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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF THE LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS  
OF JOHN F. KENNEDY: A LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR  
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Leadership and Policy

by

Kanika D. Colvin- White

November, 2008

John Fitzpatrick, Ed.D.- Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

This study is lovingly dedicated to my daughter Klark Ashley White, who has been a source of my inspiration to achieve. It is my hope that each day I will exemplify the result of hard work and perseverance, so that you will one day become a self reliant woman of honor who will positively impact the lives of everyone around you. Your smile, unexpected hugs, and gentle whispers of “I love you mommy” warms my heart.

Additionally, this study is dedicated to the foster children of the world. Believe in yourself even when others stop believing. Try harder when you no longer feel like trying. And have a forgiving heart so that negative burdens will not weigh you down and hinder your ability to attain your goals. Above all, trust that you are in God’s plan, and he loves you more than you can ever love yourself.

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I am eternally grateful to God for dispatching angels to protect me during the most arduous times in my life. I am thankful for my family, friends, and everyone who loves and has supported me. With your support, I have been able to pursue and attain my goals.

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## ABSTRACT

Adverse challenges in schools that distract from student learning have necessitated effective leadership more than ever before. These challenges include, but are not limited to, budget cuts, standardized testing, poorly trained teachers, poverty, and low parent participation. Every school year academic administrators approach the aforementioned challenges with the hope of improving student achievement. However, without effective practices to foster and sustain student achievement, often, their efforts are in vain.

As school districts recruit and deploy leaders, it is critical to select those who have passion to foster positive change. It is equally important to hire administrators who possess those characteristics essential for effective leadership.

There is a myriad of existing leadership models, theories and applications for school leaders, who strive to further develop their leadership approach. However, many of the historical models identified in literature do not encompass the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy. Although he has been noted as a remarkable leader, many of the historical models lack his characteristics, as identified in literature and other resources. Kennedy was known for his lifelong abilities to make leadership look effortless and to see obstacles as opportunities.

The intent of this grounded theory qualitative study is to examine the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy and to use his characteristics as a construct for an alternative leadership model for education practitioners. This researcher has utilized grounded theory methodology to study a particular

situation through systemic data collection and analysis to develop a theoretical model. Specifically, this study serves 2 purposes: identify John F. Kennedy's leadership characteristics and provide a new paradigm in school administrative management. The model will function as a tool for education practitioners who seek to overcome obstacles, restructure and eradicate ineffective practices.

This study illustrates relevant literature to reveal existing historic models and definitions of effective leadership. Additionally, through biographical analysis and summaries of events, it focuses on Kennedy's leadership practices as documented in the literature. Ultimately, the findings of this study provide the scaffold for Kennedy's Leadership Model for Education Practitioners.

*“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”*

*-John F. Kennedy*

## Chapter 1

### The Problem and Purpose

#### *Introduction*

During a time when public schools are seemingly failing, strong leadership becomes even more critical. According to an article published by California Progress Report, of 520,000 ninth grade students in the 2002-2003 school year, only 67%, or 348,000 actually graduated three years later in 2006 (Schrag, 2007). Even more appalling, is the number of schools in California that are considered low achieving. At the conclusion of the 2007-2008 school year, a total of 2,187 schools were in Title I Program Improvement Status (California Department of Education, 2008).

School principals are faced with many forces that contrast the work that occurs daily in schools to maintain the momentum for student academic achievement and proficient test scores. These forces include increased accountability, decreasing financial support, adverse background experiences of students, lack of parental support, and increased governmental involvement. Sergiovanni (2000) indicates forces imply strength or energy to move something or to resist movement. Lipman (2004) suggests, although accountability has encouraged some schools to maintain focus on student achievement, it has reinforced inequalities. Consequently, the increase in accountability, in accordance to the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), combined with other forces

necessitate alternative leadership models to address practices that have not been effective.

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was signed by President George W. Bush in January 2002. ESEA is known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. This act states that all students should be proficient in reading and math by the year 2014. NCLB places pressure on states to make significant standards based academic growth. NCLB requires high standards and expectations for all students, extra support for students who need it, state assessments, accountability measures, qualified teacher, and parent choice to give parents an option when their home school is low-performing.

School leaders are entrusted with the charge to understand and address forces that go against student progress using good judgment that supports their organization's vision. The dynamic nature of these forces make the work of leaders continuous as we must function as systems and possibility thinkers prepared to respond with intellectual vigor to build the capacity for favorable outcomes within our organizations. As leaders, we must resist the urge to view organizational challenges as failures, but as the birth of opportunity and resilience (Wheatley, 2005).

Fullan (2001) wrote, "In education, an important end is to make a difference in the lives of students" (p. 13). School principals pursue possibilities to make a positive difference everyday as they engage the external and internal forces that either support or distract from student learning. The daily work of

school principals is critical as it involves ensuring that the school environment is conducive to learning. This work is most effectively done by espousing the importance of maintaining focus on student learning and minimizing disruptions.

Some of the issues leaders encounter can be a result of structural challenges within the organization such as facilities concerns, while others may be a result of the ineffective practices of the leader. Whatever the cause of failing schools, a part of the solution to restructuring and changing ineffective practices are knowledgeable leader whose characteristics and behaviors foster change. In short, becoming an emerging leader, whose courageous interventions and articulate stances redefine school leadership requires discipline (Marshall & Oliva, 2006).

The number of increasingly failing schools, suggest the lack of effective leadership, which is necessary to address emerging needs. These needs include high-stakes testing, administrator quality, curriculum and instructions development, special education, school law, and parent/community relations (Owings, 2003). School principals fail more often than they succeed as a result of their misjudged actions and ineffective approaches (Bolman & Deal, 2002).

There is an increased shortage of qualified administrators, which necessitates the urgency for school districts to further develop school leaders and equip them with tools to be successful (Hoagland-Smith, 2006). Hoagland-Smith further suggest, to develop school principals that are effective managers, and instructional leaders, school districts should train and insist that school principals:



1. Identify their role as an instructional manager;
2. Identify organizational changes;
3. Identify a shared goal and lead the team in that direction;
4. Identify how to assimilate the roles of the follower and leader;
5. Identify a means of effective communication; and
6. Identify realistic problem solving strategies.

Administrators must possess the characteristics and behaviors for effective leadership. The study of leadership, has documented different models and practices that could increase the success of school principals. The leadership characteristics and attributes demonstrated by John F. Kennedy are noted as one of the most effective and fascinating leader practices (Barnes, 2005). Barnes suggests, any leader looking to improve him or herself can greatly benefit from the stellar leadership lessons of John F. Kennedy.

In studying and analyzing the leadership style of John F. Kennedy, the researcher has made connections between Kennedy's characteristics, attributes and beliefs that are missing from educational leadership models. Kennedy demonstrated in his short time in office as the President of the United States of America, that he could lead the American people, become well liked (in spite of his untimely death), and change the condition of the country. Kennedy was unafraid to address the challenges he faced as a leader such as the Great American Contradiction, defending freedom abroad while denying African American people freedom in the United States (Barnes, 2005). His means of executing a superior level of leadership has been well documented in the

literature: *A Thousand Days* by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. is one of the earliest studies on Kennedy; *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* by Richard Reeves has also documented Kennedy's leadership. From an oppositional point of view there is literature such as, *A Question of Character: A life of John F. Kennedy* by Thomas C. Reeves that is critical of Kennedy for what Reeves believes to be various moral failings (S. Plotkin, personal communication, April 29, 2008). Resources such as the aforementioned were valuable sources for identifying reoccurring themes in Kennedy's leadership. Additionally, these resources provided support to the framework for Kennedy's leadership model for education practitioners.

#### *Background of the Problem*

School principals are faced with many forces that are sometimes negative in nature and resistant to forward movement (Sergiovanni, 2000). These forces can and often distract from student learning. As a result of high accountability, increasingly diverse obstacles such as poor facilities, lack of parent involvement and failing schools, school principals must possess characteristics that will enable them to maintain the momentum for student achievement. Identifying characteristics that can support education practitioners can positively benefit student learning and sustainability. Additionally, it can improve the attractiveness of educational leadership and longevity of current school leaders.

#### *Educational Leadership*

Educational leadership is influenced by the dynamics of the social fabric of society (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium [ISLLC], 1996). This

social fabric is continuously changing as we are becoming an increasingly more racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse society. Poverty is increasing for many families and the physical, mental, and moral well being of many children are declining (ISLLC, 1996). Taking all of this into consideration, leaders in education must be well prepared and equipped with tools and research based models to support their success.

There have been many perspectives as to what attributes define effective school leadership. Leadership has been greatly studied in an attempt to identify specific characteristics successful leaders possess (Schein, 1992). Elmore (as cited in Marzano, McNulty & Waters, 2005) suggest that effective leadership, in the area of education, is based on the school leaders' understanding of instructional curriculum and the ability to solve site specific problems. Collins (as cited in Marzano et al., 2005) asserts that effective leadership involves personal will and a strong commitment to the goals in spite of obstacles. Additionally, Buckingham and Clifton (2001) suggest that effective leaders understand their natural strengths and work toward sharpening those strengths which can be learned.

The aforementioned qualities in leadership are important. However, there are additional characteristics effective leaders should possess that were modeled through the leadership style of President John F. Kennedy. The legacy of Kennedy has been evident throughout history. Almost every U.S. President sought to model their leadership style after his (Barnes, 2005). Additionally, Barnes states that combined with Kennedy's ability to make leadership look

effortless and his lifelong ability to see obstacles as opportunities, he was a stellar leader. For educators seeking to increase their effectiveness as leaders, understanding the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy is relevant.

*Purpose of the Study*

The impact of leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Winston Churchill, and John F. Kennedy has been well documented. Kennedy admired Dr. King's ability to motivate and seek human freedom (Barnes, 2005). Kennedy learned the importance of fairness and love of all mankind from the leadership style of Dr. King. Kennedy learned from Churchill that the process of enrolling others in a common vision is more easily accomplished when your people view their contributions and sacrifices as their service towards a common goal (Barnes, 2005).

Inspired by the leadership style of Churchill, examples of Kennedy's leadership have provided many recent leaders such as Bill Clinton, an effective model. Bill Clinton learned the persona of being a charismatic and visionary leader. Charisma can be a powerful leadership tool that helps to draw others to you (Barnes, 2005). Most recently the American people have observed the rising political leadership of Senator and Democratic Presidential Nominee Barack Obama who demonstrates many of the same characteristics of leadership that have been associated with President Kennedy. Like Kennedy, Obama is also charismatic, which is a characteristic essential in greatly enhancing the effectiveness of educational leaders (Barnes, 2005). The intent of this study was

to develop a model for leaders in education by using a grounded theory research method in examining the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy.

The intent of this study served two purposes. The first purpose was to identify characteristics in the leadership of John F. Kennedy. This study also examined the leadership approach of John F. Kennedy, and like many recent leaders, extracts from the characteristics and qualities that enabled his success (Barnes, 2005). Secondly, this study served as a foundation for a new leadership model for school leaders. This model is an alternative to existing leadership models for education practitioners who seek to overcome obstacles, restructure and eradicate ineffective practices.

#### *Research Questions*

1. What were the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy that exemplify his leadership style?
2. Can an educational leadership model be created based on Kennedy's leadership characteristics?
3. How can this educational leadership model based on the characteristics of John F. Kennedy lead to successful educational leadership?

#### *Summary*

California schools are being challenged by not only an increasingly diverse population, but also by the need to attract and maintain effective people in the areas of school leadership. School districts must recruit leaders who

possess certain attributes that will increase their success during challenging times.

Although there are many exceptional leaders who possess certain attributes that have been helpful to their leadership, often they do not possess the characteristics of John F. Kennedy. By combining the characteristics and behaviors of Kennedy, who experienced leadership at a time when there were many forces working against the progress of our nation, educational leaders will be more effectively prepared to face the negative forces in education.

In chapter 2 of this study, the researcher will present a literature review that will document historical leadership models and an analysis of John F. Kennedy. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology for this study. The findings of the analysis of Kennedy's leadership practices will be presented in chapter 4. Chapter 5 will encompass the conclusion, next steps and recommendations for further exploration.

### *Definition of Terms*

*Leadership.* An act of managing the activities of a group in an attempt to set and achieve goals.

*Public school.* An elementary or secondary school supported by public funds that provide children of a community or district a free education.

*School principal.* The Chief Instructional Officer of a school.

*Education practitioner.* A person with an advance degree or training that has acquired expert knowledge in education.

*Proficient.* A person having a high degree of skill.

*No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*. Federal education policy initiative signed into law January 8, 2002 and is a modified version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.

*Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)*. In accordance with the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001), AYP is the standard for the academic achievement growth target for U.S. schools.

*Pluralistic*. The existence of groups with different backgrounds within one society.

*Pedagogy*. The science or profession of teaching that generally refers to teaching strategies or methods.

*Program improvement*. Identification of schools or local education agencies that fail to make AYP two consecutive years in English-language arts and math.

## Chapter 2

### The Review of Relevant Literature

#### *Introduction*

The intent of this chapter is to examine literature that has defined effective leadership and documented research based theories. This chapter includes historic and current leadership models. The conclusion of chapter 2 includes a biographical profile of John F. Kennedy, and delineates the characteristics and behaviors he demonstrated in his leadership style. The attributes identified in the biographical profile has been used to formulate a response to the research questions presented in chapter one and the development of a new leadership model for education practitioners.

Many theorists have documented how they define leadership. Some say that leadership is the ability to become aware of different perspectives by viewing challenges through multiple lenses (Bolman & Deal, 2002). Fullan (2001) suggests that leadership is the ability to make a positive difference and alleviate obstacles that distract from student learning. Schein (1992) asserts that leadership encompasses the ability to allocate resources, support change initiatives and the ability to work with stakeholders to shape the organizational culture of a school. "Leadership consists of the ability to effectively delegate authority, develop collaborative decision-making processes, and the willingness to step back from being the central problem-solver" (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, p.186). Seemingly, there are many variations on how leadership is defined.



