial relationships category also performed favorably, with a weighted average score of 3.31. The lowest category (of which item 11 was a part) was process or self-determination, with an average rated score of 3.20. The category includes how we as a staff resolve problems and focus on improving the organization as the priority instead of waiting for

the bomb to drop and blaming others. This process needs to be addressed and closely monitored throughout the upcoming school year.

Teacher Belief Survey

The Campton Middle School Staff completed the Teacher Belief Survey (Appendix D) in the fall of the 2015–2016 school year. A total of 42 staff members completed the Teacher Belief Survey. “This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create challenges for teachers” (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001). The survey questions are grouped in three main categories: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. All three of these sections encompass school culture by addressing climate, motivation, and student performance. Additionally, teachers’ answers are solely based on their opinion or perspective on themselves and their abilities.

For ease of reading and interpreting the survey results, the questions were grouped in the three categories (student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management) and are not presented in chronological order. Each table consists of the total number of staff members that completed the survey and the distribution of responses in quantity and percentage form.

The weighted average number represents the overall average response by the staff to that particular question. The highest weighted average that can be attained is a 9.00. The questions were rated with a Likert scale format with a rating from 1 to 9 points, with 1 being low and 9 being high. The significance of the weighted average number is that it tells you your strengths and weaknesses and the potential areas of focus to improve upon as a staff.

Student Engagement

Table 17

2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.23
2.	0		
3. Very Little	1	2.38%	
4.	2	4.76%	
5. Some degree	15	35.71%	
6.	4	9.52%	
7. Quite a bit	13	30.95%	
8.	2	4.76%	
9. A great deal	5	11.90%	

This question was the second-lowest weighted average in the Teacher Belief Survey, with a mean of 6.23. Additionally, 42% of the staff members rated themselves number 5 or below, confirming a low confidence level in knowing how to motivate students to do their best on a consistent basis.

Table 18

4. How much can you do to help your students value learning?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.52
2.	0		
3. Very Little	1	2.38%	
4.	1	2.38%	
5. Some degree	11	26.19%	
6.	6	14.29%	
7. Quite a bit	15	35.71%	
8.	1	2.38%	
9. A great deal	7	16.67%	

The data from table 18 had an average rated response of 6.52, which was the third-lowest of all questions on the Teacher Belief Survey. Approximately 31% of the staff members rated themselves with option 5 or below, which indicates a lower confidence level in helping students value learning. This can be the result of an inability to make connections with the students.

Table 19

7. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.71
2.	0		
3. Very little	0		
4.	1	2.38%	
5. Some degree	6	14.29%	
6.	3	7.14%	
7. Quite a bit	23	54.76%	
8.	3	7.14%	
9. A great deal	6	14.29%	

The data from table 19 tells us that the staff's mean response was 6.71, with only seven staff members who rated themselves lower than a 6 on the scale. This was the highest-rated response in the category of student engagement and demonstrates that the majority of staff are fairly confident that they can convince students of their ability to produce quality work.

Table 20

11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.16
2.	1	2.38%	
3. Very little	3	7.14%	
4.	0	0.00%	
5. Some degree	14	33.33%	
6.	1	2.38%	
7. Quite a bit	17	40.48%	
8.	1	2.38%	
9. A great deal	5	11.90%	

Question 11 was the lowest-rated response from the entire survey, with a mean score of 6.16. Additionally, 43% of staff members rated themselves at number 5 or below, indicating a disconnect with one of our key stakeholders: families. Tupa and McFadden (2009) reported that educating parents should result in positive gains for their children. Making connections and communicating consistently with our parents/guardians is a key to ensuring that our children have a strong foundation to succeed.

This also is likely related to the lower response rate from staff on motivating and helping students value their work. When our relationships and lines of communication with families are not strong, how can we expect them to reinforce the importance of education and assist their children from home? The majority of our children need support and reinforcement from both home and school to do their best.

Instructional Strategies

Table 21

5. To what extent can you draft good questions for your students?

Answer Choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		7.31
2.	0		
3. Very little	1	2.44%	
4.	0		
5. Some degree	3	7.32%	
6.	4	9.76%	
7. Quite a bit	17	41.46%	
8.	5	12.20%	
9. A great deal	11	26.83%	

The staff rated themselves confidently when asked about their ability to draft questions for students, producing a mean score of 7.31. This was the second-highest average on the Teacher Belief Survey, with only four teachers rating themselves a 5 or below. The higher confidence level can be a result of staff focusing and being responsible for only one content area.