However, common among all of the research is the importance of the relationships between leaders and stakeholders.

### *Concerns in Leadership*

The effectiveness of a leader greatly impacts the successfulness of the organization. Educational leadership can become either a hectic system of chaos, or a means of improving schools and better serving students (Thomas, 2002). More recently, educational leaders have knowingly taken on the concerns of stakeholders during a time of social change and continuously evolving demands like high stakes testing and increasingly diverse student populations.

Thomas further lists other barriers to leadership:

1. Decreasing funding to support public education. Alternative sources of education such as charter schools and home schooling are receiving stronger support.
2. Higher academic expectations for children of an increasingly diverse society as there are higher numbers of students in Special Education, more students who have English as their second language, and more students who come from non-traditional families.
3. Increased involvement of governmental agencies over Content Standards, Special Education, and facilities.
4. Increased pressure to improve technology integration. The cost of technology will cause many schools to continuously lag behind more affluent schools.
5. Increased accountability and pressure to increase test scores and prepare students for the work force. This expectation comes with minimal financial support. (Thomas, 2002, p. 5)

### *Understanding Leadership*

According to Thomas (2002), to better understand leadership, we must analyze the history of leadership to be best informed. "Leadership has a setting, a historical framework, a wholeness of meaning, and a diversity of influences" (p. 2). Thomas further suggests what he believes to be factual of leadership:

1. Leadership is based on the isolated needs of each event. Situations at times, influence the acts or strategies of the leader.
2. There is no single method of leadership. There is no single set of leadership styles or approaches. Leaders are just as diverse as the situations in which they encounter.
3. An individual with followers who make the act of problem solving and goal setting appropriate is a leader. The leader has a responsibility to help others realize and buy-in to the goals of the group.
4. Leadership has ethical implications. Ethical dimensions are always present and may have adverse or beneficial effects on other people.  
(Thomas, 2002, p. 6)

Analyzing the historical strategies of leaders, enable us to understand leadership.

Thomas Jefferson taught us the imperatives of education; Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King have taught us peaceful leadership and resolution; and John F.

Kennedy taught us the importance of personality, connection to the people, and the power in charisma. Thomas (2002) also provides two lenses with which one can view the education puzzle: (a) personal proficiencies, and (b) technical proficiencies. Personal proficiencies are skills, such as speaking and writing.

They include the ability to: (a) understand both content and feeling by being an active listener, (b) verify accuracy of information received, (c) clearly articulate and speak directly to the issue, (d) possess a positive outlook on life, and (e) motivate and inspire other. Technical proficiencies are job specific, i.e., the level of expertise required to perform a particular job function. They include: (a) professional and ethical leadership traits, (b) curriculum and instruction knowledge, (c) professional development knowledge, (d) the ability to develop strong interpersonal relationship, and (e) fiscal and resource allocation knowledge. As such, personal and technical proficiencies result in effective leadership.

The result of Personal and Technical Proficiencies is ethical leadership founded by equity, fairness and justice. Additionally, there is an expectation of a keen understanding of best leadership practices, effective pedagogies and research based approaches. To meet the increasingly diverse needs of education, effective leadership must emanate from research, wisdom and the ability to influence with a commitment to fair practices. The willingness to serve others and maintain a positive idealism will be necessary to attain goals and face resistance. Effective leadership requires a willingness to serve others and maintain idealistic expectations. Educational leaders must meet the diverse needs of education and be buttressed by research, wisdom, and a commitment to ethical leadership and fairness. In addition to bringing about the above, personal and technical proficiencies lead to a keen understanding of the best leadership practices and effective pedagogies. According to Fullan (2001), “Understanding the change process is less about innovation and strategy and more about innovativeness and strategizing” (p. 31). Thus, understanding the components of change—moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge sharing, and coherence making—are crucial to being an effective leader.

*Moral purpose.* Instilling moral purpose involves acting with intentionality to further support a vision and mission. Thus, intentional actions with moral purpose, means to “act with the intention of making a positive difference in the lives of employees, customers, and society as a whole” (Fullan, 2001, p. 3). Leadership necessitates the willingness to respond to the needs of others and the organization.

*Understanding change.* Leaders minimize distractions and obstacles and viewing troubling circumstances as opportunities for change. In short, “a culture of change consists of great rapidity and nonlinearity on the one hand and equally great potential for creative breakthroughs on the other” (Fullan, 2001, p. ix). As such, actions must constantly be refined—there are no short cuts to understanding the change process (Fullan, 2001).

*Relationship building.* Fullan (2001) states that if the first priority to effective leadership is to establish moral purpose; relationship building should be the second task as it is difficult to manage without relationships. Within any organization, effective relationship building is critical and should be a major concern of the leader. The capacity to build and foster relationships involves an understanding of the parts of which the relationship is comprised. This involves the ability to manipulate the components of the relationship without compromising the quality of the relationship. This action involves the ability to identify leadership opportunities in others.

To a large extent, relationship building has to do with time, but also involves a vast amount of trust, and believing in the integrity of individuals involved. Covey (2004) used the notion of an emotional bank account to convey the critical aspects of relationships. People need to be emotionally uplifted and validated.

*Knowledge sharing.* The way in which information is disseminated, has much to do with the practice of collaborating and knowledge sharing. “Change leaders work on changing the context, helping create new settings conducive to

learning and sharing that learning” (Fullan 2001, p. 79). A culture of sharing information is an effective practice to foster relationship and collaboration building. Fullan (2001) provides a Knowledge Sharing Paradigm which illustrates the give and take relationship in a culture of collaboration. “Knowledge is constantly received and given, as organizations provide opportunity to do so and value and reward individuals as they engage in the receiving and sharing of knowledge” (Fullan, 2001, p. 86). Individuals within an organization can establish a habit of knowledge exchange which will enabled engagement in meaningful work that further supports the shared mission and vision.

*Coherence making.* In a culture of change, obstacles are a part of the process of organizational growth and positive change. “Messiness is necessary, in order to discover the hidden benefits-creative ideas and novel solutions are often generated when the status quo is disrupted” (Fullan, 2001, p.107). Problematic situations make sense, when the opportunities within the chaos becomes apparent; creating a functioning problem solving team, better communication, sustainable change, and bridged working relations.

### *Multiple Frames*

Bolman and Deal (2002) state that, when dealing with leadership challenges, the leader should not rely solely on human resources or structural knowledge to inform about what needs to be done; consideration must be given as to how highly charged politics and emotionally packed symbolism inform the necessary work. An effective approach to leadership is a leadership plan that takes into consideration multiple perspectives regarding an issue (Bolman &

Deal, 2002). The best leaders use multiple frames or lenses, each offering a different perspective on common challenges:

Table 1

*Four Frame Perspectives*

FRAMES	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
Political Frame	Clarifies where control and power lies.	The leader must deescalate potential destructive paths
Human Resource Frame	Identifies the needs of all stakeholders.	The leader must prioritize needs.
Structural Frame	Identifies organizational design, practices, policies, and procedures.	The leader must work within appropriate channels to solve problems.
Symbolic Frame	Identifies the essence of an organizational culture.	The leader must work to reframe an emotionally charged culture to seek productive resolutions.

*Personality and Behavior*

Human behavior consists of several different styles that are each triggered by circumstances (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). In terms of leadership, one style tends to dominate and an excessive presence of any style may lead to pathological behavior and dysfunctional leadership (Valenty & Feldman, 2002).

Kets de Vries and Miller (as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002) identify five personality styles that influence leadership: (a) compulsive, (b) depressive, (c) dramatic, (d) paranoid, and (e) schizoid.

1. *Compulsive* behavior causes meticulousness, lack of spontaneity, and forces one's own ways of doing things on others.
2. *Depressive* behavior causes the feeling of inadequacy, hopelessness, and guilt.
3. *Dramatic* behavior causes excessive expression of emotion, a craving for activity and excitement and narcissistic preoccupation.

4. *Paranoid* behavior causes hypersensitivity, readiness to counter perceived threats, and mistrust of others.
5. *Schizoid* behavior causes lack of enthusiasm, indifference to criticism and detachment. (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984, p. 161)

Each of these styles can harbor dangers to others and an organization. Many organizational problems are a result of the behavioral style of the chief leader (Valenty & Feldman, 2002).

John F. Kennedy is often referred to as a dramatic and charismatic leader (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). Considering his leadership characteristics, Kennedy exhibited dramatic and paranoid behavior according to the work of Kets de Vries and Miller (1984). The work of Kets de Vries and Miller suggest dramatic leaders are likely to be impulsive, uninhibited, hypersensitive, venturesome, and prone to concentrate power at the top with themes of boldness, risk taking, and adventure (Valenty & Feldman, 2002).

In 1961, Kennedy made 355 requests to Congress; in 1962, 298; and in 1963, 401 (*Congress and the Nation*, as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002). Many of Kennedy's proposals were bold and adventuresome. Kennedy established The Peace Corps early in his administration and issued an executive order to establish the President's Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity which was passed by Congress in 1962. Kennedy's tax cut program is still used as a model for stimulating the economy (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). As a way of mobilizing the public, Kennedy conducted 63 live televised press conferences during his administration. Kennedy's foreign policy leadership was also dramatic. After the construction of Berlin Wall, Kennedy visited Berlin and said to a

tumultuous crowd that “Freedom is invisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free” (Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p. 170).

Initially Kennedy seemed to conform to Kets de Vries and Miller’s description of a dramatic leader by his ability to draw attention to himself, craving for action, and his tendency to concentrate power to the top (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). However, many characteristics describing a dramatic leader do not describe Kennedy. Kennedy was absorbed in the activities of his administration and was an avid reader.

Rather than being suggestible, a trait that Kets de Vries and Miller attribute to dramatic leaders, Kennedy took great care, particularly on the most important issues confronting him as president, to avoid undue influence being exerted by others over his decision making processes. (Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p. 172)

### *Historical Models of Leadership*

Covey (2004) states, “The basic task of leadership is to increase the standard of living and the quality of life for all stakeholders” (p. 218). Additionally, he states that consideration must be given to the long-term welfare of stakeholders. To present a more clear perspective of the views of past and present leadership scholars, historic leadership models will be briefly detailed in this section of the chapter.

Leadership is the influence that connects dominant personality traits to a group phenomenon and social process (Bogardus, 1934). Additionally, Bogardus suggest that the personality traits which cause a person’s talents to be seen as superior over others can be observed very early on in that person’s life. A child’s behavior early in life is indicative of what may be expected once an adult



(Bogardus, 1934). Bogardus illustrates this theory by the documented work of child prodigy composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, whom began composing before the age of four and Ludwig van Beethoven who wrote published compositions by age ten. “Leadership often dates from certain points in human experience. Some of these points represent a significant turning of attention to a particular line of activity” (p. 79).

In their book *Introduction to Educational Leadership*, Boles and Davenport (1975) examined the relationship of leader types and styles to the leadership process. They further suggest that there is an appropriate leadership style for different types of followers. Seemingly, depending on the types of followers, one leader may be more suitable than another as a result of their leadership style (see Table 2). This does not mean that leaders cannot experience success with followers whose personalities may not match their leadership style and approach. Some leaders are capable of adjusting their style to accommodate their followers or the circumstances. Additionally, many leadership traits can be learned which gives the leader the opportunity to initiate a style of leadership that is tailored to the specific needs of followers or organization. For example, if a follower has exhibited signs of being autistic, a leadership style that is very nurturing would be most suitable to help the follower reach and exceed his potential. If the follower is sociocentric, a more inclusive and participative style would be more appropriate for this follower.

Table 2

*Example of Follower Types and Leader Styles*

<u>Types</u>	<u>Styles</u>
Autistic	Nurturing
Animistic	Demonstration, force
Awakening	Prescriptive
Power-seeking	Hard bargaining
Sociocentric	Participative
Individualistic	Goal setting
Pacifistic	Acceptance, support

In an attempt to explain the components of the emergence of leadership, Bass (1990) illustrates theories and models that support the predictions of problems and the application of leadership. Many events in history were influenced by great men. The Great-Man Theory illustrates transformational leadership of people who used their power and influence to create change (Bass, 1990). Lee Iacocca and Kenneth Chenault are transformational business leaders who used their strengths to stimulate the growth of their corporations. Golda Meir, Idi Amin, Kaiser Wilhelm, Ho Chi Minh, Hugo Chavez, Josef Stalin, and Charles de Gaulle are all leaders regarded as change agents who fostered internationally recognized change. John F. Kennedy was a political leader who was also regarded as a transformational leader who used his strengths to shape a nation.

The Great-Man Theory (Bass, 1990) is consistent with what Boles and Davenport (1975) called Hereditary Leadership. This theory suggests that change through leadership is influenced by a superior few. Galton (as cited in Bass, 1990) illustrated the attempts of past theorist to explain leadership on the basis of inheritance through a study of the hereditary background of great men. Other examples of great leadership, have been documented through the work of leaders like Douglas MacArthur and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose leadership gave the 1960s Civil Rights Movement its surge.

Trait Theory suggests that there are superior qualities and characteristic that a leader possesses making him or her more superior over his or her followers (Bass, 1990). Early test of this theory were to identify if there was a significant difference in the traits of identified leaders and ordinary people. This theory became unfavorable after Stogdill's (as cited in Bass, 1990) critique concluded that the emergence of leadership was dependent on variables involving the leader and the situation. However, there have been many theories to follow that credit inherited traits as important to leadership.

In the Multiple-Linkage Model, Yukl (as cited in Bass, 1990) suggests that a follower's ability to accept a condition is contingent upon the leader's initiation of the model. Yukl goes on to state that the role of the leader, available resources, and overall group cohesiveness are all connected to a subordinates' work effort. The work of a subordinate is a result of multiple variables initiated by a leader's behavior (Bass, 1990).

The Multiple-Screen Model (Bass, 1990) is an approach that involves the relationship between leaders and subordinates. Additionally, this model attempts to explain the correlation between a leader's intelligence, and the work performance of subordinates. Fiedler and Leister (as cited in Bass 1990), suggests that knowledgeable leaders who have good relationships with their bosses, can foster an environment of increased work ethic. Thus, in the absence of leader intelligence and an effective leader-boss relationship, experience is most critical for group efficacy.

Vroom and Yetton (1976) linked facts about leadership and proposed a leadership style they believed would foster success. To determine whether a leader should approach situations with a directive or participative style, Vroom and Yetton suggest that leaders should ask clarifying questions and probe for further understanding. They suggest that leaders should be directive when they are certain that their subordinates have no knowledge of what needs to be done. However, if a leader's subordinates have information or knowledge regarding a situation and are capable of being a contribution, then a leader should utilize a more participative approach.

Transformational leadership involves leaders who encourage subordinates to focus on their long term needs and possess awareness of what really matters that is in the interest of all stakeholders (Bass, 1990). Seltzer, Numerof, and Bass (as cited in Bass, 1990) state that there are four dimensions of transformational leadership: charismatic leadership, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Charisma has been viewed by theorists, as a valuable leadership attribute. According to Bass (1990), leaders who are charismatic, have an overwhelming influence over their followers. Followers of a charismatic leader embody moral inspiration and purpose. Charismatic leaders are more concerned about doing the right thing as opposed to doing things right (Bass, 1990).

Inspiring followers has been considered a strategic approach when the goal of the leader is to obtain buy-in to goals or organizational vision. Downton (as cited in Bass, 1990) suggest that inspirational leadership occurs when a follower believes in the goals and purpose of a leader but not necessarily in the leader. The leader is therefore not considered their role model but has acted as a person who has ideas and goals that are shared by others.

The way in which a leader views past problems and challenges, reflects the leader's ability to seek possibilities. Through intellectual stimulation, a leader encourages followers to reframe old problems (Bass, 1990). The ability to take an old problem and think about it in a new way, suggests that there are possibilities even in an unfavorable situation. Individualized consideration encourages a leader to give careful thought to the needs of neglected individuals in the organization. This approach fosters a system that empowers others to assume roles of leadership. Often, those empowered assume roles in leadership that they had never considered.

Servant Leadership is an approach that focuses on the passion to serve others and to make their personal needs a high priority (Greenleaf, 1977). This servant-first leadership approach can be tested by the personal growth of those

served, in respect to their ability to also become servants and possibly assume roles of leadership. According to Greenleaf (1977), Servant Leadership accentuates the significance of collaboration, trust, empathy and ethical use of power which is dissimilar to top-down hierarchical approaches. The objective of Servant Leadership is not to increase personal power but to enhance work efficacy through teamwork and leadership as a vehicle to further serve.

Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) calls on natural leaders who rise from inequitable situations to return to their roots to help others rise from their disadvantaged circumstances. He believed that the charge of Servant Leadership in education is to reframe the thinking of educators in regards to social mobility.

Failures in leadership are a result of not knowing the nature of the work that needs to be done and an inadequate understanding of the process of resolving a situation (Selznick, 1957). Institutional Leadership is the process of work needed to resolve social needs. "An institutional leader...is primarily an expert in the promotion and protection of values" (p. 28). An institutional leader understands values, avoids opportunistic trends, and deals with vulnerabilities as they arise.

### *Biographical Analysis of John F. Kennedy*

Many researchers have been fascinated by the life of John F. Kennedy who at one point was thought to be the most powerful man in the world and considered an almost impossible myth. The second of Joseph and Rose Kennedy's nine children, John F. Kennedy, affectionately known as Jack, was

born in Brookline, Massachusetts on May 29, 1917 (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). Born into a family of financial wealth, John F. Kennedy learned many values at a young age that would shape his leadership (Martin, 1983). Drive was instilled in the Kennedy children through competitive sports and financial responsibility. Joseph Kennedy was an ambitious man who became a millionaire by the age of 35 (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). Joseph Kennedy was intentional in his actions about his children developing independence and competitiveness, and he pushed his children to win and frowned upon second place. “Don’t play unless you can be captain, and second place is failure” (Burner, as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p. 163) are words remembered by the Kennedy children of their father. Joseph Kennedy held high standards for his children and continuously pushed them towards excellence.

Rose Kennedy, the daughter of a congressman and mayor of Boston held much of the same standards for the Kennedy children. She was a devout Roman Catholic and “strict disciplinarian who provided her children with firm guidance and a sense of individuality” (as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p. 163). Joseph and Rose Kennedy instilled in their children a sense of self-worth and taught them to be proud of their heritage (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). Life for the Kennedy children was extremely challenging. Joseph Sr. and Rose Kennedy, in their efforts to further instill a sense of superior performance, would often have their children compete against one another for parental affection (Valenty & Feldman, 2002).

The children were encouraged to grasp a sound understanding of financial management and planning. The children were no strangers to hard work. Jack Kennedy had to write a letter to his father requesting an allowance increase, Robert Kennedy had a paper route, and Kathleen Kennedy was once scolded for spending money excessively. It was the hope of Joseph and Rose Kennedy that their children would be disciplined and responsible citizens (Martin, 1983).

It has been documented in history books that Joe Jr. was the political hopeful of the Kennedy family. After the death of Joe Jr. in World War II, John F. Kennedy "Jack" began a career in politics and appeared to be a family replacement. However, on the day of his presidential inauguration, he shared that he had always seen himself as president (Dickerson, as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002).

John F. Kennedy broke the mold of expectation. After battling life with ongoing health challenges, and although briefly, choosing to attend Princeton University instead of Harvard where his father and all four of his brothers attended; he sought the path of politics after the death of his older brother Joe who was the chosen politician for the family (Martin, 1983). Kennedy eventually entered Harvard University in 1936 where he authored a thesis on British Foreign policy that was later published with the title "*Why England Slept*". Throughout his childhood, JFK battled a host of illnesses: skeletal malformation, bronchitis, measles, chicken pox, whooping cough, German measles, diphtheria, hives, irritable colon, jaundice, colds, and flu (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). In addition, he underwent surgeries to remove his appendix, tonsils and adenoids.



JFK often denied being sick which is not surprising considering the very competitive upbringing and the family encouragement that strongly suggested that all Kennedy's should be vigorous, self-reliant, and assertive (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). As an adult he suffered from Addison's disease which causes the adrenal glands to fail and suffered from back problems that caused him to use a cane even while president; however he never used his cane in public as it was a symbol of weakness (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). "Those who place great value on bodily strength and integrity react to an incurred disability by denying its existence" (Safilios-Rothchild, as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p.166). Succumbing to sickness or pain was unacceptable for a member of the Kennedy family.

In his book, *John F. Kennedy on Leadership*, John A. Barnes documented the leadership of Kennedy as seemingly effortless from which much could be learned. He went on to say that not only did Kennedy's leadership style serve as a model for business executives, but many presidential hopefuls sought to portray Kennedy's legacy. According to Barnes (2005), areas of Kennedy's perspective in which he received the greatest notoriety are: vision, charisma, decision-making, policy-making, communication, organizational struggle, and crisis management.

### *Vision*

Vision is the goal of an organization that helps those involved to understand the cause for their efforts (Barnes, 2005). Vision provides an idea of the future and result of collective cooperation. Kennedy proclaimed his vision for

our nation first during his Inaugural Address. He collaborated with a speechwriter by the name of Ted Sorensen. Through his extensive study of the Gettysburg Address and ideas he solicited from advisors, family and friends, the vision of Kennedy was born (Barnes, 2005). Vision does not need to solely come from the head of a leader, but should come from research, intuition and prior experiences.

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our heritage, and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world... (Barnes, 2005, p.15)

Kennedy's speech was to spread the word of human freedom throughout the world. He wanted Americans to know that the level of freedom he spoke of would require great sacrifice and commitment. Kennedy called on collaboration and teamwork:

...And so my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man. (Barnes, 2005, p.17)

James M. Strock, a leadership consultant, identified the components of successful statements of vision and believes that Kennedy's vision encompasses all elements. A statement of vision must be:

1. Simply stated
2. Direct
3. Memorable
4. Flexible
5. Consistent with values
6. Inclusive
7. Optimistic and

8. Personified by the leaders. (Barnes, 2005, p.19).

At Rice Stadium in Houston, Texas in September 1962, Kennedy spoke the following words:

The United States was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them. This country was conquered by those who moved forward. And later, we set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win. (JFK: The Kennedy Tapes, 1992)

From a school systems point of view, “The vision and mission of a school embody how the school as an organization is expected to relate to parents, the community, and educational standards” (Townley, Schmieder-Ramirez, & Wehmeyer, 2005, p. 149). School vision and mission statements represent our guiding principles, and speak to our willingness to develop a community of learners where students, teachers, staff and parents work collectively in creating and maintaining an environment where all children are safe, challenged to reach their potential. Shared commitment to the principles that illustrate the goals of all stakeholders makes the distinction between a learning community and an ordinary school (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Mission and statements of vision are vital to the successfulness of any organization (Covey, 2004).

*Charisma*

Kennedy was considered a charismatic leader who inspired others by his ability to motivate the public by his alluring personality (Barnes, 2005). There are

myths to charismatic leadership: all that is required to leadership is charm, self-belief is fundamental to the leader, and people follow those whom they admire (ChangingMind.org, 2008). Charismatic leaders make great persuasive use of both their body and verbal language. Conger & Kanungo (as cited in ChangingMinds.org, May 4, 2008) describe five behavioral attributes indicative of Charismatic Leaders: (a) vision and articulation, (b) sensitivity to the environment, (c) sensitivity to member needs, (d) personal risk taking, and (e) performing unconventional behavior.

Charismatic leaders and transformational leaders are very similar in their approach. The main difference is that transformational leaders seek to change organizations and strictly charismatic leaders may not want to change anything at all. Kennedy was both a charismatic and transformational leader (Barnes, 2005). It was not uncommon for Kennedy to engage the youth with his infectious personality. While visiting the West Coast, a little boy asked Kennedy, "Mr. President, how did you become a war hero? Kennedy responded, "It was absolutely involuntary, they sank my boat" (Adler, 1967, p. 91).

### *Decision Making*

The effectiveness of any leader depends greatly on the decisions he or she makes: the understanding of the issue, the people who he or she listens to, and the choices made (Paper, 1975). It is not enough for leaders to simply make speeches with mere unfulfilled or unfeasible promises. Thus, leaders must weigh competing alternatives and breathe life into promises and goals.

### *Policy Making*

Rarely are decisions in government decisive or final, and most often, policy is the outcome of separate or ambiguously related actions (Hilsman, 1967). According to Hilsman (1967), policy making is an inconsistent compromise between competing goals or means of achieving goals. During the Kennedy Administration, policy making involving allied trade with Cuba, the Vietnam crisis and other critical national calamity, and was often developed from a combination of sources: National Security Council, Congress, High-ranking officers at the Pentagon, and public opinion (Hilsman, 1967).

### *Organizational Challenges*

The Kennedy Administration wanted innovation which was different from the Eisenhower administration which produced *status quo* policies and lacked innovation (Hilsman, 1967). “The Kennedy administration was activist in foreign policy, oriented to the emerging peoples and the new nationalisms, and determined to attempt to shape events” (p. 23). During Kennedy’s first month in office, he eradicated the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) created by President Eisenhower in 1953. The OCB was responsible for assimilating the enactment of national security policies. Instead, Kennedy assigned much of the work of the OCB to the Secretary of State.

### *Communication*

On January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy was confirmed as the 35<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America. In Kennedy’s inaugural address, he communicated what he hoped to be the future of his administration and the U.S.

...Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge-and more. To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United, there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do- for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder... (Reeves, 1990, p. 83)

In this memorable address, Kennedy spoke of the power within collective responsibility, and the possibilities in change. He spoke of teamwork and loyalty to both humanity and the nation. Additionally, Kennedy espoused his belief of the importance of sacrifice and ownership of the work he believed to be necessary to change the world.

...Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own. (Reeves, 1990, p. 83)

Kennedy was regarded as a dynamic, engaging, and courageous leader (Preston, 1963). He believed that courage necessitates a permanent place in politics (Kennedy, 1956). He remained highly accessible to all staff workers and believed in an organizational structure that was small and personable. He was also a great listener. Titles of White House staff were distinguishable, yet not exclusive. Responsibilities evolved as the work needed, changed. It was the expectation of Kennedy that each person working on his staff would assist one another. Kennedy regarded his staff as extended family and often compared this notion to "a wheel and a series of spokes" in which he was the wheel and those

in his office were the spokes (Preston, 1963). Preston further writes, “Kennedy was his own Chief of Staff, and his principal White House Advisors had equal stature, equal salaries and equal access to his office” (p. 103).

### *Crisis Management*

Kennedy was an authority on U.S. policy and policy creation (Preston, 1963). He spent many years strengthening his understanding of policy prior to becoming president through his work on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and during his extensive travels with his father’s role as Great Britain’s United States Ambassador. Innumerable crises both inside the government and internationally, helped Kennedy to put political challenges in perspective (Neustadt, 1980). Kennedy possessed such a dynamic energy, interest and eagerness to be personally involved and knowledgeable about everything that went on under his leadership. Preston (1963) stated that Kennedy had a tendency to process information with great complexity. Understanding multi-source data regarding a crisis was not sufficient as he also evaluated oppositional perspectives. Kennedy did not consider himself to be an expert on foreign affairs during his presidential campaign. However, as president, Laos and Cuba kept Kennedy preoccupied, allowing him to become an authority on foreign affairs and policy (Bradlee, 1975). Being a great listener was important to him as he sought to obtain unbiased information from advisors. In addition to his interaction with the CIA and Communist China, Kennedy’s approach as a leader was of great benefit to him during times of crisis such as LAOS, the Cuban

Missile Crisis, the Congo Crisis, and Vietnam. During these crises, Kennedy exhibited the leadership characteristics that made him great.