Table 22

9. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.95
2.	0		
3. Very little	1	2.38%	
4.	0		
5. Some degree	9	21.43%	
6.	4	9.52%	
7. Quite a bit	14	33.33%	
8.	4	9.52%	
9. A great deal	10	23.81%	

The knowledge and utilization of a variety of assessments is a key skill for all teachers to acquire. The mean average score for question number nine was 6.95, second-lowest in the instructional strategies category. There were 10 staff members who rated themselves below a 6. But on a positive note, another 10 staff members scored themselves at 9, which is a rating of “a great deal.” This can be the result of the experience level of the staff, with approximately half being non-tenured.

Table 23

10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		7.5
2.	0		
3. Very little	1	2.38%	
4.	0		
5. Some Degree	2	4.76%	
6.	0		
7. Quite a bit	23	54.76%	
8.	3	7.14%	
9. A great deal	13	30.95%	

The question of providing alternative explanations was the highest rated on this survey, with a mean of 7.5. Only three staff members rated themselves below a 6. This is a positive sign, and expected for a building that has staff who focus on teaching one content area throughout a school day.

Table 24

12. How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.69
2.	0		
3. Very little	0		
4.	2	4.76%	
5. Some degree	9	21.43%	
6.	4	9.52%	
7. Quite a bit	19	45.24%	
8.	1	2.38%	
9. A great deal	7	16.67%	

Questions 9 (Table 22, p. 49) and 12 (Table 24, p. 50) in the teaching strategy section involved utilization of assessment and instructional strategies. These were the two questions that the staff rated themselves the lowest on, with averages of 6.95 and 6.69 in the teaching strategy section. In both questions, about 25% of the staff members rated themselves at 5 or below. Understanding how to incorporate assessments and having an array of instructional strategies helps not only in differentiating instruction, but also in keeping students engaged, and thus managing the classroom more efficiently.

Both of these questions involved the ability to determine student strengths and weaknesses through assessment and then differentiate instruction as needed. In the process section of School Culture Triage Survey, a staff member made the following comment: “We made our instructional decisions on our own islands.” This brings to light that the staff needs more guidance, collaboration, and support in assessing and differentiating instruction.

Classroom Management

Table 25

1. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		7.38
2.	0		
3. Very little	0		
4.	0		
5. Some degree	6	14.29%	
6.	4	9.52%	
7. Quite a bit	17	40.48%	
8.	2	4.76%	
9. A great deal	13	30.95%	

The staff members gave themselves a high rating in question number 1, with a weighted average score of 7.38. Unsurprisingly, this was the highest-rated question in the classroom management category. Six teachers gave themselves a rating of 5 or lower, which reflects the confidence level for the staff in controlling and managing disruptive classroom behavior.

Table 26

3. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 41)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0	0.00%	6.78
2.	0	0.00%	
3. Very little	0	0.00%	
4.	0	0.00%	
5. Some degree	10	24.39%	
6.	1	2.44%	
7. Quite a bit	23	56.10%	
8.	2	4.88%	
9. A great deal	5	12.20%	

When reading question number three in table 26, it's simultaneously comparable to and quite different from question number one from table 25. Question one dealt with a student who is exhibiting disruptive behavior, while question three involved neutralizing a student who is being disruptive. The average weighted response for question number three was 6.78, with the significant difference being the amount of number 9 ratings between the two: question one had 13 staff members at the rating of number 9 with only five at the 9 rating on question number three. This tells me that staff are more comfortable at managing the disruptive behavior than they are at helping students correct their actions or neutralizing situations before they escalate.

Table 27

6. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?

Answer choices	Total # of responses (out of 42)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.88
2.	0		
3. Very little	0		
4.	0		
5. Some degree	8	19.05%	
6.	4	9.52%	
7. Quite a bit	22	52.38%	
8.	1	2.38%	
9. A great deal	7	16.67%	

Question six from table 27 involved staff rating themselves on their ability to have students follow classroom rules. Staff responded with an overall rating of 6.88, with 19% rating themselves with a 5 nearly 17% rating themselves with a 9, which stands for “a great deal.” This once again might show the preference or natural tendency staff have for being an authority figure with the students versus working in partner.