*President Kennedy and the CIA*

During the 34-month long Kennedy Administration, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was prominently involved in two major events, the 1961 infiltration of the Bay of Pigs, Cuba and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis (Central Intelligence Agency, 2007). Authorized by President Kennedy, In April of 1961, more than 1400 Cuban insurgents landed at the Bay of Pigs, Cuba, in a failed attempt to oust Fidel Castro's communist regime. This incident caused the president immense embarrassment. It was later made public that the CIA trained the members of the forces, who became known as "Freedom Fighters". The CIA was also embarrassed by the failed mission at Bay of Pigs. It has been documented that President Kennedy promised air support which did not occur and led to many casualties. Soon after the fiasco, Kennedy fired the then head of the CIA Allen Dulles. Kennedy made promises to end the anti-Castro movement in the United States and withdrew at least 1000 troops from Vietnam. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy signed a nuclear test ban treaty with the Soviet Union which was viewed at being "easy" on Communism. In spite of challenges, Kennedy persevered and sought possibilities, even during challenging times which is common among great leaders.

Kennedy's decisions on how to best address communism led to many conspiracy theories. Other events led to undisputed speculations of CIA



conspiracies and a seemingly flawed relationship between the CIA and President Kennedy such as the following:

1. Members of the CIA sought the services of NAZI SS members at the conclusion of World War II.
2. Members of the CIA conspired to overthrow the presidents or prime ministers of Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia, Cuba, South Vietnam, and Nicaragua.
3. CIA officials conspired to utilize American citizens to conduct experiments with dangerous, mind-altering drugs without their knowledge or consent.
4. CIA officials sought the services of members of the mafia and murderers.
5. CIA officials, without a declaration of war from Congress, conspired to assist in the invasion of Cuba.
6. CIA officials plotted to assassinate Fidel Castro. (Hornberger, 1992)

In spite of the documented facts involving the CIA that would suggest differences in opinions regarding National Security and communism, it was apparent that Kennedy's leadership style still involved one of support and gratitude which has been documented in many speeches delivered to CIA officials such as the following which occurred at the CIA headquarters on November 28, 1961:

I want, first of all, to express my appreciation to you all for the opportunity that this ceremony gives to tell you how grateful we are in the government and in the country for the services that the personnel of this Agency render to the country. It is not always easy. Your successes are unheralded-your failures are trumpeted. I sometimes have that feeling myself. But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential-it is and how, in the long sweep of history, how significant your efforts will be judged. So I do want to express my appreciation to you now, and I'm confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country, as you have in the past. (CIA, 2007)

### *Cuban Missile Crisis*

The United States secretly photographed nuclear missile sites being built by the Soviet Union on Cuban soil in October of 1962 (*JFK in history: Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2008). The missile sites indicated medium range ballistic missiles, which were capable of carrying a warhead far enough to strike Washington D.C., Mexico, Caribbean, or the Southeast U.S. (Kennedy, 1964). After meeting with advisors to discuss how to address the problem, Kennedy decided to order a blockade around the island of Cuba, so the Soviet ships could not deliver materials. After 13 days of the world watching, the Soviet leader, Khrushchev, ordered his ships to return and agreed to destroy the missile sites. Kennedy in exchange, agreed to remove nuclear missiles from Turkey, and not to invade Cuba.

### *Communist China*

In an attempt to prevent a second attack by China on India, the Kennedy Administration spent many hours contemplating a nuclear attack on China. It was the goal of the Kennedy administration to prevent another country from falling to communism over disputed border territories (Giridharadas, 2005). Kennedy proclaimed, "Any large Chinese Communist attack on any part of the area would require the use of nuclear weapons by the U.S., and this is to be preferred over the introduction of large numbers of U.S. soldiers" (Giridharadas, 2005, p. 1). Although Kennedy perceived a nuclear attack as an option, he collected as much intelligence from his advisors as possible regarding the global impact of an attack. Kennedy was warned that a nuclear attack on China would send the

message to the world that the United States was hostile towards East Asian countries. Kennedy's leadership involved a willingness to gain insight from those around him, as opposed to single-handed decision making.

### *Laos*

Laos was one of the once French ruled Indochina states (Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam). Laos established sovereignty after defeating the French attempt to maintain dominance after the surrender of the Japanese in World War II (*JFK in history: LAOS*, 2008). Civil War broke out as Pathet Lao insurgents from the neighboring communist North Vietnam attacked. President Eisenhower shortly after Kennedy's inauguration warned him that an attack may become necessary to prevent Laos from being occupied by the Pathet Lao. Laos was considered to be critical to all of Southeast Asia. If Laos became occupied by communists, immense pressure would have been placed on South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand (Schlesinger, 2002). Kennedy did not respond hastily and rejected many proposals that would have sent in American ground troops. A Declaration of Neutrality of Laos was established at the Geneva peace conference of 1962. However, after a decade of U.S. bombing to destroy the North Vietnam supply route which ran through Laos, the Pathet Lao eventually took control of the country. For Kennedy the option that he took "was the best of unattractive options" (*JFK in history: LAOS*, 2008).

### *Vietnam*

It was the belief of President Kennedy that the instability of developing countries warranted new approaches to foster economic and social development

(Vietnamwar.com, 2007). Kennedy sent advisors to assess Vietnam's government and their capacity to maintain the momentum towards modernization. After receiving accusations that he was easy on defending freedom against communism, Kennedy supported Eisenhower's commitment to protect South Vietnam by deploying over 16,000 American soldiers (Sorensen, 2008).

As the U. S. combated the National Liberation Front Guerillas of the North, the South Vietnamese government failed to cooperate as promised and was plagued by corruption and unresolved internal disputes. Kennedy faced resistance to implement land reform programs and eventually called on the support of the CIA to assist South Vietnam in coping with the war by assassinating the autocratic South Vietnamese leader Ngo Dinh Diem. To the Kennedy administration, this was necessary as Diem's focus was not on fighting communism and improving the relations of his people but his personal power. Additionally, Diem was using military and resources funded by the United States to carry out attacks and raids on Buddhist groups. This ultimately led to further escalation of the war and an increased commitment to the Saigon government. Kennedy did not lead the U.S. through the final days of the Vietnam crises, because he was assassinated on November 22, 1963.

### *The Congo Crisis*

The threat of Soviet domination of the Republic of Congo (currently Zaire), was a concern of the Kennedy administration and came as a result of the Soviet influence over the charismatic leader of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba. The

formation of a moderate coalition government ended the crisis only to have the birth of a new crisis after the onset of hostilities in Katanga (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1994). The Congo's economic viability was threatened by Katanga's secession and was of great concern to the United States. The U.S. provided the Congo with financial and logistic support which was apart of Kennedy's new approach. He wanted to improve the relations between the United States and black African countries. His plan had three major components:

1. New mandate authorizing the United Nations (UN) to control all military components of the Congo;
2. If Congolese failed to establish a government, the United States would support the establishment of a government, representative of all parties with interest in the Congo; and
3. More U.N. administrative and technical support.

President Kennedy sent out messages outlining the new program to make sure all supporters were aware of the components. Additionally, Kennedy sought to solicit supporters by outlining the plan and met frequently with Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ambassadors of other countries.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology

#### *Restatement of Problem*

School systems leaders are faced with many forces that are sometimes negative in nature and resistant to forward movement (Sergiovanni, 2000). These forces can and often times distract from student learning. During a time of high accountability, increasingly diverse obstacles and failing schools, our leaders must possess characteristics that will enable them to maintain the momentum for student achievement. Identifying characteristics that can support education practitioners can positively benefit student learning and sustainability.

#### *Restatement of Purpose*

There have been books written to document the leadership impact of great leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Winston Churchill, and John F. Kennedy. Kennedy admired Dr. King's ability to motivate and seek human freedom (Barnes, 2005). Kennedy learned the importance of fairness and love of all mankind from the leadership style of Dr. King. Kennedy learned from Churchill that the process of enrolling others is more easily accomplished when your people see their contributions and sacrifices as their service towards a common goal (Barnes, 2005).

Inspired by the leadership of King and Churchill, John F. Kennedy afforded many more recent leaders like Bill Clinton the benefits of his model. Bill Clinton learned the benefits of being a charismatic and visionary leader from Kennedy. Charisma and vision can be powerful leadership tools that help to

influence and motivate people (Barnes, 2005). Most recently the American people have observed the rising political leadership of Senator and Democratic Presidential Nominee Barack Obama who demonstrates many of the same characteristics of leadership that have been associated with President Kennedy. After his keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts, Caroline Kennedy suggested that Obama reminds her most of her father because of his ability to captivate and inspire people. An excerpt of Obama's speech demonstrates great likeness to the many speeches delivered by Kennedy during his presidency.

...Yet even as we speak, there are those who are preparing to divide us, the spin masters and negative ad peddlers who embrace the politics of anything goes. Well, I say to them tonight, there's not a liberal America and a conservative America — there's the United States of America. There's not a black America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America. The pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States; Red States for Republicans, Blue States for Democrats. But I've got news for them, too. We worship an awesome God in the Blue States, and we don't like federal agents poking around our libraries in the Red States. We coach Little League in the Blue States and have gay friends in the Red States. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and patriots who supported it. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America... (USA Today, 2008)

Like Kennedy, Obama too is charismatic, which is a trait that has been identified as important in greatly improving the effectiveness of educational leaders (Barnes, 2005). The purpose of this study has been to develop a model for

education practitioners. The study was conducted by using a grounded theory research method in examining the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy.

The intent of this research serves two purposes. The first purpose was to identify John F. Kennedy's leadership characteristics. This study examines the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy and extract characteristics that enabled his success through his personal and presidential challenges (Barnes, 2005). Secondly, this research serves as a foundation for an alternative leadership model for school administrators. This model will also serve as a vital tool for education practitioners who seek to overcome obstacles, restructure and change ineffective practices.

### *Research Design*

This research is a grounded theory study. According to Creswell (1998), when the objective is to create or develop a model that is relevant to a particular situation, grounded theory methodology is appropriate. Grounded theory is a qualitative research method used as a systemic means of collecting and analyzing data to support the development of a theoretical model (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Qualitative research is "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). Unlike quantitative research where the researcher seeks to make predictions and identify general reoccurrences, qualitative researchers focus on illuminating the findings. Additionally, qualitative researchers seek to comprehend the research



phenomena, and extrapolate similarities and emerging themes (Hoepfl, 1997).

May (1986), suggest overall parameters for a grounded theory study:

1. The study includes definitions of key terms and a broad research question that may change during data collection and analysis.
2. The study includes a literature review that does not suggest a hypothesis but illustrates gaps that provide the rationale for conducting a grounded theory study.
3. The researcher provides ideas of a study methodology, with the understanding that the method may change through the course of the study.
4. The researcher presents a theoretical model with references to outside literature to demonstrate support for the model.
5. The researcher will conclude the study with the implications of the theory for further research.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest the following as parameters for a grounded theory study:

1. In the selective coding phase, the researcher must present a clear analytic story.
2. The researcher should provide a more analytic theory at an abstract level and less description of the phenomenon being studied.
3. In the axial coding phase, the researcher tells the story and makes specific relationships among the categories.

4. In the axial coding phase, the researcher also presents different variations and conditions under which the theory is validated.

This study has examined the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy and how his characteristics might support a leadership model for education practitioners. In this study, the researcher has collected primary sources of written and audio data, biographical data, identified reoccurring themes in the data, and present theoretical propositions to support a model of the theory (Creswell, 1998).

Bogdan & Biklen (2003) suggests that in good research, methods are consistent with the logic embodied in the methodology. The researcher has collected sufficient data through available literature and document analysis to better inform the study. This data is in the form of audio recordings, video clips, Kennedy's public papers, and literature. This researcher has collected information that illustrates Kennedy's meaningful and effective leadership traits and characteristics and applied them to a leadership model for education practitioners.

This study examined the leadership characteristics of President John F. Kennedy and how these characteristics support a leadership model for education practitioners. This study explored written and audio data, biographical data, identified reoccurring themes in the data, and presents theoretical propositions to support a model of the theory (Creswell, 1998). The researcher analyzed Kennedy's influential characteristics—e.g., vision, charisma, decision-making, policy-making, communication, organizational challenges, and crisis

management—in order to investigate their application to education. In short, this research illustrates Kennedy’s meaningful and effective leadership traits and characteristics and applied them to a leadership model for education practitioners. This research has been inspired by the obstacles Kennedy faced and how certain characteristics enabled him to overcome challenges. Education practitioners can learn to more effectively approach their challenges in schools through a model based on the leadership behaviors of John F. Kennedy. This model is not intended to replace existing leadership models, but serve as an alternative.

*IRB Requirements*

This study has been conducted in accordance to federal, ethical and professional standards for research. The researcher applied to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for a Claim of Exemption. This method was chosen because the study presented minimal risk, because there were no human subjects and the research involved collecting existing data (Pepperdine University, 2004). The formal application for exempted status through IRB approval was submitted to Jean Lee, Graduate and Professional School (GPS) IRB Manager of the Graduate and Professional School for Pepperdine University. After careful review of the application, the IRB determined that this study met the requirements for exemption and approve the proposed study protocol. An approved protocol number was assigned to this study.

*Data Collection*

In their book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967), Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss documented a new research method that provided an alternative to methods that merely applied theory to a problem. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the discovery of theory from data that provides us with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications is grounded theory. In grounded theory, the researcher formulates a substantive theory about the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 1998).

During the process of illustrating the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy, this study has resulted in the creation of a leadership model for education practitioners. Creswell (1998) identified four types of information to collect in Grounded Theory research:

1. Observations (ranging from non-participant to participant);
2. Interviews (ranging from semi-structured to open ended);
3. Documents (ranging from private to public); and
4. Audio-visual materials (including materials such as photographs, compact disks, and videotapes).

The data collected for use in this study originated from audio recordings, video clips, Kennedy's public papers, and literature. The researcher has utilized information collected from literature and documents and compare them to emerging categories which Creswell (1998) calls constant comparative method of data analysis. In addition to his leadership, to better understand Kennedy as a person, the researcher spent a great deal of time researching individuals who

worked closely with Kennedy. Tim Russert recently interviewed Ted Sorenson who served as an advisor and speech writer for Kennedy. From this interview, the researcher was able to collect detailed information regarding Kennedy’s decision making process, vision for the United States, and his perspective of relationships. Additionally, the researcher sought out resources from historians and scholars to ensure that all pertinent literature is included in this study. Table 3 illustrates a list of researchers, historians and scholars that have been contacted through email, as a source for obtaining biographical data pertaining to the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy. Each person that the researcher contacted was asked the question: What biographical sources of data would best illustrate the leadership model demonstrated by John F. Kennedy?

Table 3

*Scholars Contacted by Email*

Name	Organization/Location	Suggested Resources
Stephen Plotkin	John F. Kennedy Foundation Boston, MA	A Thousand Days  A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy
Ted Sorensen	Kennedy Advisor New York City	Counselor
Arthur Schlesinger	Historian	<i>No response</i>
Maria Brahme	Pepperdine University Los Angeles, CA	Profiles in Courage
Loretta Hunnicutt	Pepperdine University Malibu, CA	Presidential Power
Dan Caldwell	Pepperdine University Malibu, CA	President Kennedy: Profile of Power

The biographical resources suggested by the scholars served a secondary source for identifying the leadership characteristics and attributes illustrated by John F. Kennedy. References found in the suggested literature and documents were also used as a second source of biographical resources.

### *Data Analysis*

*Open coding.* In *open coding* the researcher develops and categorizes concepts and themes that emerge from the data. In this process, the researcher free of assumptions explores available data. The researcher analyze for similarities and differences, the data describing the characteristics and attributes of John F. Kennedy. The leadership practices of John F. Kennedy, has been compared to current leadership practices in the field of education. Detailed notes have been categorized identifying the leadership behavior of John F. Kennedy, as documented in literature and audio recordings. The traits have been grouped according to the similarities that exist between traits in different sources of literature documenting the leadership of John F. Kennedy. Additionally, the account of Kennedy's leadership behavior has been compared to the leadership attributes suggested by researchers and scholars recommended through historical models.

*Axial coding.* In *axial coding* the researcher builds connections within categories to foster a deeper theoretical framework of the researcher's analysis. The researcher has reconstituted the data by a process called axial coding after completing the initial open coding analysis process. During the axial coding process, the researcher has identified if new relationships exist. To identify the

central phenomenon that has been identified during the analysis of Kennedy's leadership attributes, a coding diagram has been created. The researcher has explored the data to identify similarities and connections between the data. Through this process, the researcher has strengthened the relationships around the categories being focused upon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The characteristics and attributes that have been identified represent the attributes that encompass the leadership model for education practitioners that has been developed by the researcher.

*Selective coding.* In *selective coding* the researcher develops a narrative of the connection between the categories in axial coding, and conditional assumption or theories are introduced (Creswell, 1998). The researcher has developed the story, and used it to develop the model following the axial coding phase. In the selective coding phase, conditional assumptions or theories are usually introduced (Creswell, 1998). Creswell further suggest that the researcher recognizes that the analytic phase is systemic. The prescribed categories of information in the theory will be a central phenomenon, consisting of conditions, causal conditions, strategies, context, and consequences (Creswell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher presented the identified leadership characteristics and attributes of John F. Kennedy in the context of events documented during his presidency of the United States of America. The documentation of actions taken by Kennedy has provided this researcher with the data that has been used to develop a leadership model for education practitioners.

Both historical models of leadership data and data from sources documented the leadership practices of Kennedy have been examined to identify similarities. When specific attributes or characteristics of Kennedy were presented multiple times, they were categorized. During this process, detailed notes have been transcribed and labeled to help the researcher identify saturated categories and insufficiently detailed theories. One of the four challenges of grounded theory research is that the researcher must determine when categories of information have become saturated. Creswell (1998) suggest reasons a grounded theory study challenges researchers:

1. The researcher must resist formulating theoretical ideas so that the substantive theory can emerge.
2. The researcher must acknowledge that this type of study is systemic with specific steps in data analysis.
3. The researcher faces the challenge of determining when categories are saturated or when the theory is sufficiently detailed.
4. The researcher must recognize that the primary goal of a grounded theory study is a premise with specific components: a central phenomenon, causal conditions, strategies, conditions and context, and consequences which are all prescribed categories of information in the theory.

*Conditional matrix.* A conditional matrix may be developed by the researcher that clarifies the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon. Because this phase of analysis is not frequently found in grounded theory studies, it is not presented here.



### *Validation*

A comparative analysis of the historical leadership models illustrated in chapter two, and the characteristics and attributes have been utilized to validate the researcher's leadership model. In qualitative research, there are three types of validity: descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical (Johnson, 1997).

Descriptive validity refers to the researcher's account of the facts and the degree of accuracy (Johnson, 1997). Did the researcher accurately document what actually happened and what they saw, heard, or read? In descriptive validity, the researcher reports the descriptive information which is a major objective in most qualitative studies.

Interpretive validity refers to the researcher's accurate understanding of the facts provided from point of views, experiences and thoughts (Johnson, 1997). The researcher therefore has the obligation to accurately illustrate in their report the viewpoints and thoughts of participants and data obtained through literature. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations will negatively impact the validity of the study.

Theoretical validity refers to the researcher's ability to connect the theory documented, to the data making the study credible and defensible. The researcher must take the results of the study and connect it to the theory. During this process, patterns and themes emerge. (Johnson, 1997)

### *Researcher's Bias*

Researcher's bias threatens the validity of any study. The biases occur as a result of selective observation and selective recording of information where the

researcher allows personal viewpoints to suggest how the study will be conducted and interpreted (Johnson, 1997). A self reflection strategy called reflexivity is useful in avoiding biases because it affords the researcher the opportunity to reflect on potential biases and predispositions (Johnson, 1997).

The researcher's appreciation for the leadership of John F. Kennedy during his presidency of the United States of America, may have impacted the researcher's ability to conduct and present an unbiased study. Kennedy was considered a risk taker. He intervened during the Cuban Missile Crises, consequently preventing what could have resulted in a catastrophic nuclear war. Although a complete failure, he authorized the Bay of Pigs conflict. Moreover, he sacrificed his southern state support and approval rating as a result of his civil rights activism (Greenstein, 2004). Kennedy led the U.S. during an era in history when the citizens of the country were so divided on issues and the negative forces that affected his work were great and had a global impact. President Kennedy has also been highly favored among members of the researcher's family because of his commitment to enforce Human and Civil Rights Laws of the 1960s. Kennedy actively worked to desegregate southern U.S. schools through the Civil Rights Act and lobbied southern business owners to employ African American people (Reeves, 1993). On September 22, 1962, at a ceremony commemorating the Emancipation Proclamation, Kennedy spoke these words:

Much remains to be done to eradicate the vestiges of discrimination and segregation, to make equal rights a reality for all of our people, to fulfill finally the promises of the Declaration of Independence. Like the proclamation we celebrate, this observance must be regarded not as an end, but a beginning... (Settel, 1965, p. 23)

President Kennedy was concerned with education and through his speeches he piqued national interest (O'Hara, 1965). Additionally, as a current educational leader, the researcher possesses ideas of what should be considered key aspects of an effective leadership model. Because the researcher was aware of the personal exposure and experiences that may have affected this study, the reflexivity strategy was used throughout this study to address the potential problem of bias.

### *Results*

The researcher's presentation of findings represents a leadership model for education practitioners developed from the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy. The researcher has included literature from historical leadership models. In presenting the findings, the researcher has demonstrated the connection between Kennedy's leadership characteristics and the literature referenced in Chapter Two of this study to support the theoretical model (Creswell, 1998). "Segments of actual data in the form of vignettes and quotes provide useful explanatory material. This material helps the reader form a judgment about how well the theory is grounded in the data" (Creswell, 1998, p. 179).

## Chapter 4

### Kennedy's Leadership Lessons

#### *Introduction*

As a result of an analysis of the available literature documenting the leadership of John F. Kennedy, a framework of Kennedy's leadership characteristics has developed. This construct is founded on the identified attributes and characteristics of Kennedy, found in literature and other resources that have documented his leadership. The other resources include audio recordings of speeches, public papers, and transcriptions of phone calls and meetings with advisors. Upon completion of the analysis of randomly selected documented events, ten leadership characteristics were identified and compared to existing leadership models. The ten characteristics were extracted from events that occurred during the Kennedy administration, and are illustrated through Kennedy's words, traits, and behaviors.

The intent of this study is not to suggest that Kennedy's 10 attributes and characteristics are an all-inclusive list. More extensive research may unveil additional characteristics that can foster effective leadership, based on the attributes and characteristics of Kennedy. This list provides an example of how Kennedy demonstrated and practiced leadership during his presidency. Furthermore, the leadership model for education practitioners will encompass the 10 attributes and characteristics that have been identified. Additionally, these 10 attributes and characteristics will address the three research questions for this study:

*Research Questions*

1. What were the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy that exemplified his leadership style?
2. Can an educational leadership model be created based on Kennedy's leadership characteristics?
3. How can this educational leadership model based on the characteristics of John F. Kennedy lead to successful educational leadership?

*Kennedy's Leadership Words*

John F. Kennedy possessed the ability to inspire through his pragmatic choice of words. Through care and insightful word selection and word sequence, Kennedy began most of his problem solving efforts through letters and speeches to convey his message. For example, in his letters to the Soviet Chairman Khrushchev during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy was careful not to fall into the "terminology trap" by labeling groups of people like "communist" or "the enemy" (Sorenson, 2008, p. 138). He understood that offensive words could place key people, during his efforts of crisis management, beyond the realm of reasoning and resolution. Kennedy relied on nautical metaphors and avoided casual mention of war, such as "war on communism" or "war on hate" (Sorenson, 2008, p. 138).

On October 23, 1962, at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy reviewed the wording of the proclamation of the proposed Soviet quarantine of missiles. The original title of the proclamation stated that the purpose was "to

stop the introduction of Sino-Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba.” Kennedy believed that by using the term “Sino-Soviet” it could further escalate the matter and be viewed as undesirable. Kennedy’s perspective was supported by his aides and the final title was worded “Interdiction of the delivery of offensive weapons to Cuba” (*JFK: The Kennedy Tapes*, 1992).

Kennedy believed that his messages to the citizens of the United States and the world, is best understood and accepted when words are used to simplify, clarify, and emphasize his views (Sorenson, 2008). A speech should be consistent with a theme and be well organized and coherent. Kennedy used words and a variety of literary strategies to make his statements and speeches memorable. A literary device that occurs when there is rhetorical use of inverted word order is known as chiasmus. On January 20, 1961, Kennedy stated:

... So let us begin anew, remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. *Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.* Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us. Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms and *bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations...* (*JFK: The Kennedy Tapes*, 1992)

### *Kennedy’s Leadership Characteristics*

Kennedy’s leadership characteristics have been categorized by using grounded theory research method, as described in chapter 3 of this study. Ten leadership characteristics have been identified from events that occurred during Kennedy’s presidency. The events were documented in literature, speeches, audio tapes, phone call transcriptions, and presidential public papers. The 10

characteristics represent Kennedy's approach to leadership demonstrated in his words and actions. Furthermore, these characteristics encompass a leadership model, suggested as a style for successful leaders.

*Kennedy was charismatic.* Kennedy was considered a charismatic leader who inspired others by his ability to motivate the public by his alluring personality (Barnes, 2005). There are myths to charismatic leadership: all that is required to leadership is charm, self-belief is fundamental to the leader, and people follow those whom they admire (ChangingMind.org, 2008). Charismatic leaders make great persuasive use of both their body and verbal language. Conger & Kanungo (1998) describe five behavioral attributes indicative of Charismatic Leaders: (a) vision and articulation, (b) sensitivity to the environment, (c) sensitivity to member needs, (d) personal risk taking, and (e) performing unconventional behavior. As stated in chapter two, the leadership approach of charismatic and transformational leaders are very similar. Transformational leaders seek to change organizations and charismatic leaders may not want to change anything at all. Kennedy demonstrated both charismatic and transformational leadership (Barnes, 2005).

Kennedy's campaign brochure captured the theme "A time for greatness" and pictures a profile of a vibrant, young and handsome presidential candidate which Kennedy was often referred as. His attire as well as that of his wife, Jacqueline, caused many fashion trends. His smile was said to be charming and he had an infectious laugh and sense of humor. Throughout his presidential

campaign and leading to his inaugural address, Kennedy was able to captivate his audience leaving most in attendance mesmerized (Schlesinger, 2002).

*Kennedy was a visionary.* Kennedy demonstrated early on that he was a visionary leader and would practice goal and vision sharing as president. At the Democratic National Convention on July 15, 1960, at the Memorial Coliseum in Los Angeles, Kennedy asserted,

...we stand today on the edge of a New Frontier, the frontier of the 1960's, the frontier of unknown opportunities and perils, the frontier of unfilled hopes and unfilled threats. Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom promised our nation a new political and economic framework. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal promised security and succor to those in need. But the New Frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises. It is a set of challenges. It sums up not what I intend to offer to the American people, but what I intend to ask of them. It appeals to their pride, it appeals to our pride, not our security. It holds out the promise of more sacrifice instead of more security. The New Frontier is here whether we seek it or not. Beyond that frontier are uncharted areas of science and space, unsolved problems of peace and war, unconquered problems of ignorance and prejudice, unanswered questions of poverty and surplus. (JFK: The Kennedy Tapes, 1992)

Vision is the goal of an organization that helps those involved to understand the cause for their efforts (Barnes, 2005). Vision provides an idea of the future and result of collective cooperation. Kennedy proclaimed his vision for our nation first during his Inaugural address. He collaborated with a speechwriter by the name of Ted Sorensen. Through his extensive study of the Gettysburg Address and ideas he solicited from advisors, family and friends, the vision of Kennedy was born (Barnes, 2005). Vision does not need to solely come from the head of a leader, but should come from research, intuition and prior experiences.