Table 28

8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?

Answer Choices	Total # of responses (out of 41)	Percentages	Weighted average on a 9.00 Likert scale
1. None at all	0		6.70
2.	0		
3. Very little	0		
4.	0		
5. Some degree	8	19.51%	
6.	4	9.76%	
7. Quite a bit	20	48.78%	
8.	2	4.88%	
9. A great deal	7	17.07%	

Question eight from table 28 involved staff rating themselves on their ability to establish a classroom management plan with each group of students. Staff produced an overall rating of 6.70, with 19.51% of the staff at the number 5 rating and more than 17% staff members rating themselves number 9, which stands for “a great deal.” For both questions six and eight, which dealt with students following classroom rules and establishing a classroom management plan, the responses from the staff were almost identical due to their comfort level in establishing authority.

In the classroom management section, the staff responded favorably for questions one, six, and eight, which involved enforcing rules and establishing a classroom management system. What the staff scored themselves lowest in was their ability to calm a student down following a disruptive action. This requires having or making a connection with a person, which brings us to rapport building and how we process situations. We can conclude that the staff are more comfortable and confident in controlling or giving consequences versus connecting and correcting someone’s actions.

Comparing the School Culture Triage Survey with the Teacher Belief Survey

In the School Culture Triage Survey, the lowest-rated item in the process section dealt with being proactive or reactionary, with the staff leaning toward the latter. The correlation here is that the staff favors or feels more confident toward being reactionary by handling a discipline issue when it occurs, rather than being able to focus on preventing it from happening or diffusing it before it becomes an issue.

Another interesting point of comparison is that under the professional collaboration section on the School Culture Triage Survey, the lowest-rated response involved collaboration among staff and the student behavior code. With the staff feeling that the administration does not support them or lacks follow-through at times, the staff might feel that they need to drop the gauntlet down as soon possible so that a student faces consequences.

In the student engagement section of the Teacher Belief Survey, the two lowest-rated questions were numbers 2 and 11.

2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?

Both questions revolve around having the ability to connect to people and build relationships. As we reflect back to the School Triage Survey results, one of the factors hindering staff's ability to move forward, working together, resolve matters, and be proactive is the need to build rapport with all stakeholders. The main premise of the document is making those connections with others and being willing to do so to persevere

through adversity. This is not the makeup of the current school culture. This issue needs to be evaluated and addressed for the staff and school to move forward.

SECTION SIX: A VISION OF SUCCESS (TO BE)

Introduction

To improve the school culture of Campton Middle School, I used the Wagner's (2008) Change Leadership Model consisting of the 4 C's: context, competencies, conditions, and culture. Each component of the Change Leadership Model outlines how the school culture transformed into a nurturing and professional environment for all stakeholders involved. This transformation includes the vision of each component, as well as a picture of what that component looks like in an outstanding school culture at Campton Middle School.

Context

The building organization is stable and runs efficiently on a daily basis. The administrative leadership team meets daily/weekly to ensure that all administrators are on the same page. This allows for cohesiveness within the leadership team and a strong presence and unity in front of the staff and with parent/guardians. The involvement of district administration for day-to-day support is completely eliminated.

The staff leadership team is led by the building principal, so there is consistent communication on a weekly basis. The principal is the main administrator for each team, so the building functions as one, with the same expectations and standards established for all. Each team at Campton Middle School receives approval through the building principal, which allows for consistency. The remainder of the administrative team acts as a support system for staff and reports directly to the principal to maintain consistency. The stability of the building organization and the efficiency promotes confidence and morale with all stakeholders.

Conditions

Campton Middle School is organized into four teams due to scheduling purposes. The four teams have the same standards and expectations for all students, are valued equally, and report directly to the building principal for consistency. Each team meets weekly to ensure consistency and cohesiveness. The content-level teams meet bimonthly to confirm consistency with curriculum coverage, common assessments, and the sharing of instructional strategies. In addition to the administrative team meeting weekly, the roles and responsibilities for each administrator are established and communicated to the entire staff for transparency and efficiency.

The entire staff has collaborated to create building procedures for consistency and efficiency throughout the entire building. The procedures include all transitions, beginning with arrival and extending to expectations through the day and dismissal procedures. The student behavior code has also been collaboratively revised to reflect consistency across the four teams, giving teachers autonomy and incorporating a progressive discipline approach that is objective and efficient with the administrative team. Campton Middle School, in a joint effort with students and parents, creates core values and a vision and mission statement. This enables everyone to make consistent decisions that fall within the agreed-upon expectations and values of all stakeholders.