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new



generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our heritage, and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world... (Barnes, 2005, p.15)

The goal of Kennedy's speech was to spread the word of human freedom throughout the world. He wanted Americans to know that the level of freedom he spoke of would require great sacrifice and commitment. Kennedy called on collaboration and teamwork:

...And so my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man. (Barnes, 2005, p.17)

From a school systems point of view, "the vision and mission of a school embody how the school as an organization is expected to relate to parents, the community, and educational standards" (Townley et al., 2005, p. 149). School vision and mission statements represent our guiding principles, and speak to our willingness to develop a community of learners where students, teachers, staff and parents work collectively in creating and maintaining an environment where all children are safe, challenged to reach their potential. Shared commitment to the principles that illustrate the goals of all stakeholders makes the distinction between a learning community and an ordinary school (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Mission and statements of vision are vital to the successfulness of any organization (Covey, 2004)

*Kennedy was accountable.* In April of 1961, President Kennedy authorized more than 1400 Cuban insurgents to invade Bay of Pigs, Cuba, in an effort to

oust Fidel Castro. This invasion was a complete failure and caused Kennedy immense embarrassment. It became public that the CIA trained the members of the forces, who became known as “Freedom Fighters” and that Kennedy promised an air strike, that never occurred, to support the mission. Instead of placing the blame on his advisors, Kennedy publicly took responsibility for the failed mission although some would argue that he blamed the CIA (Sorenson, 2008).

*Kennedy was inspirational.* Kennedy inspired others to strive for excellence. Ted Sorenson, who was a Kennedy advisor and speech writer, was often sent back to improve his work until both he and Kennedy believed it to be his best possible effort (Sorenson, 2008). Kennedy’s leadership style involved one of support, gratitude, and inspiration which has been documented in many speeches such as one delivered to CIA officials at the CIA headquarters on November 28, 1961:

I want, first of all, to express my appreciation to you all for the opportunity that this ceremony gives to tell you how grateful we are in the government and in the country for the services that the personnel of this Agency render to the country. It is not always easy. Your successes are unheralded-your failures are trumpeted. I sometimes have that feeling myself. But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential-it is and how, in the long sweep of history, how significant your efforts will be judged. So I do want to express my appreciation to you now, and I'm confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country, as you have in the past. (CIA, 2007)

*Kennedy was resilient.* Perhaps Kennedy learned his best lesson for being resilient, from a life of overcoming illnesses. Whatever the cause of his resilience, it was evident in his leadership that he learned from his mistakes. On October 16,

1962 Kennedy viewed photographs that were evidence that the Soviet Union had missiles in Cuba. Kennedy did not wait for an attack, but responded proactively by placing a blockade of Soviet naval ships and arranged a direct phone line between the White House and Soviet Union to improve communications and decrease misunderstandings (Schlesinger, 2002). In spite of the failed Bay of Pigs mission and failing relations between Kennedy and the CIA, Kennedy did not respond to future crisis with hesitation or fear.

*Kennedy was communicative.* Kennedy worked diligently to become a great speaker and convey passion and conviction through his words. He was intentional when it came to simply stating his ideas and providing his audience with visual imagery. Kennedy was a master at developing phrases that people could remember. In his detailed plan to address the national concerns of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, Kennedy communicated his ideas and gained overwhelming support:

...Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress... I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

First: To halt this offensive buildup a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba from whatever nation or port will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military buildup. The foreign ministers of the OAS [Organization of American States], in their communiqué'

of October 6, rejected secrecy on such matters in this hemisphere. Should these offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the hemisphere, further action will be justified. I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities; and I trust that in the interest of both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at the sites, the hazards to all concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized.

Third: It shall be the policy of this Nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated today the dependents of our personnel there, and ordered additional military units to be on a standby alert basis.

Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the Organization of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action. The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements, and the nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers. Our other allies around the world have also been alerted.

Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations, we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our resolution will call for the prompt dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of U.N. observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

Seventh and finally: ...I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and to transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction by returning to his government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis, and

then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions... (American Rhetoric, 2008)

Kennedy addressed the nation on June 11, 1963 to communicate the actions he planned to take to alleviate the increasing hostilities surrounding the Civil Rights Movement:

...Next week I shall ask the Congress of the United States to act, to make a commitment it has not fully made in this century to the proposition that race has no place in American life or law. The Federal judiciary has upheld that proposition in a series of forthright cases. The Executive Branch has adopted that proposition in the conduct of its affairs, including the employment of Federal personnel, the use of Federal facilities, and the sale of federally financed housing. But there are other necessary measures which only the Congress can provide, and they must be provided at this session. The old code of equity law under which we live, commands for every wrong a remedy, but in too many communities, in too many parts of the country, wrongs are inflicted on Negro citizens and there are no remedies at law. Unless the Congress acts, their only remedy is the street.

I am, therefore, asking the Congress to enact legislation giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public -- hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar establishments. This seems to me to be an elementary right. Its denial is an arbitrary indignity that no American in 1963 should have to endure, but many do.

I have recently met with scores of business leaders urging them to take voluntary action to end this discrimination, and I have been encouraged by their response, and in the last two weeks over 75 cities have seen progress made in desegregating these kinds of facilities. But many are unwilling to act alone, and for this reason, nationwide legislation is needed if we are to move this problem from the streets to the courts.

I'm also asking the Congress to authorize the Federal Government to participate more fully in lawsuits designed to end segregation in public education... (American Rhetoric, 2008)

On January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy became the 35<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America. In his inaugural address, he communicated what he hoped to be the future of his administration and the U.S.

...Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge-and more. To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United, there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do- for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder... (Reeves, 1990, p. 83)

Kennedy spoke of the power within collective responsibility, and the possibilities in change. He spoke of teamwork and loyalty to both humanity and the nation. Additionally, Kennedy espoused his belief of the importance of sacrifice and ownership of the work he believed to be necessary to change the world.

...Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own. (Reeves, 1990, p. 84)

*Kennedy was compassionate.* One of Kennedy's most innovative programs was the establishment of the *Peace Corps* on March 1, 1961 (JFK Presidential Library & Museum, *Peace Corps*, 2008.). Through the Peace Corps, American volunteers were sent to undeveloped countries to assist with poverty, illiteracy, and disease prevention. This afforded the United States the opportunity to show human compassion by sharing skills that could help countries with the greatest needs, become more self- reliant. Under the leadership of Sergeant

Shriver, Kennedy's brother-in-law, the Peace Corps helped others in need around the world and improved international understanding.

*Kennedy was optimistic.* Kennedy believed in the upward mobility of America. This was most evident in his anti-communism, civil rights and "race to space" initiatives. He believed that he could change an entire generation of people by being a role model. Kennedy believed that by going into Vietnam, America could lead the charge against the spread of communism. He spread the ideas of hope and a new America where all people received equal rights. Kennedy invited Americans worldwide to venture into a "New Frontier" that included homeland prosperity, worldwide prosperity, and space exploration (Schlesinger, 2002).

After the Soviets relentlessly contended the nuclear ban at Geneva during the Eisenhower administration, Kennedy eventually took the initiative to ban nuclear bomb testing. He felt that the United States had an obligation to lead the ban. While speaking to his colleague, Senator Clinton Anderson, Kennedy said, "I think the United States should take the leadership in bringing these tests to an end...and I think we owe it because we are the only country that engaged in atomic warfare in the last war" (Schlesinger, 2002, p. 453). Kennedy believed that the nuclear ban was the most effective way to prevent a worldwide spread of nuclear bombs.

On June 10, 1963, Kennedy spoke at American University addressing talks of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty between the U.S. and Soviet Union:

...let us not be blind to our differences—but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal. (North & Vann, 2003)

*Kennedy was ambitious.* On May 25, 1961, President Kennedy addresses his concerns to Congress that the U.S. was falling behind the Soviet Union in the “space race”. He argued that technology had vastly improved and with urgency the U.S. should increase space initiatives to put a man on the moon within the decade (Schlesinger, 2002). It was the goal of Kennedy to be first in space, the first country to put a man on the moon. On September 12, 1962, Kennedy spoke at Rice University on space exploration:

...The exploration of space will go ahead... whether we join in it or not, and it is one of the great adventures of all time, and no nation which expects to be the leader of other nations can expect to stay behind in this race for space. Those who came before us made certain that this country rode the first waves of the industrial revolutions, the first waves of modern invention, and the first wave of nuclear power, and this generation does not intend to founder in the backwash of the coming age of space. We mean to be a part of it—we mean to lead it. For the eyes of the world now look into space, to the moon and to the planets beyond.

Yet the vows of this Nation can only be fulfilled if we in this Nation are first, and, therefore, we intend to be first. In short, our leadership in science and in industry, our hopes for peace and security, our obligations to ourselves as well as others, all require us to make this effort, to solve these mysteries, to solve them for the good of all men, and to become the world's leading space-faring nation.

...We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. For space science, like nuclear science and all technology, has no conscience of its own. Whether



it will become a force for good or ill depends on man, and only if the United States occupies a position of pre-eminence can we help decide whether this new ocean will be a sea of peace or a new terrifying theater of war. I do not say that we should or will go unprotected against the hostile misuse of space any more than we go unprotected against the hostile use of land or sea, but I do say that space can be explored and mastered without feeding the fires of war, without repeating the mistakes that man has made in extending his writ around this globe of ours... (Rice Webcast Archive, 1962)

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong fulfilled Kennedy's dream by becoming the first man to walk on the moon during the Apollo 11 mission.

*Kennedy was idealistic.* Kennedy lived by high standards and pursued perfection (Schlesinger, 2002). Through an idealistic approach, Kennedy legitimized his Vietnam policy. In 1956 Kennedy stated, "Vietnam represents the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, the keystone to the arch, the finger in the dike" (Fishel, 1968, p. 144). Kennedy encouraged Americans to consider the Vietnam conflict as a fight between communism and freedom. Kennedy conveyed a message that the U.S. must do whatever possible to defend freedom and protect against communism. As a result of his idealism and a call for social justice and national upward mobility, Kennedy represents the climax of liberalism (Fishel, 1968).

#### *Other Leadership Traits*

Kennedy demonstrated other leadership traits that were revealed during the coding process. These traits could not be categorized during the axial coding process because they were not consistently evident. Additionally, some of these traits were exhibited long before his presidency. However, these traits may be useful to any administrator and are worth noting.

*Life long learner.* Throughout Kennedy's childhood, he suffered from many illnesses such as chicken pox and measles (Barnes, 2005). As a result of his illnesses, he spent many days of his life bedridden. He found comfort in reading. Kennedy was a fast reader and was able to read and comprehend substantial amounts of material in short periods of time (Sorenson, 2008).

*Courage.* In 1941, Kennedy enlisted into the Navy and was regarded as courageous far before he gave his first order as Commander-in-Chief (Barnes, 2005). Additionally, his naval services came after he had been previously rejected because of health challenges.

In 1956, Kennedy authored a book titled *Profiles in Courage*, in which he documents courage he has seen in Congress, in particularly in the Senate. Kennedy believed that great leaders take risks and approach challenges unafraid. Kennedy had an idea to document the ways in which courage had been illustrated in the practices of other leaders. In his book he writes:

...I am convinced that we have criticized those who have followed the crowd- and at the same time criticized those who have defied it- because we have not fully understood the responsibility of a Senator to his constituents or recognized the difficulty facing a politician conscientiously desiring, in Webster's words, "to push [his] skiff from the shore alone" into a hostile and turbulent sea... (Kennedy, 1956, pp. 3-4)

Kennedy believed that the shortcomings of politicians, is their fear of not being liked. When Kennedy entered Congress, he was told "the way to get along is to go along" (Kennedy, 1956, p. 4). If he had embraced this leadership approach, perhaps many events, both successes and failures, would never have occurred. However, his courage led him to defy status quo and exhibit innovativeness.

*Independent.* Before graduating from Harvard, Kennedy first attended Princeton University which was not consistent with Kennedy family tradition (Barnes, 2005). Additionally, Kennedy sought the vice-presidential nomination which his father warned against in 1956.

#### *Effect of Kennedy's Leadership*

*The effects of Kennedy's words.* Kennedy spoke with great zeal and captivated his audiences no matter the message. When he spoke, many believed it to be mesmerizing (Schlesinger, 2002). Kennedy spread his message of advancing into a more technological age, and his vision of a world free of communism. The degree of Kennedy's ability to use words to inspire people has been continuously validated as leaders to follow him have emulated his traits. Kennedy used his words to paint a picture of his vision that became so real to his listeners. He accomplished this task by speaking with charisma that many people found to be captivating and sincere. Kennedy relied heavily on metaphors in delivery of his speeches and was particular about word choice (Sorenson, 2008). He spent many hours with speechwriters developing messages to the world that would increase his support and buy-in to his vision.

#### *Lessons of Kennedy's Leadership*

Table 4 lists Kennedy's leadership characteristics. This researcher has created a concise list of Kennedy's characteristics and effects found in events documented in the literature.

Table 4

*Lessons of Kennedy's Leadership*

Characteristics	Effects
He was charismatic.	He was able to convey a message of urgency to his listeners. He was able to inspire and motivate people. He was memorable.
He was a visionary.	He was able to articulate the direction he wanted to take the country. He challenged status quo. He gained credibility and support.
He was accountable.	He took responsibility for successes and failures.
He was inspirational.	He encouraged others to seek roles in leadership. He promoted teamwork and unity.
He was resilient.	He vivaciously overcame obstacles. He did not allow failures to discourage him. He learned from mistakes.
He was communicative.	He sought input from those around him. He utilized public addresses to convey his plans and goals.
He was compassionate	He showed interest in the issues of other countries. He found innovative ways to help people in need. He believed in and promoted freedom and equality.
He was optimistic.	He saw opportunity in the midst of crisis.
He was ambitious.	He set high goals and led by high standards.
He was idealistic.	He pursued perfection.