Competencies

The staff as a whole understands and applies our established core values on a daily basis when making decisions. This allows for consistency throughout the building when applying our building-wide procedures and behavior code. Working in partnership and collaborating with all stakeholders is the norm, not the exception, with a focus on

relationships. Staff and administrators focus on rapport building while being supportive and understanding of everyone's roles. The administrative team collaborates and ensures that an internal appeal system within the building minimizes, if not eliminates, all need for district administrative support. As a result, the confidence of and support from our families continues to grow and improve.

Culture

The culture of Campton Middle School is based on collaborative vision and core values. Similarly, all decisions are based on the vision and values. The administrative team is efficient and its members are competent in understanding and performing their roles, including how they support the staff. All students are given the same standards and expectations, and there is a focus on rapport building to produce a nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. All stakeholders are partners and are involved in the educational process through open and honest communication that is respectful and based on trusting relationships.

SECTION SEVEN: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS FOR CHANGE

Introduction

As I analyze the transformation of Campton Middle School, there are several strategies that need to be implemented to transition from the “as is” to the “to be” stage (Wagner, 2008). These strategies involve both technical and adaptive changes that need to take place for the transformation of the school culture to begin (Reeves, 2009). This also involves the buy-in from staff, which allows the leadership and faculty to begin to move in the same direction and grow together.

Table 29
Strategies and actions for change

Strategy	Actions
<p>1. Administrators and staff consistently reinforce building procedures and student behavior code</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate in the summer and create building procedures and student behavior code • Apply and reinforce the procedures as consistent expectations building-wide • Apply the behavior code consistently and progressively • Monitor the plan on a weekly basis to determine if modifications are needed • Provide professional development opportunities for staff that focus on how the core values look on a day-to-day basis when applying building procedures and rules
<p>2. Focus on building a rapport with all stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators are supportive, work in partnership with staff, and celebrate and recognize accomplishments • Staff focuses on building a rapport with all students so all students have a support system and an adult advocate • The school schedule has been

	<p>modified to allow for time in the morning for rapport building with staff and students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators and staff work positively with parents and guardians by communicating and involving them in different events such as Mom’s and Dad’s Day and Open House
<p>3. Stakeholders collaborate and create core values and a common vision and mission statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff begins the process of confirming key action verbs that embody the school’s values during faculty professional development sessions in the summer • A school culture committee is assembled and meetings scheduled in the fall to create core values, mission, and vision statements • The student council and parent teacher organization are involved in finalizing the school’s core values, mission, and vision statements • Staff and administration make daily decisions based on the core values • The core values, mission, and vision statement are reviewed annually
<p>4. The administrative team works efficiently by collaborating and understanding their specific roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators have established roles that are communicated to staff • The administrative team has incorporated an appeal system within the school to manage day-to-day operation of the building internally • Building administrators are self-sufficient and on the same page with daily/weekly meetings
<p>5. Create a positive and conducive learning environment for all students by establishing a collaborative environment that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily decisions are based on the core values for all students • Incorporate and promote building-wide incentives and

has high expectations for all students	celebrations recognizing student accomplishments
6. Staff and administrative team work collaboratively to maintain cohesiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher team leaders specifically communicate to the principal to ensure consistent communication throughout the building • Content teams meet bimonthly for curriculum and team continuity

Strategy 1: Consistently Reinforce Procedures

The first strategy involves the administrators and staff consistently reinforcing building procedures and the student behavior code. This is a critical piece due to the nature of bringing a supportive structure and harmony to the building. The initial step involves collaborating and creating the building procedures and student behavior code together, then annually revisiting, auditing, and determining if there should be any revisions. The staff as a whole needs to understand and apply the procedures consistently and progressively. The continual monitoring of the plan by staff and administration is essential to determine if there should be any modifications or clarifications. Staff are making the connection with the building procedures and student behavior code within their classroom. “A well-managed classroom has a set of procedures and routines that structure the classroom” (Wong & Wong, 2009, p. 84). There is professional development opportunities provided that involve several stages. The first professional development session involves how the core values look on a day-to-day basis when applying building procedures and rules. The additional sessions will focus on specific classroom management strategies, ways to manage chronic behaviors, and strategies on building rapport with students and parents.

Strategy 2: Build Rapport with All Stakeholders

Building a rapport with all stakeholders is the foundation in making real changes. In a school setting there are three key stakeholders: staff, students, and parents/guardians. The foundation for the students is established by the staff and home, and involves frequent communication and getting the parents to attend different school events. Modifying the school schedule to allow for additional time for homeroom teachers and students to build rapport is another key action step in developing relationships. Finally, celebrations recognizing student and staff successes are important rituals that motivate and develop morale.

Strategy 3: Stakeholders Create Core Values

Creating core values and a vision statement as a staff provides essential components to move in the same direction and transform a school culture. The initial step is for the staff to create key action verbs, use the action verbs to create the core values, and then begin the process of completing the mission and vision statements. A School Culture Committee was assembled to help guide this process and to involve all three stakeholders: staff and administration, student council, and the parent-teacher organization. Having a common vision and core values to apply to daily decision making is essential in transforming a school culture. After their completion, the core values, mission, and vision statement should be reviewed on an annual basis to reconfirm the school's values and direction.

Strategy 4: Administrators Collaborate and Understand Roles and Responsibilities

When working within an administrative team, all members need to know and understand their roles and responsibilities. At the beginning of the school year, the

administrative roles chart was created and shared with staff. The administrative flowchart was reviewed and revised throughout the fall semester until a final draft was formed. With daily and weekly team meetings, the administrative team reached a level of cohesiveness and efficiency that allowed it to support the staff and handle internal problems without involving district administration. As a result, the rapport and confidence with the parents/guardians of Campton Middle School has drastically improved.

Strategies 5 & 6: Collaboration and Establishing High Standards for All Students

Setting consistent high standards and expectations for all students across the entire building is essential. This begins with each adult in the building collaborating and understanding the expectations and standards for everyone and setting the bar consistently as a result. Campton Middle School is one building under one roof, and it needs consistency and high expectations for all. What helps in this endeavor are the team leaders reporting to the building principal for consistency and cohesion throughout the school. This allows for staff and administration to work in harmony by being supportive of each other. Applying the core values in daily decision making fosters consistency in even independent day-to-day decisions. The last piece needed is building the camaraderie and spirit of Campton Middle School by incorporating and promoting building-wide incentives and celebrations to recognize student and staff accomplishments.