Using the historical leadership models, the biographical analysis, and events during Kennedy's leadership that has been documented in the literature, this researcher has presented the construct for a leadership model for educational leaders. The lessons of Kennedy's leadership illustrate the relevance of his characteristics, and the impact it could have on current leadership in education.

*Leading with charisma.* According to Bass (1990), leaders who are charismatic, have a tremendous influence over their followers. Followers of a charismatic leader embody moral inspiration and purpose. Charismatic leaders are more concerned about doing the right thing as opposed to doing things right (Bass, 1990). Ethical decision making, as it relates to followers, is essential to charismatic leaders. According to Howell and Avolio (1992), charismatic leaders are regarded by their followers as:

1. A leader who is nurturing and an all-powerful guide.
2. A leader with the solutions to solve their problems.
3. A leader who can achieve monumental tasks.
4. A leader that they can trust who is driven by values.

Howell and Avolio (1992) additionally suggest that in terms of accomplishing heroic tasks and turning around underachieving organizations, charismatic leaders can: (a) communicate a captivating vision, (b) enthusiastically promote their beliefs, (c) propose inventive ideas, (d) inspire strong work ethic in followers, (e) encourage high standards, and (f) maintain the trust and support of followers.

*Leading with vision.* Vision is the goal of an organization that helps those involved to understand the cause for their efforts (Barnes, 2005). Vision provides an idea of the future and is a result of collective cooperation. With vision, everyone within an organization understands the purpose and direction in which they are all moving. By leading with vision, followers receive a sense of hope, and believe that the goals of the vision are achievable. Visionary leaders

intuitively shape their vision around the prevailing needs of humanity. The question because a matter of, “what can we do to positively impact the lives of all people?” According to McLaughlin (2001) a visionary leadership involves: (a) a commitment to core values, (b) clearly articulated goals, (c) empowering relationship, (d) courageous and innovative actions.

*Leading with accountability.* Failures in leadership are a result of not knowing the nature of the work that needs to be done and an inadequate understanding of the process of resolving a situation (Selznick, 1957). Apart of the responsibility of a leader is to gain understanding of the work necessary for success and learning from past failures. So often leaders accept responsibility for the successes but as failures occur, have found ways to shift the blame or create excuses. Leading with accountability involves accepting mistakes, errors, and failures and viewing the possibilities within them.

*Leading with inspiration.* The Great-Man Theory illustrates transformational leadership of people who used their power and influence to create change (Bass, 1990). Leaders capable of inspiring others, utilize their ability to motivate to foster change. Downton (as cited in Bass, 1990) suggest that inspirational leadership occurs when a follower believes in the goals and purpose of a leader. Inspirational leadership occurs when people believe in the goals and vision of the leader and are inspired to contribute to the cause.

*Leading with resilience.* Through intellectual stimulation, a leader encourages followers to reframe old problems (Bass, 1990). The ability to take an old problem and think about it in a new way, suggests that there are

possibilities even in an unfavorable situation. When fostering resilience, a leader has the opportunity to demonstrate and encourage perseverance after organizational shortfalls. Patterson and Kelleher (2005) states that a resilient leader:

1. Seeks to understand failures and how they may have contributed to them.
2. Believes that good things will occur and want to play an active role in the process.
3. Maintains focus on the things that matter most.
4. Perseveres during tough times.
5. Manages their energy output well to avoid physical and mental burnout.
6. Utilize their courage and respond to their convictions when adversities occur.

*Leading with communication.* The Multiple-Screen Model (Bass, 1990) is an approach that involves the relationship between leaders and subordinates. Healthy relationships can be fostered through communication. Effective leaders are capable of communicating with followers. Through communication, the leader can inform followers of goals, and expectations so that there is one organizational message and clearly understood objectives. Harvard Business School Professor Nitin Nohria believes that the real job of leaders is to foster productive communication (Blagg & Young, 2001). Asserted first by Aristotle long ago, Nohria believes "You can reach people through logos or logic, by appealing

to their sense of what is rational." "You can use pathos, appealing to their emotions, or you can make an argument based on their sense of values or ethos; Great leaders spend the bulk of their time communicating, and they know how to employ all three of Aristotle's rhetorical elements" (Blagg & Young, 2001, p. 1).

*Leading with compassion.* Servant Leadership is an approach that focuses on the passion to serve others and to make their personal needs a high priority (Greenleaf, 1977). According to Greenleaf, Servant Leadership involves compassion, and accentuates the significance of collaboration, trust, empathy and ethical use of power which is dissimilar of top-down hierarchical approaches. By being a compassionate leader, the needs of followers will come before your own needs. Compassionate leaders are sympathetic to the needs of their followers and are most interested in increasing work productivity by creating happy employees.

*Leading with optimism.* Transformational leadership involves optimistic leaders who encourage subordinates to focus on long term needs and possess awareness of what really matters that is in the interest of all stakeholders (Bass, 1990). In spite of adversities, optimistic leaders can highlight hope and the prospect of a successful future to their followers. Optimistic leaders can set the tone for future possibilities. Leaders who are optimistic resist hopelessness by believing that challenges and setbacks are temporary and isolated (Dinkmeyer & Eckstein, 1995).

*Leading with ambition.* In the Multiple-Linkage Model, Yukl (as cited in Bass, 1990) suggests that a follower's ability to accept a condition is contingent



upon the leader's initiation of the model. Regarded as remarkable leaders, ambitious leaders set high expectations and seek unthinkable goals. Ambitious leaders aspire to attain large-scale goals. The dreams of ambitious leaders benefit society, as their accomplishments enrich the lives of others (Champy & Nohria, 2000).

*Leading with idealism.* The idealistic leader accentuates the reality of truth (Brightman, 1933). Idealistic leaders can illustrate for followers, ideals consisting of collective goals. It should be understood that although idealism does not represent a present state of being, it does represent possibilities and future achievement.

Characteristics that help to foster a desired outcome can be either innate or learned. It is not enough to merely know the work that needs to be done, but understand how to discover or learn the characteristics and talents that lead to success (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001). With an open mind and willingness to learn, leaders who do not naturally possess the characteristics proposed in Kennedy's model can learn the characteristics. This process involves practice and knowledge of how each of the characteristics is defined. Additionally, understanding the behavior that fosters the effects and desired outcomes of the leader will help to accelerate the learning process. Table 5 illustrates a construct for the leadership model for educational leaders. This model encompasses the characteristics for effective leadership, and the effects of each characteristic on those being led. Although this list provides some effects on those being led, it is not a complete or final list of effects that may occur by implementing this

leadership model. It can be presumed that the extent of positive effects is correlated to the level of implementation of the model.

Table 5

*A Leadership Model for Educational Leaders*

Characteristics	Effects
Charisma	Motivates followers. Inspires followers.
Vision	Establishes organizational purpose. Supports mission.
Accountability	Establishes roles. Celebrates small victories. Eliminates placing blame.
Inspiration	Encourages others to exceed expectation.
Resilience	Willingness to change ineffective practices. Increases trust of the leader. Fosters risk taking.
Communication	Builds positive relationships. Fosters inclusiveness.
Compassion	Allows leader to show empathy for the needs of others.
Optimism	Increases positive energy.
Ambition	Supports risk taking. Defies status quo. Allows high goal setting.
Idealism	Enables others to focus on long term goals. Embraces change. Establishes an ideal image of the future.

*Summary of the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders*

The aforementioned leadership model is based on the known leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy and the documented literature on leadership. This model illustrates the characteristics demonstrated by John F. Kennedy through his words and attributes. Kennedy spoke with charisma and espoused a strong sense of inspiration and hope. He effectively communicated his vision for a new America and motivated all citizens and friends throughout the world to support change. Kennedy was a visionary leader with high hopes and ideals for the U.S. and the world. He spoke of his vision through his words during his public address. He encouraged his supporters to follow him and strive to keep the U.S. at the forefront of change and innovation. He wanted the U.S. to serve as the model for the world.

Kennedy was accountable for not only the successes of his administration, but also the failures. This showed how leaders could use a failure as a framework for possibility. Kennedy sought to learn from failures. He encouraged his supporters to not give in, to failures and the possibility of defeat. Kennedy encouraged those around him to strive for their personal best and to be accountable.

Kennedy was inspirational and helped to persuade others to participate in areas of leadership that without his encouragement, may not have participated. He fostered teamwork which was evident with his advisors and other personnel who worked for his administration. He expected those around him to support one

another and be of service whenever possible. Kennedy inspired people around the world to support his vision of a free world.

Kennedy used his resilience to persevere through obstacles. He modeled how effective leaders use challenges as a learning tool. He was a risk taker and demonstrated how a leader can turn crises into possibilities.

Kennedy was communicative and utilized his role as a leader as a platform to inform the world of his plans and goals. He thoroughly communicated his plans to address issues as his means of keeping everyone well informed. Additionally, he conveyed his compassion for others and his interest in mobilizing resources to address the needs of people worldwide. He promoted freedom and equality at home and abroad.

Kennedy was an optimist who looked for opportunities and set ambitious goals to keep the U.S. at the forefront. He was idealistic and strived for perfection, which he consistently communicated publicly.

## Chapter 5

## Leadership Model for Educational Leaders

*Leadership Model for Educational Leaders*

After the completion of the data analysis of the available literature documenting the leadership of John F. Kennedy, a model for leadership has been developed. This construct is founded on the identified attributes and characteristics of Kennedy, found in literature and other resources that have documented his leadership. A comparison of historical leadership models to Kennedy's leadership characteristics provides validation. Outlined in previous chapters, the researcher has identified ten characteristics comprised of this model. The characteristics are: (a) charisma, (b) vision, (c) accountability, (d) inspiration, (e) resilience, (f) communication, (g) compassion, (h) optimism, (i) ambition, and (j) idealism.

Written in the context of Kennedy's leadership qualities, the following are summary definitions for each of the aforementioned characteristics.

*Charisma.* Charisma is a characteristic that gives the leader the ability to gain the interest of others. Through charisma, the leader can become more memorable and capable of motivating others. In a school setting, charisma can be an effective trait when there is low morale within the faculty or there is lack of buy-in and support of the goals of the leader. Charisma can be utilized when speaking to faculty, morning assemblies with students, and even when meeting with parents to display the leader's enthusiasm and comment to achieve goals. As others begin to observe the passion of the leader, they may be more likely to

support the direction in which the leader would like to move the organization.

*Vision.* Vision is the leader's idea of the future. Through vision, the leader boldly commits to the unknown. The leader has the responsibility of clearly articulating their vision so that all stakeholders understand the direction and goals of the organization. A great leader would use every possible opportunity to have conversations around vision. A leader has successfully communicated vision once all stakeholders become capable of articulating the vision of the organization.

*Accountability.* Accountability involves the willingness of the leader to accept responsibility for successes and failures. Additionally, leaders are accountable when they take responsibility for all of the needs of the organization. This includes intentionally identifying the work that needs to be done, the needs, and solutions. Often, this level of accountability involves risk taking and courageous innovativeness.

*Inspiration.* Inspiration is the leader's ability to motivate and gain the interest of others. A leader can be an inspiration to others by actively participating in the everyday hard work of the organization. If it is the desire of the leader to better address the specific needs of students, the leader can model what that work looks like by working with small groups of students, meeting with teachers to discuss specific student needs, and being consistent in the everyday work that supports goals.

*Resilience.* Resilience is the leader's ability to persevere through challenges and crisis. It should be understood by the leader, that there will be

organizational shortfalls and challenges. To better assist followers in dealing with challenges as they occur, it is paramount that the leader exhibits resilience and perseveres during tough times. This can be an opportunity to use a crisis as a learning tool. It can be a good practice to brief with faculty before major events and debrief at the conclusion of events to have necessary conversations regarding the things that went right and wrong.

*Communication.* Communication is the leader's ability to keep everyone abreast of status, plans, and goals. Leaders can create teams to serve as advisors to create a culture of inclusiveness. Weekly meetings with support staff and faculty, is a great opportunity to foster and sustain a culture of communication. Effective communication can also be in the form of newsletters that can inform the entire learning community of necessary information.

*Compassion.* Compassion is the leader's ability to show understanding for the needs of others. A leader can display compassion by getting to know the people with whom they work. This effort can be supported by establishing a hospitality committee who can be responsible for leading the efforts of acknowledging the needs of those within their learning community and those who are not. Community service efforts are a great way to support the needs of those who are not directly affiliated with the organization.

*Optimism.* Optimism is the leader's ability to maintain a positive attitude during times of crisis. Having a positive attitude can be contagious and provide a boost in morale when necessary. Being an optimistic leader involves resisting

negative language or the appearance that failure has in anyway discouraged the work towards goals.

*Ambition.* Ambition is the leader's ability to set high goals. Leaders who are ambitious encourage others to exceed mediocre expectations. Ambitious leaders have the ability to encourage students who have not experienced academic success to strive for excellence. Additionally, ambitious leaders can model expected behavior that fosters excellence for ineffective faculty.

*Idealism.* Idealism is the leader's ability to set high expectations, goals and strive for nothing less than excellence. Idealistic leaders are continuously looking for opportunities to improve. Leaders who are idealistic strive to defy status quo and avoid ineffective practices. Idealistic leaders are efficient, competitive, and strive to perfection.

The 10 rudiments that encompass the leadership model for educational leaders are illustrated in Figure 1. Each modular component of this model is interconnected. When the components of this model are present in a leader's management approach, they will actively demonstrate the characteristics identified.



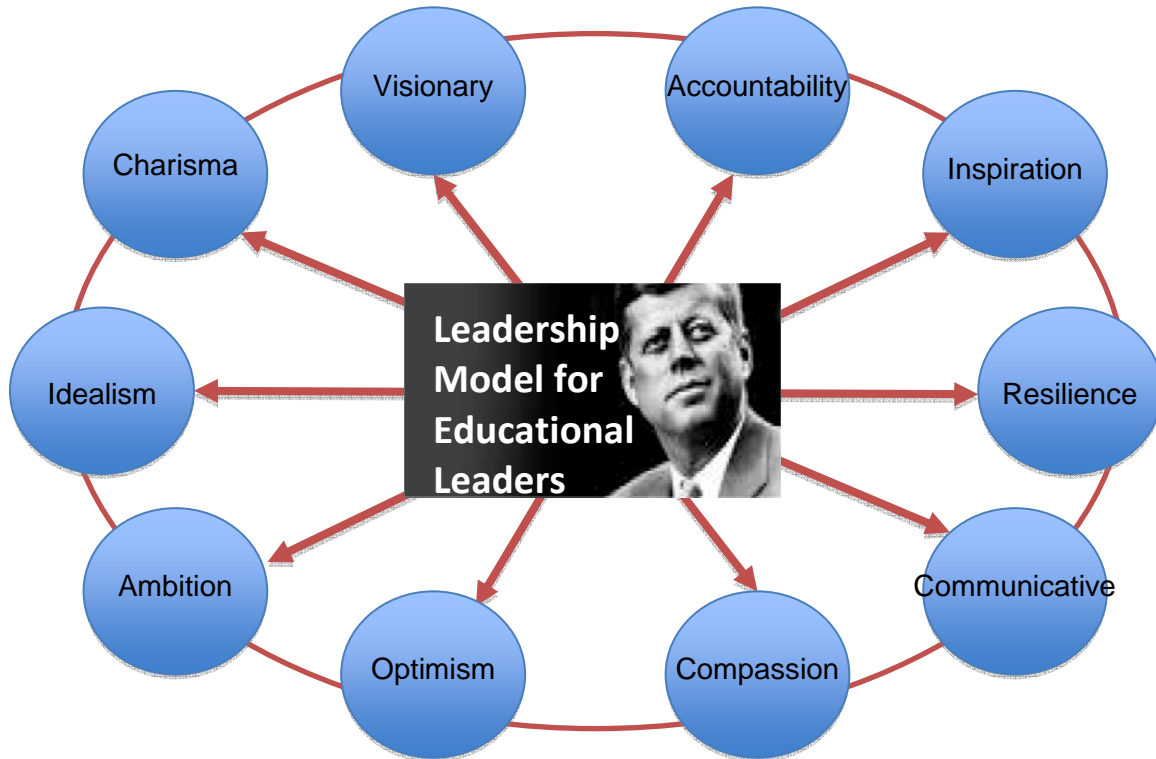


Figure 1. Leadership model for educational leaders.

John F. Kennedy used the characteristics of this model to demonstrate effective leadership. An education practitioner who implements the components of this model as outlined in Tables 4 and 5 of Chapter 4 and Figure 1 of this chapter will have first hand experience of the positive effect of employing the characteristics of the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders to their approach to leadership. Leaders will ascertain how using charisma helps to motivate others. Leaders who implement this model will lead with optimism and coach followers on persevering through the most adverse situations. Leaders will lead with idealism and strive for perfection in all arenas. These leaders will also be accountable for both successes and failures and inspire their followers to serve in areas of leadership that without encouragement, they may not have. Leaders who implement this model will be resilient and not succumb to

adversities and challenges. They will be ambitious and set high goals and standards beyond the average person's expectation. These leaders will have a clear vision that followers are able to understand and visualize the long term effect of the vision. The leader will communicate the direction in which they wish to move towards in a way that articulates the roles and expectations of followers. The leaders who implement the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders will be compassionate and hold the needs of their followers with high regard.

The leaders who implement this model in their approach to leadership will be risk takers, team builders, and inspire others to exceed even their own expectations. This leader will model the practices of this leadership model so that followers will begin to learn and also implement the components of this model. This approach to leadership is revolutionary in comparison to historical leadership models. This researcher will compare the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders to historical leadership models in the next section of this chapter.

#### *Model Comparison*

The Leadership Model for Educational Leaders encompasses the elements of Kennedy's leadership practices documented in literature and other resources. The researcher has compared the elements of this model to existing models to identify similarities and to validate the need for implementation of the new model. After comparing the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders, to the historical leadership models documented in Chapter 2 of this study, the researcher found similarities with six of the models. The following six models

share characteristics with the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders: (a) servant leadership, (b) inspirational leadership, (c) transformational leadership, (d) individualized consideration, (e) multiple-linkage model, and (f) multiple-screen model.

The Servant leadership style shares common characteristics with the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders because it focuses on the needs of others. The leader's focus is on building capacity to lead within followers and encouraging them to assume roles and responsibilities that are not the norm. The leader's role is to build efficacy through team building and collaboration. The Leadership Model for Educational Leaders involves compassion and inspiration. Kennedy worked diligently to establish the Peace Corp to serve people in need worldwide and worked domestically to solve the issues of human rights and equality.

Inspirational leadership focuses on goals and the purpose of the leader, not necessarily the leader. Kennedy inspired followers through his charismatic character and positive outlook. He used words and persona to motivate others to reframe their thinking and actively become involved in the change process.

Transformational leadership maintains the focus on the issues that matter most. The critical and urgent issues that must be dealt with immediately are a priority. Kennedy took risks and defied status quo by tackling old problems with innovative ideas. Although he was sometime unsuccessful, as in the Bay of Pigs fiasco, he used challenges and failures as a framework for possibility. Kennedy

was an optimist and resilient, and he demonstrated his perseverance to his followers.

Individualized consideration is somewhat like servant leadership where the focus is on the needs of the followers. Additionally, the specific needs of the organization become a priority of the leader. In this model, a leader is tailor made to meet individualized needs. As documented previously, Kennedy was deeply concerned with the needs others worldwide. Domestically, he focused his leadership on the current needs of the country. During his 34 months in office, the specific needs of the U.S. surrounded civil rights and issues of equality. Kennedy began to focus his work around those issues. In terms of specific international issues, Laos and Vietnam exemplify his individualized work to overthrow communism and protect basic human rights.

The Multiple-Linkage Model focuses on the leader's behavior and their initiation of the work needed to reach goals. During the Congo Crisis, Kennedy put a plan in place that illustrated how he saw the conflict being resolved. The United Nations would control military actions and would provide financial, logistical and technical support to the Congo. This was Kennedy's approach to aggressive improve relations with black Africans.

The Multiple-Screen Model focuses on the relationship between the leader and followers. Efficacy is increase as relationship building is fostered. Additionally, the experience, intelligence, and preparedness of the leader are paramount. Kennedy was communicative and his leadership involved inclusiveness. He has been documented in his presidential public papers and in

transcripts of telephone conversations that he sought the input and opinions of his aids and advisors on most issues. He built positive relationships and fostered teambuilding by focuses little attention on the titles of his staff members but instead on their ability to share goals, tasks, and problem solve cohesively.

There were other models and theories that showed little similarity with Kennedy's leadership approach such as Trait and Great-Man Theory that proposes a great deal of focus on leader superiority and hereditary leadership. Although, many of the ideals of the Kennedy family included the idea that being a Kennedy, includes possessing a willingness to strive for perfection and excellence. The biographical analysis of this study describes a disciplined family with many beliefs and customs consistent with attributes common in the Trait and Great-Man Theory approaches to leadership. Rose Kennedy was committed to providing her children with firm guidance and a sense of individuality" (as cited in Valenty & Feldman, 2002, p. 163). However, Joseph and Rose Kennedy both taught their children to have a strong sense of self-worth and taught them to be proud of their heritage while instilling in them the importance of superior performance (Valenty & Feldman, 2002). However, John F. Kennedy as a leader became one that was focused on excellence as a country through collaborative effort as opposed to individual excellence. He set clear goals and sought to attain them by uplifting others to assume leadership roles. Table 6 summarizes the comparison of the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders to the six historical models identified from the literature review in chapter two of this study.

Table 6

*Comparison of Kennedy's Leadership Model*

Servant	Inspirational	Transformational	Individualized	Multiple-Linkage	Multiple-Screen
Accentuates collaboration and trust	Leader not necessarily a role model	Leader has influence over followers	Leader empowers others	Subordinate buy-in contingent on leader's initiation of work	The leader's experience is important
Leader encourages others to assume leadership roles	Leader encourages others to assume leadership roles	Leader articulates shared goals	Leader gives careful thought to organizational needs	Relies on resources and overall subordinate cohesiveness	Relationships influence the work ethic of followers
Focus is on the needs of others	Focus is on goals	Focus is on what matters most	Focus is on the needs of others	Focus is on leader's behavior	Focus is on relationship between leader and followers
Leader enhances work efficacy through team building	The leaders goals are shared by others	The leader reframes old problems	The leader fosters a system where the contributions of others are most critical to success	Validation encourages followers	The leader is intelligent

*Purpose of Leadership Model for Educational Leaders*

The purpose of the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders is to provide education practitioners with a revolutionary model to use as an alternative to existing available leadership models. This leadership model can provide leaders who seek drastic change within their organization with a research

based tool. If leaders seek to defy status quo based on the traditional leadership approaches, this leadership model is an excellent tool to use as the foundation. Kennedy's legacy has been evident throughout history. Many U.S. Presidents and other organizational leaders sought to model their leadership style after his (Barnes, 2005). Additionally, Barnes states that combined with Kennedy's ability to make leadership look effortless and his lifelong ability to see obstacles as opportunities, he was a stellar leader. For educators seeking to increase their effectiveness as leaders, understanding the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy is relevant.

The second purpose for the Leadership Model for Educational Leaders is to attend to the research questions listed in Chapter 1 of this study.

1. *What were the leadership characteristics of John F. Kennedy that exemplify his leadership style?*

This researcher provided a construct for a leadership model based on Kennedy's leadership characteristics in Table 5 of Chapter 4. This construct lists 10 leadership characteristics that exemplified Kennedy's leadership style that has been documented in literature and other resources. These characteristics are: (a) charisma, (b) vision, (c) accountability, (d) inspiration, (e) resilience, (f) communication, (g) compassion, (h) optimism, (i) ambition, and (j) Idealism.

The next section of this study will address the final two research questions:

2. *Can an educational leadership model be created based on Kennedy's leadership characteristics?*

*3. How can this educational leadership model based on the characteristics of John F. Kennedy lead to successful educational leadership?*

Table 5 of Chapter 4 illustrates a leadership model for education practitioners based on his characteristics and the possible effects it could have on followers. Although this model will be available to leaders, there is still the challenge of a leader's willingness to disregard historical approaches to leadership. A leader must possess courage and the will to take risks in order for this model to be successful. In order for this model to be successful, a leader must apply all of the components of this model to their leadership approach with fidelity. If a leader chooses to implement this model with fidelity, this model will serve as a vital tool to overcome obstacles, restructure and eradicate ineffective practices. Leadership is the ability to become aware of different perspectives by viewing challenges through multiple lenses (Bolman & Deal, 2002). Fullan (2001) suggests that leadership is the ability to make a positive difference and alleviate obstacles that distract from student learning. Schein (1992) asserts that leadership encompasses the ability to allocate resources, support change initiatives and the ability to work with stakeholders to shape the organizational culture of a school. "Leadership consists of the ability to effectively delegate authority, develop collaborative decision-making processes, and the willingness to step back from being the central problem-solver" (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, p.186). By utilizing this leadership model based on the characteristics and behaviors of Kennedy, who experienced leadership at a time when there were many forces working against the progress of the United States of America,



educational leaders will become better prepared to face the negative forces in education.

### *Suggestions for Future Research*

As an extension of this study, future research would identify characteristics that education practitioners already possess that are similar to Kennedy's leadership characteristics. This study would survey educational leaders to identify characteristics that they believe they possess and also the characteristics evident in their leadership approach. The purpose of this study will be to identify if there are already commonalities in educational leader's approaches to leadership that is already being implemented in their practice.

Another future study would be a comparison of the success of education practitioners who possess Kennedy's attributes to those who do not. The data collection for this study would be in the form of survey, interview, and observation. The purpose of this study would be to do an in-depth analysis on the differences between the two different leadership styles.

### *Conclusion*

This research on Kennedy's leadership characteristics has been an enriching and life changing journey. The possibilities within the discoveries that have been made through this research can potentially move a failing organization into the realm of possibility and success. The literature documenting Kennedy's life and personal journey into leadership and throughout his career in leadership is informative and can positively impact the way education practitioners approach leadership. As a matter of application, this research serves as an alternative to

existing leadership models. Additionally, this model will not cure and fix all of the problems that exist in education today. There is so much left to discover in this phenomenon. Such discoveries include more in-depth research into inherited leadership characteristics versus learned leadership characteristics. The available psychological research available regarding the human brain and genetic character traits is still so very vague. More research would uncover new discoveries into the complexities of the human brain and genetically transferred attributes and characteristics.

*Personal Reflection*

I have been encouraged by Kennedy's life work to continue to make my focus, enriching the lives of others. I know that as a result of my research, I will be a more successful leader capable of empowering others to believe and achieve in the face of crisis. Almost 50 years ago Kennedy was able to speak about possibilities and model his beliefs through resilience and an optimistic outlook. In my current position as elementary school principal, I will have the opportunity to put this model into practice.

The Leadership Model for Educational Leaders will enable education practitioners to lead with: charisma, vision, accountability, inspiration, resilience, communication, compassion, optimism, ambition and idealism. This model provides examples of what leadership with each of those characteristics involve. Additionally, this model informs leaders of defined characteristics that they can learn to implement into their practice if they do not innately possess them.

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