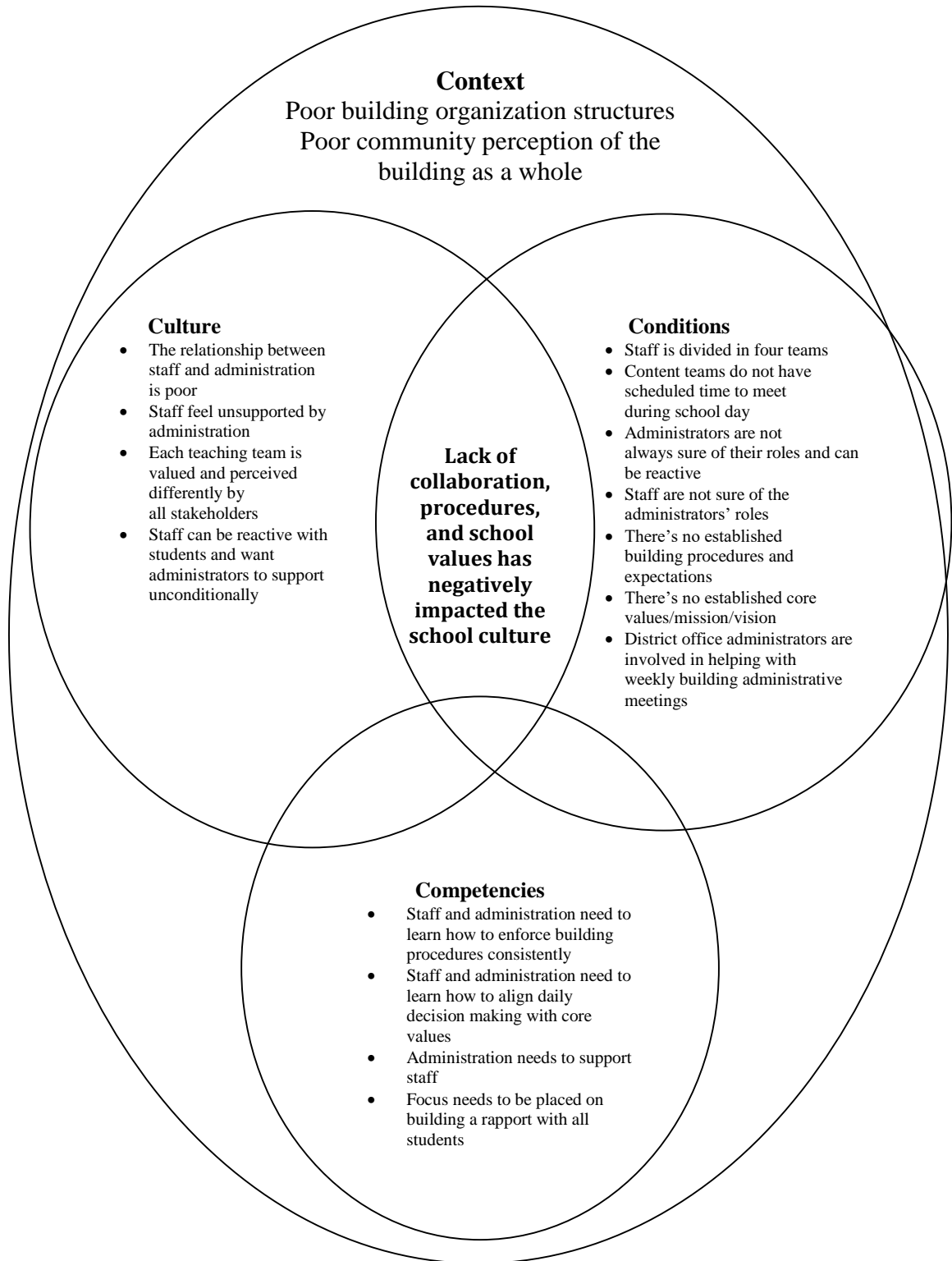
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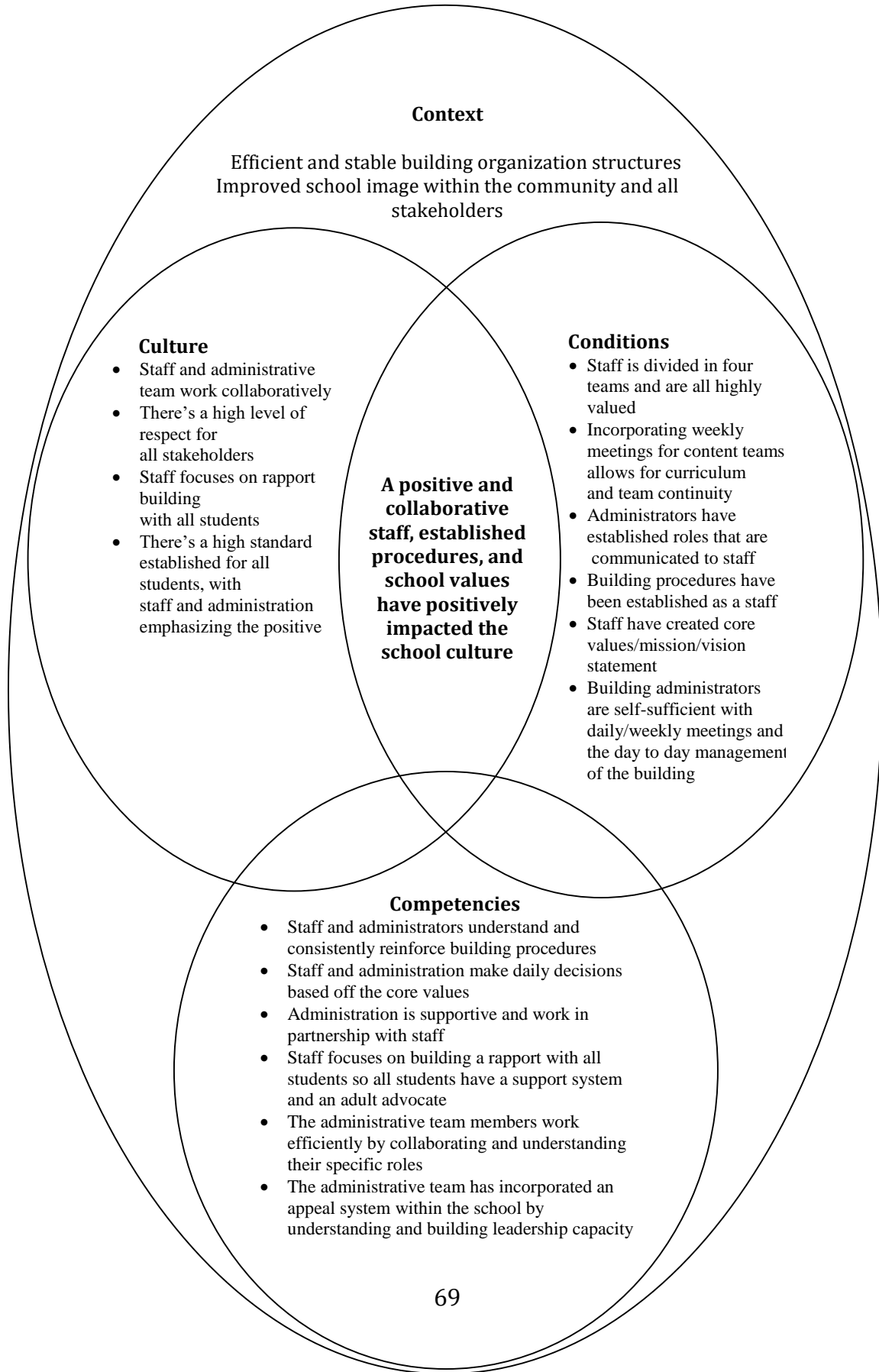
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APPENDIX A: AS IS



APPENDIX B: TO BE



APPENDIX C: SCHOOL CULTURE TRIAGE SURVEY

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Professional Collaboration					
1. Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.					
2. Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.					
3. Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.					
4. The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.					
5. The planning/organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.					
Collegial Relationships					
6. Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values.					
7. Our school reflects a true "sense" of community.					
8. Our schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.					
9. Our school supports and appreciates sharing of new ideas by members of our school.					
10. There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebrations, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment.					
Process or Self-Determination					
11. When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.					
12. School members are interdependent and value each					

other.					
13. Members of our school community seek alternatives to problems/issues rather than repeating what we have always done.					
14. Members of our school community seek to define the problem/issue rather than blame others.					
15. The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.					
16. People work here because they enjoy it and choose to be here.					

APPENDIX D: TEACHER BELIEF SURVEY

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?									
2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?									
3. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?									
4. How much can you do to help your students value learning?									
5. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?									
6. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?									
7. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?									
8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?									
9. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?									
10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?									
11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?									
12. How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?									

The survey rating options are the following: 1. Not at all, 3. Very little, 5. Some degree, 7. Quite a bit, 9. A great deal

APPENDIX E: SCHOOL CULTURE SURVEY RESULTS

Following a presentation on the results of each School Culture Triage Survey (Professional Collaboration, Collegial Relationships, and Process of Self-Determination) section, the staff discussed and answered the following questions in small groups and then shared with the entire staff.

Professional Collaboration

1. What's Surprising?
2. What's Not Surprising?
3. Areas of Concern?
4. Why did we rate this way?
5. What are the obstacles preventing us from attaining a 5 rating in this section?

Collegial Relationships

1. What's Surprising?
2. What's Not Surprising?
3. Areas of Concern?
4. Why did we rate this way?
5. What are the obstacles preventing us from attaining a 5 rating in this section?

Process of Self-Determination

1. What's Surprising?
2. What's Not Surprising?
3. Areas of Concern?
4. Why did we rate this way?
5. What are the obstacles preventing us from attaining a 5 rating in this section?

APPENDIX F: EXIT SLIP COPY

Following a presentation of the school culture survey results and small group discussions, each staff member completed the exit slip.

Exit Slip

School Culture Survey and Action Plan Follow Up

1. What were your takeaways from the survey discussion today? Is there anything that was missing? (E.g. lowest response rates from the following questions - behavior code, celebrations, and staff and administration communication)

2. What do you think about our action plan for the coming year? (E.g. building procedures, communications, discipline process, etc.)

3. What are your hopes and fears going into this new school year?

4. Other: