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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

A MULTI-SITE CASE STUDY: THE EFFECT OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP ON  
SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN CHARTER SCHOOLS IN  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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

by

Pardeep Kullar

April, 2011

Margaret Weber, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Pardeep Kullar

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## VITA

**Pardeep Kullar, Ed.D.**

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**Education**

**Doctor of Education**, Organizational Leadership (2010)  
Pepperdine University

**Master of Arts**, Education Major with Specialization in Psychology (2003)  
Pepperdine University

**Bachelor of Arts**, History Major with Minor in Psychology (2001)  
University of California, Los Angeles

**Experience**

**Dean of Education**, North-West College (Nov 2010 – Current)  
Head of the college's educational program, overseeing all aspects of instructional strategy;  
Emphasis on developing curriculum, reviewing faculty performance, and leadership training;  
Associate with outside agencies for programmatic certification and on-line learning tools.

**Adjunct Faculty**, Los Angeles International College (Oct 2005 – Dec 2010)  
Offered lecture and research investigation on American government, politics, and culture;  
Challenged beliefs and opinions of college students about American governmental policies;  
Co-lectured introductory Psychology course and through an online education symposium.

**Assessment Coordinator**, Green Dot Public Schools (Aug 2008 – Mar 2010)  
Created rigorous teaching strategies for test prep instruction to increase student achievement;  
Utilized data of in/formal assessments to measure student learning and share best practices;  
Instructional Leadership Team member, with focus on growth in professional development.

**School Teacher**, Los Angeles Unified School District (Aug 2002 – Jun 2007)  
Provided instruction to students in K-8, specifically middle school math and science;  
Implemented method for critical thinking skills development, later adopted by LAUSD;  
Offered strategies for the integration of cross-curriculum and differentiated instruction.

**Leadership**

**Director of Investor Relations**, The iGlobal Group  
Reviewed business plans for fundraising; negotiated agreements for investor partnerships.

**Executive Director**, Village of Zion, Inc.  
Recruited, trained and supervised 130 employees for tutorial services program of 1,560+ students.

## **Consultancy**

### **UNIX Technologies**

Collaborated with CEO on business development by way of research in market strategy and financial trend analysis

### **Brand Culture Company**

Charged with the development of a customer experience strategy that could be utilized across multiple markets

### **Al Houda School of Islamic Studies**

Presented series of seminars based on the concerns of school administration for faculty and staff dedication to growth of school

### **Early Birds Learning**

Partnered in the decision making process to expand operation, franchise options versus regional development

### **Priority One Credit Union**

Evaluated change management program through interview and observation to understand internal dynamics

### **Embassy Suites Hotel, LAX North**

Conducted strategic analysis plan for thorough diagnosis and improvement of management-employee relations issues

## **Academic Coursework**

**Leadership and Theory:** Examined classical and contemporary theories and styles of leadership and their application to a variety of professional and global settings.

**Organizational Behavior, Theory and Design:** Looked at organizations, their structures, intended outcomes, and how they deal with culture, employee behavior, and values.

**Ethical Leadership and Social Justice:** Gained introductory insight to the study of ethical leadership and value clarification and responsible organizational leadership in society.

**Information Literacy and Scholarship:** Developed a “doctoral voice” by mastering aspects of scholarship in written, oral, and web-based communication, while using innovative technology.

**Research Methods and Evaluation:** Examined theory and practice in the design, conduct, analysis, and interpretation of experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey procedures for organizational research and evaluation.

**Qualitative Research Analysis:** Gained an introduction to qualitative research designs and such topics as the collection and interpretation of qualitative data and the methods of minimizing threats to the trustworthiness and authenticity of qualitative studies.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Mastered skills in the use of principles and methods for both descriptive and inferential statistics, including a study of measures of central tendency, variability, position, and relationship.

**Personal Leadership:** Gained introspective knowledge to the concepts, skills, and strategies of personal/professional transformation for leading global organizations.

**Management and Policy Development:** Gained an introduction to major theories and approaches to management and policy development in local, national, and global settings.

**National Policy Experience:** Gained practical experience in policy development at the national level through travel to Washington, D.C.

**Economics and Political Systems:** Applied theories and principles of micro and macro economics to analyze, design, and evaluate policies that address business, political, and educational challenges at the national level.

**International Policy Experience:** Gained an international perspective on policy development through a visit to Monterrey, Mexico, for interactive leadership.

**Leading Educational Programs:** Developed an integrated approach of leading and viewing educational program development and evaluation at the institutional level.

**Entrepreneurship:** Created a new venture through the exploration of theory, strategy, and practice for organizational leadership.

**Consultancy Project:** Applied knowledge, skills, and values to a real-world problem.

**Law and Dispute Resolution:** Examined environmental forces that impact the organization with an emphasis on applicable legal issues.

**Transforming Organizations in a Global Community:** Focused on current change theory, futurist literature, and major world trends in education and related disciplines.

### **Scholarly Research**

#### **New Advancements to Web Technologies and Social Networking Communities**

Provided in-depth analysis and contribution to ongoing research in web technologies at the California University of Technology



### **Charter School Development in California and Other States**

Contributed to the findings and analysis of the impact of charter school development in California and throughout the nation

### **Organizational Theory, Behavior and Change in K-12 Education**

Added findings through empirical data and statistical analysis to research on school organization, environment, and structure

### **Refereed Publications**

**Kullar, P. (2006).** The arising need for charter schools in the public education sector. *International Journal of Education*, Vol. 40, Issue I. Honolulu, HI: HIC Proceedings.

**Kullar, P. (2008).** Building team leadership: the case of the young women's conference committee. *International Journal of Business*, Vol. 12, Issue 8. Honolulu, HI: HIC Proceedings.

**Kullar, P. (2008).** Leading with soul to create a learning community with a viable institutional curriculum. *International Journal of Learning*, Vol. 15, Issue 2. Chicago, IL: CG Publisher.

### **Other Publications**

**Kullar, P. (2008).** Think global: isolating the variable for next generation entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneur21*, Special Edition. Diamond Bar, CA: K-Publications.

### **Presentations**

**Los Angeles Unified School District,** Building a Shared Vision: Focusing on strategies for buy-in from all constituents.

**California University of Technology.,** The Fundraising Process: Introduced methodologies for fundraising for new ventures to young entrepreneurs.

**Hawaii International Conference,** The Charter School Movement: Presented research on the trend for public school choice among parents in the United States and abroad.

**The Young Women's Conference,** Building Self Awareness and Confidence: Addressed issues related to self-esteem and offered strategies for positive self-image and personal growth.

**Pepperdine University,** Determining Eligibility for Students with Learning Disabilities: Presented findings from research related to key areas in assessing student needs for special education qualification.

## **Public Policy**

### **Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.**

Held meetings with legislative officials on educational policy development and implementation;

Coordinated a question and answer session with Senator Feinstein for various doctoral candidates.

### **International Policy Development, Monterrey, Mexico**

Met with political and business leaders of Mexico involved in international trade and government;

Interviewed members of the community on issues regarding the upcoming presidential campaign.

## **Community Service**

### **Angels of Humanity, Los Angeles, California, Founder**

Started a non-profit organization dedicated to providing self-esteem and awareness seminars; Worked closely with middle/ high schools in local districts to integrate programs for success.

### **Habitat for Humanity, Atitlan, Guatemala, Volunteer**

Built earthquake-safe infrastructure frameworks for rural housing development community; Mixed mud-cement solution to create concrete and used it to plaster bricks for house walls.

### **Cross-Cultural Solutions, Salvador, Brazil, Volunteer**

Created an affection therapy program for mentally disabled/ emotionally disturbed students; Worked at Mother Theresa's orphanage to engage young children in social skills activities.

### **HOPE Youth Corp, Kingston, Jamaica, Volunteer**

Remodeled the Kingston Children's Hospital and Clinic serving surrounding community; Cleaned up children's orphanage and created playtime activities for interaction of children.

## ABSTRACT

This research study analyzes the effect of principal leadership practices on school climate and the resulting effect of school climate on student achievement at 4 charter schools in Los Angeles, CA. This study assesses whether teachers consider the school climate at their respective charter school as positive in nature after at least 2 years of principal leadership, going on 3 years at the current schools. It analyzes school climate as it relates to principal practices based on the leadership frameworks presented by Bolman and Deal (1991), and discusses the possible correlation of school climate and student achievement within the schools by analyzing state standardized test scores to draw a conclusive correlation.

This study was quantitative in nature; two surveys were administered to teachers: The Leadership Orientation Survey (Others; See Appendix B) by Bolman and Deal (1991) was used to assess principal leadership frames and the School Climate Survey by the National Association of Secondary School Principals was used to measure school climate.

The findings of this multi-site case study provided charter management organizations and other stakeholders a foundation for assessing the role of principal leadership in regards to the impact on a positive school climate and increased student achievement in a charter school setting. This research study can give insight for the school staff in future activities for continued professional development and positive growth in school climate through specific principal leadership orientations. The findings can also support other ongoing research about differences in charter school success based on these categories.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The dissatisfaction in public education has been growing for many years, based on the notion that the practices in public schooling have become too bureaucratic, ineffective, and task-cumbersome (Osborne & Patrick, 1998). The traditional structure of public school administration, organization and governance has been found to be unresponsive to pressures for change (Lubienski, 2001). A push towards a more entrepreneurial approach to public education has become more favorable by parents in the United States, Great Britain, New Zealand, and Canada. This shift has led to the creation of charter schools. Charter schools provide a public education with a private mission (Bosetti, 1998; Lewis, 1998; Manno, Finn, Bierlein, & Vanmyek, 1998; Tyler, 2002).

### **Setting**

Charter schools have taken on a new approach to public education by offering innovative leadership strategies to combat the challenges faced by traditional public schools. The concept of the principal as a leader has grown beyond the role of management only; principals are now viewed as the vessels for school change and improvement (Lezotte, 1990). The importance of school climate on student achievement has become paramount in driving school success (Barth, 2002). In order to measure school success, it is necessary to measure the effect of principal leadership on school climate and in turn the impact of school climate on student learning.

Research shows that more and more traditional public schools are failing to meet the needs of state standards for student learning (Osborne & Patrick, 1998). At the same time, more charter schools have been opened in the last 20 years than ever before.

Charter schools offer an opportunity for a “different” education in a public school setting, giving parents and the community hope of student and school success. According to the US Charter Schools organization, there are currently 41 charter laws in 40 states. In those 40 states, there are a total number of 4,364 charter schools servicing more than 1,251,342 students.

Many advocates of school reform, through the creation of charter schools, support the philosophy that public education should combine the essential principles of a free-enterprise system. These principles include choice, educational competitiveness among schools, market-based opportunities, more accountability, responsiveness to parent and student needs, and deregulation of monopolistic control (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby, 1998). Advocates support the philosophy that the movement towards charter school development offers more opportunity for student growth and success in the public education system.

Opponents argue that charter schools provide significant opportunity for social discrimination, as well as, pose a threat to the viability of mainstream public schools. They believe that charter schools are not doing much to actually improve the educational gaps found in the public school system, or include innovate new teaching techniques and methods. Opponents of charter schools show that there is undistinguishable improvement in student achievement at charter schools compared to their counterpart traditional public schools based on their research (Ravitch, 2010). According to the their perspectives, charter schools display a lack of accountability to public funds that support them (Fuller & Elmore, 1996) and provide an under representation of English language learners and special education students in their schools (Ravitch, 2010). This has led to questionable

practices in charter schools displaying higher student achievement. Studies have also found that there are twice as many unproductive charter schools as there are good ones (Ravitch, 2010).

Current issues faced by public schools include: shortage of funds, resources, supplies, and facilities; oversized classrooms and understaffed schools, declining test scores and low student achievement levels, and a growing sense that the school district is working to meet the needs of the administration, not the students (Fellmeth & Weichel, 2001; Lingard, Knight, & Porter, 1993). There has been an ongoing movement towards the creation of charter schools over the last two decades based on urgent needs for improvement. Some of those areas of need are driven by (a) the urge to increase structural freedom, (b) the need to increase financial efficiency based on the entrepreneurial approach of the education system, (c) a push to increase instructional effectiveness, (d) flexibility and adaptability, (e) a desire to redistribute power so as to set up the most efficacious balance of power among all stakeholders, (f) the response to include stakeholders in the vision, mission, and decision-making process, and (g) a goal to enrich the education system by increasing variety, competition, and choice in public education (Barlow, 1995; Chamberlain, 1995; Dianda & Corwin, 1994; Herman, 1991; Lawton, 1995; Milne, 1995; Thomas, 1991; White, 1991).

The choices that have led to the need to restructure public education have come from a variety of related areas. Traditional schools do not have much accountability in the decision-making process where school districts operate in a very top-down structure (Johnson & Landman, 2000). School-based management schools enable school personnel (administration, faculty, and staff) to make decisions related to staffing and

school budgeting for supplies, textbooks, resources and technology. Traditional schools are not given this decision making power at the school level (Adelman & Taylor, 2002). In-District Charter Schools are governed by its board and fit into parameters determined by the established firm (McBeath, 2002). While private schools have the most power to structure the governance of the school to their own accord, charter schools have a considerable amount of leeway, as well, and traditional public schools have very little real power for self structuring (Doddall, 2000; Levacic, 1995).

Charter schools are diverse in nature and reflect a versatile culture of values and interests based on the diversity of the students and community it serves (Bosetti, 1998). Charter schools share the vision for greater equity, providing a mainstream public education with a private school mission. Charter schools are driven by the need for greater social equity, greater variety in educational structure, accommodations for more, a more focused vision, and tailored programs specific to the needs of students (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001; Strike & Soltis, 1998).

Charter schools serve students and parents who have been underserved by the mainstream public school system (Cobb & Glass, 1999). Charter schools are able to meet the needs of students who have not been successful in traditional public schools by providing a more focused environment. Charter schools also provide institutional innovation for the use of public funds for education with a greater level of autonomy (Wells, 1998).

The goals of the charter school movement over the past two decades have been to provide (Kolderie, 1998):

1. Improved student achievement, as measured by standardized tests.

2. Improved student learning through a variety of learning opportunities.
3. Improved district-run public schools with individual school structures.
4. Greater parent, teacher, administration and student satisfaction outcomes.
5. More competition in public education through a free-market enterprise.

There are two types of charter schools: dependent and independent. Dependent charter schools are established or remain a legal arm of the school district or county office of education that granted their charter. Independent charter schools function as independent legal entities and are usually governed by or as public benefit (not-for-profit) corporations. Independent charter schools can be governed by a charter management organization.

Charter management organizations have faced the challenge in being able to bring their vision to fruition due to lack of funds, or not being able to pass the rigorous process for charter renewal. In addition, charter schools face the challenge of achieving their charter goals (improved student achievement) in order to keep their charter from being revoked and the school being closed down. Charter management organizations have to consistently answer to the school districts, under which they are chartered to make sure their schools are following all district compliance policies.

The key concepts for charter school goals have grown out of the lack of effective change in the public school system, flexible charter school regulations, the decentralization of power, the opportunity for an inclusive process, and the creation of a community support system (Bulkley & Fisher, 2002). Among the key concepts for



charter schools, is autonomy. “Without autonomy, charter schools cannot serve as experimental laboratories or lighthouses from which other children can learn. And they cannot act as market competitors, threatening public school monopoly and inducing it to change” (Hassel, 1999, p. 78).

Control in charter schools is reallocated in response to the constraints imposed by district bureaucracies, pressures for the improvement of public schools, hardships faced through school reform, and limited school funding (Fuller, 2000). The shift in control is meant to give parents more involvement in the education process, to decentralize power of the school board, and to provide a more cost-effective and cost-efficient public education (Gifford, Ogle, & Solomon, 1998). Charter schools show that change in the structure of public education is possible, effective, and efficient (Fris, 2004).

Self-management and self-regulation are central components to charter school autonomy. Charter schools have the power to control internal operations and external relationships on their own, as well as the decision-making process to lead and create school change (Bulkley & Fisher, 2002).

Charter schools have two facets of accountability:

1. Charter schools are accountable to the central granting authority agency for charter renewal and performance (Vergari, 2000).
2. Charter schools are also accountable to the population they serve – the consumer – to provide opportunities and services that continue to gain buy-in from teachers, parents, administrators, and the community (McKinney, 1998).

Charter school values are centered round themes of equality and respect, innovation and improvement, market-based competition, sovereignty in governance, and openness to change (Cobb & Glass, 1999; Schwartz, 1994). Charter schools have a great mission and vision behind the institutional structure of the organization and continue to build on it (Hurlburt, 1996). Charter schools have the potential to reinvent education through initiatives that promote decentralization at the district level, encourage curricular diversity, include parental vision, and promote competitive education (Jain, 2002).

The development of charter schools has taken on rapid growth over the last twenty years. With more and more traditional school districts turning over administrative control of schools to charter management organizations and independent organizations, school choice is becoming a viable option for students and parents (Glazer, 1999). In Los Angeles, on August 25, 2009, the community voted for Los Angeles Unified School District to offer parents a school choice plan. The school choice plan would enable charter organizations to take over and operate one-third of all LAUSD schools in the upcoming years; as a result, currently, there are 61 charter schools in operation in Los Angeles.

Based on Poland (1996), a charter school is a public school that operates by contract with the Board of Education, either at the district or state level, to improve student achievement. In this contract, an education plan is created, outlining the curriculum, concepts, and teaching methods to be used (Poland, 1996). Charter schools focus on improvement in student achievement and in providing a learning environment conducive for that. The establishment of charter schools offers choice for parents and students, via new schools or adding on to an existing school. Charter schools are not

private schools; they are public schools that provide an alternative option for parents. They may not be accountable to all of the regulations of traditional public schools, but they must comply with all provisional laws for state funding and district authorization for their continued operations.

Just like public schools, charter schools are not permitted to enforce testing criteria for admissions purposes. Charter schools must accept students until admissions numbers are met the same way traditional public schools are required to do so. Since charter schools are driven by the notion of improved student achievement, they are held accountable to a specified three- to five-year contract between themselves and the district or state granting them charter authorization. This explicit accountability waives charter schools from most state and district regulations regarding school operation (Hill, 2003). Charter schools are generally positioned as "educational choice" options, being recognized as having the capacity to overcome and resolve the under comings of many of the more common problems in public schools. While there is strong support for increased growth and funding levels in charter schools among most or many members of the educational and political sectors, as well as the general public, there is also a good population of members that are highly critical (or at least very skeptical) about such schools.

Charter schools have become more essential in the movement towards educational reform in the United States in recent years. Parents feel more empowered to vocalize their interests and have options in choosing a suitable educational provider for their child's needs. Although they are funded by the government, charter schools differ from traditional public schools in that independent charter schools are not controlled by the

same governing board as traditional public schools. Offering an alternative choice to traditional public schools, charter schools are created by individuals and groups, which are committed to the realization of a "truly flexible [and] self-defining" vision of how education should be (Fulford, 1997, p. 1).

As part of the approach in the 1980s and 1990s to create options for public schooling, the reform movement led to the growth of charter schools in public education (Poland, 1996). By the year 1998, the charter school movement in the United States alone, had opened up close to 800 charter schools in more than half of the nation (Hadderman, 1998). The number of charter schools is assumed to have grown more than double over the last decade.

The charter school contract often also includes specifications of evaluation plans and outcome measures, the school's management plan, fiscal responsibilities and provisions for ancillary services. Beyond the regulations on civil rights, school safety, financial disclosure and state requirements, charter schools encompass complete autonomy for operation and practice (Poland, 1996).

One of the key components and challenges to charter school success has been charter school leadership (Toma, 2008). The role of school principal in creating and maintaining an effective school climate and positive academic environment has long been studied by researchers. Findings have shown that strong student achievement is influenced by strong principal leadership (Edmonds, 1979). The importance of the role of the principal in creating an effective school is a complexity of interactions linking environmental and personal relationships in an in-school environment that influence the outcome. Thus, the role of the principal can only be understood through the context of

the school (Hallinger & Bickman, 1996). As schools continue to experience change, the role of the principal must continue to develop.

School climate is among one of the most significant areas of change occurring in educational practice of public schools (Cotton, 1996). School climate, an elusive but encompassing component of education, is gaining new recognition today as being essential to good student achievement and the development of positive student attitudes. Positive school climate incorporates a functional, productive, and cooperative environment among not only students, teachers, and administrators, but also parents and the community (Fiore, 2000).

Views held by students, parents, and teachers about the climate of a school can have an affect on both the processes and outcomes at a particular school. Climate is measured by asking individuals to share their beliefs of the school and its environment. Individuals provide responses to characteristics of school environment according to what they believe is the truth held by a majority of the people (Halderson, Keefe, Kelley, & Berge, 1989). A beneficial school climate does not happen by accident. It takes planning, work, and strong leadership. The result, however, is that it pays tangible dividends. It can produce better learning as well as better feelings all around. Building a positive climate, therefore, should be a high priority for a principal.

Positive school climate is promoted by values that are based on openness to diversity, participation, conflict, mistakes, and reflection (Patterson, 1993). In regard to openness, opportunities for teacher collaboration, leadership, and creativity offer great beneficial experimentation in the development and creation of positive school environment (Bulach, Boothe, & Pickett, 1999).

The focus of all invested parties is on aligned school goals and student outcomes in an effort to develop positive school climate, while at the same time focusing on the importance of personal relationships and high standards of education. The enthusiastic engagement of everyone in achieving school climate alignment is ideal and to a great extent, necessary, in order to achieve academic success for all. A positive school climate is perhaps the single most important goal of any educational leader. The differences from school to school center upon the principal's leadership style to build a supportive, challenging, and positive school climate that is conducive to high academic achievement (Lickona, 1992). School and the schooling experience have a great impact on the students it serves, both present and future. The difference in a positive or negative affect is due to the quality of the climate created through school leadership provided by the role of the principal.

### **Nature of the Problem**

There are numerous charter schools in the greater Los Angeles area servicing a vast student population in an effort to provide a more efficient, effective, and innovative public education. Although, there is an overlapping common thread of ideals and values that drive the charter school movement, there is notable difference in student achievement levels among these schools. Student achievement has been tied to many factors, and for the purpose of this study, it will be limited to the byproduct of school climate. In order to assess the affect of school climate on student performance, as indicated by the annual progress index (API) and annual yearly progress (AYP) scores, as well as the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) pass rates, the role of principal leadership on school climate must be evaluated. While the principals at each of the

charter schools in Los Angeles are instructional leaders that are committed to building a positive school climate, outcomes of leadership practices have not been evaluated. A study is needed to determine the effects of principal practices on school climate.

The purpose of this study is to investigate principal leadership orientation that may positively or negatively affect various elements of the school climate. Secondly, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of school climate on student achievement. Finally, a last purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of principal leadership on student achievement.

Findings will be significant since they will provide teachers and the principals with an evaluation of principal practices with specific regard to school climate outcomes, as determined by school performance data. The study results will be shared with study participants and the principals in an effort to modify their practices and reach an optimal school climate. Findings will also help guide further research.

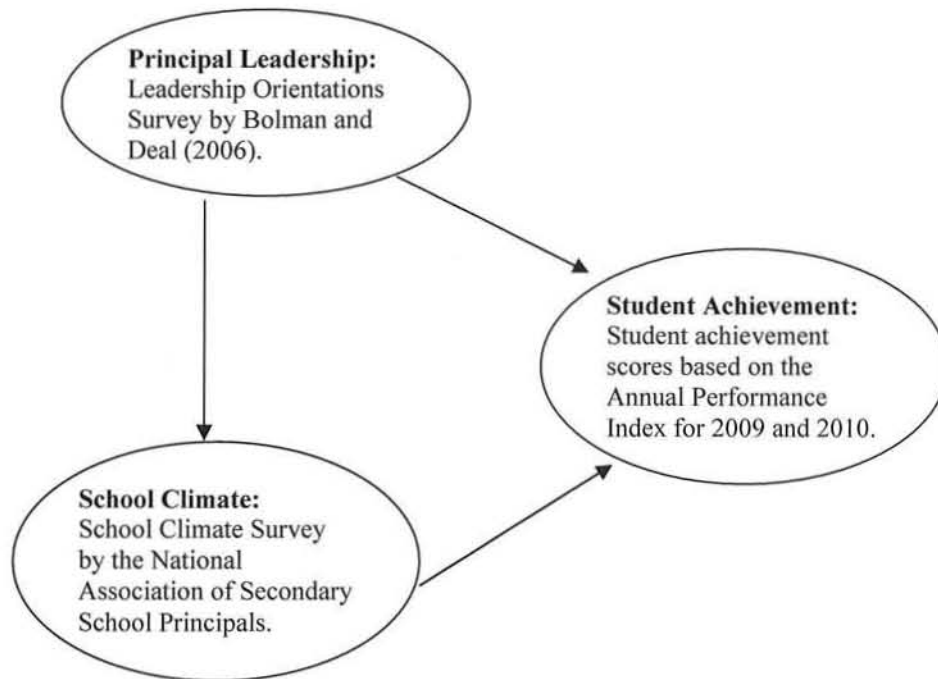
This study is making two assumptions: (a) school climate has a direct impact on student achievement, and (b) principal leadership is the major contributor to school climate.

### **Research Questions**

This research project will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between principal leadership and school climate?
2. What is the relationship between school climate and student achievement?

3. What is the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement?



*Figure 1.* Correlation of research study based on research question design.

### **Definition of Terms**

Terms used throughout this study are defined below:

1. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – A calculated growth rate in academic performance from the previous year for each school.
2. Annual Performance Index (API) – Performance index based on the growth in academic achievement, measured by statewide assessment.
3. Charter Management Organization – A non-profit organization that starts and operates charter schools.



4. Charter School – Independently operated public school receiving authorization from a state-approved granting agency, usually a school district.
5. California Standardized Test (CST) – a standardized test administered annually to students in grades 2-12 to measure academic proficiency in core grade-level subjects.
6. Ceremony – An episodic occasion that takes place when the climate is displayed.
7. Collaboration – The act of working together.
8. Curriculum – The whole body of courses and activities offered by a school.
9. English as a second language (ESL); English language learner (ELL) – a learner of the English language as their second language; a learner for whom the English language is not his/her native language.
10. Goal – The act of establishing a point, end, or place that one is striving to achieve.
11. Governance – The body of board members that control the decision-making process of an organization.
12. School – An institution of learning, serving students in grades K-12th grade.
13. Infrastructure – The basic framework of an organization.
14. Leader – An individual(s) that embody values and provide tangible role models of virtue and vision.
15. Leadership Frames – Reframing of organizations by Bolman and Deal (1991) through four frames of leadership: Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic

16. Mission – A goal or goals used to help realize a vision and connect them to necessary and possible actions to carry out the goal(s).
17. Principal – The instructional leader of the school.
18. Rituals – Physical expressions of the climate's value and beliefs.
19. School Choice – A term used to describe a variety of programs giving families the opportunity to select or determine what school their child will attend.
20. School Climate – The organizational culture within a school that cause it to be a certain way.
21. Stories – An expression by which events carry messages about the values and provide people with direction, courage and hope.
22. Values – Expression in symbols and slogans that provide a shared sense of what an organization stands for.
23. Vision – The goal the organization is working towards.

### **Summary**

This chapter summarizes the purpose of this study and provides the leading research questions this study will investigate. It also provides a list of relevant words and their meanings as they will be used in this research study. The following chapter provides an in-depth look at the research behind the areas of charter school development, principal leadership, school climate, and student achievement.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

This review of literature will provide a conceptual basis for this study. It will also describe the research findings of previous studies that have considered aspects of school leadership, school climate, student achievement, and charter school development. First, a brief introduction will be provided. Second, a synthesis of current, relevant literature will be presented. Last, the presented information will be summarized as it relates to the research purposes and questions of this study.

### **Introduction**

The role of the principal continues to be of vital importance in the educational process as principals use strategies to mold a positive school climate. Schools continue to be challenged to restructure governance, become more open to community influence, show greater accountability, provide clarification on instruction related to content based standards, and introduce and implement new teaching strategies for learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Based on the definition provided by Deal and Peterson (1991), climate is formed by the organizational structures that have been set in place over a course of time, including the values, beliefs, and traditions at the school. School climate focuses on the deeper commonly held beliefs of all constituents, in addition to the basic elements of a substantive learning environment, with a strong emphasis on the core values that are essential in teaching and influencing students (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

Stolp and Smith (1994) go farther to say that the meaning of school climate is often shaped by people's patterns of beliefs and actions that are translated by the norms and rituals in practice by the school community. A study done by Cheng (1993) on effective and ineffective organizational climate discovered that schools with greater

motivated teachers showed stronger school climates. Thacker and McInerney (1992) studied the effect of restructuring the school mission statement on school climate and student achievement. The study focused on developing curriculum aligned to the new goals for student outcome, and creating staff development that implemented more leveraged decision-making. The results significantly showed a decrease of up to 10% in the number of students who did poorly on statewide testing annually.

### **Leadership Frameworks**

Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest that every individual operates out of a category of personal and preferred frames in all behavior actions, from gathering information to making decisions. Each frame contributes to an aspect of organizational mobility and provides a specific span of techniques and processes that can be applied to enhance the efficacy of the organization.

Bolman and Deal (1991) propose four frameworks for leadership: (a) Structural, (b) Human Resource, (c) Political, and (d) Symbolic. These leadership frames can be used in isolation, in any combination, and simultaneously by a leader. Each framework is provided in greater detail in the following descriptions.

**Structural framework.** The "structural" manager works to create and implement circumstance-appropriate and problem-specific processes. Steps include:

1. Clarifying organizational goals;
2. Managing the external environment;
3. Developing a clear structure appropriate to task, and environment;
4. Clarifying lines of authority;
5. Focusing on tasks, facts, and logic, instead of personality and emotions.

Bolman and Deal (1991) state that the structural framework focuses on trying to find an arrangement of roles and relationships that meet both the needs of the organization as well as the differences of individuals.

**Human resource framework.** A manager operating from a human resource framework perceives people to be at the center of any organization, and considers it a top priority to work towards gaining commitment and loyalty of the people. This framework puts the emphasis on support and empowerment of the people. In order to communicate personal warmth and openness, the human resource manager exerts strong listening skills. People feel empowered through participation under this leader, and this leader focuses on valuing people's needs for resources in order to fulfill their job responsibilities. Human resource managers provide a supportive climate, even when confronting people when necessary, and still project personal openness.

Much like servant leadership, the human resource framework places people first, where participation in problem solving and decision making are primary focal points of the model. The ideas for this framework are derived from organizational social psychology. Under this premise, organizations are filled with people who bring in their own skill sets and potential, yet also have their own feelings, needs and biases that need to be met (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

**Political framework.** The leader is not only able to understand the political facts of an organization, but is also able to deal with them. This leader realizes the importance of interest groups and their individual agendas. He or she grasps the idea of conflict and scarce resources. The leader recognizes key players and builds connections with them for their capabilities. Through the use of power alignment, this leader manages conflict

carefully. He or she provides an open forum to negotiate differences and come up with leveled compromises. The leader joins the commonalities and shared interests of different groups and helps them recognize external barriers to fight against together.

The political framework is very important in understanding the reality of the politics within the organization and recognizing how to deal with it (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Primarily developed by political scientists, this framework addresses the issues that arise within an organization where power and resources are scarce and different interest groups are competing for them. As a result, conflict is created and coalitions are established (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

**Symbolic framework.** This leader believes that inspiration and vision are critical for the faith of the people within the organization. People will be loyal to an organization that values people for the work they do and works towards creating a unique identity. The importance of the organizational mission is created by the sense of symbolism, often times communicated through ceremony and ritual. These leaders manage energetically by making themselves highly visible. Organizational values and traditions are used as a base for a shared vision by this type of leader that offers meaning and cohesiveness (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

The symbolic framework is built on the study of people and their interactions from a social and cultural paradigm within the organization. The organization is composed of members that are playing a prescribed role. According to Bolman and Deal (1991) this framework can often times be compared to the practices of a tribe, where the cultural functions are based on “ceremonies, rituals, rules, myths, policies, stories, heroes and managerial authority” (p. 16).

A key factor with these four frames is that they are not equally functional for all situations. Each framework carries its own strengths and a leader must know which framework to adopt that will provide the greatest application and benefit for a given situation. At the same time, a leader must have the capacity to lead from that framework.

Bolman and Deal (1991) believe that the core problem with management is in the interpretation of events, where "organizational life is always full of simultaneous events that can be interpreted in a variety of ways" (p. 266). Success in management comes by not applying a personal favorite framework that displays optimal leadership skills, but by encompassing the ability to lead from any of the frameworks and knowing when to apply which one, and recognizing there are multiple avenues that can be taken. Bolman and Deal (1991) say, "Their frame - not yours - determines how they will act" (p. 270) in reference to choosing a framework.

Effective leadership can be organized according to the four frames of the leadership process:

1. Structural Analyst – leadership is centered round the concept of rules, roles, goals, policies, technology, and environment. This type of leadership is often seen as the social architecture of an organization, where the leader is driving the factory. The basic leadership challenge experienced by a structural analyst is attuning structure to the task, technology, and/or environment (Bolman & Deal, 1991).
2. Human Resource Catalyst – leadership is centered round the concept of needs, skills, and relationships. This type of leadership is often

projected as empowerment by creating a family among the members of the organization. The basic leadership challenge that a human resources catalyst experiences is aligning organizational and human needs (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

3. Political Advocate – leadership is centered round the concept of power, conflict, competition, and organizational politics. This type of leadership is often projected as advocacy, with the leader looking at the best interest of all parts of the forest. The basic leadership challenge experienced by a political advocate is in developing agendas and power bases (Bolman & Deal, 1991).
4. Symbolic Prophet – leadership is centered round the concept of ceremony, culture, ritual, meaning, stories, metaphor and heroes. This type of leadership is often viewed as an inspiration, where life experiences are shared and given value. The basic leadership challenges a symbolic prophet experiences are creating faith, beauty, and meaning (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

Many leaders manage through their own ideologies of leadership which are formed by their experiences and perspective of the world. Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest that common mistakes managers make are when they:

1. Consistently operate from only one frame for any given situation.

Holding so tightly to one leadership frame can hinder the progression that comes from a combination of multiple frames. More often than not, most leaders are operating from multiple leadership frames at the



same time, but are unable to recognize the other sub-frames to the dominant one. Leaders do not realize that leadership frames can overlap at any given time.

2. Are not innovative in coming up with solutions to problems. Leaders are not open to new models of leadership. Innovative leadership involves being solutions oriented by realizing more than one solution may be possible for any given circumstance.
3. Strive for control, rationality and certainty. Leaders fear what is unknown to them and do not want to be vulnerable to failure, so they hold on to rigidity. Leaders do not realize that sometimes it is more useful to relinquish control for greater results in the end.

On the other hand, Bolman and Deal (1991) also imply that effective leaders:

1. Are able to develop necessary skills for creativity and flexibility. Leaders are willing to learn and grow in order to be effective in any circumstance. They recognize that great leadership requires a multitude of skills.
2. Use a well-rounded perspective to lead from multiple frames. Leaders look at a situation from all aspects to offer the best outcome. They are aware that leadership must be holistic and take every viewpoint into consideration.
3. Recognize which frames they typically operate from and see their limitations. Leaders are able to realize their favored frame of operation and understand the advantages and disadvantages of that

frame. They realize that all leadership frames have their own limitations and they work to overcome them.

4. Appreciate the value in having the ability to rationalize through multiple frames and continue to learn to do so. Leaders know that different types of leadership capabilities are required for different situations. They are able to develop leadership skills from different frames.
5. Value the importance of all four frames and build teams to represent them. Leaders are focused on the growth of the organization and recognize the value in teamwork. They apply all four frames to balance organizations through team leadership.

### **School Leadership**

Even a cursory review of the literature on school leadership identifies that a consensus is lacking in the meaning of the term leadership. Feldman (1997) noted that leadership has been defined by a new meaning by every researcher of the topic. In a thorough investigation of the term leadership, Yukl (1982) found that despite the differences in all of the definitions, there are some commonalities including (a) the involvement of more than one person; consisting of a group of two or more, and (b) the process of influence is practiced by one over the other members of the group. In its most basic function, leadership involves the persuasion of one person (the leader) over the others (the followers) in an effort to achieve a desired outcome.

In the educational setting, the motivating influence a leader (principal) exerts on followers (staff and faculty) can be quite complex. Greenfield (1995) has addressed this

issue noting that if principals are to effectively administrate, they must be able to function well in a variety of roles. These roles are managerial, instructional, political, social, and moral.

In addition, Kanpol and Weisz (1990) have pointed out that a principal cannot be fully effective unless he or she understands his or her relationship to school curriculum. As the authors put it: “Principals must understand the enacted curriculum process, not just the official curriculum, and work with teachers to negotiate curriculum meaning” (p. 98).

Principals must have strong skills in the areas of problem-solving, decision-making, goal setting and people management. They must also have great knowledge of interpersonal communication, conflict management, motivation, and mentoring (Kanpol & Weisz, 1990).

Cox (1999) has reported that one of the most important characteristics of effective school leadership is the ability to effect school change in the direction of improvement. The principal needs to know about factors that obstruct and facilitate change as well as the fact that principals are but one of a group of players that produce effective change.

Educational standards in public schools today are challenging and change is needed, but instructional change is a problem for teachers, students, and administrators since it is demanding, unfamiliar, and difficult (Elmore, 1997; Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). Elmore reported that leaders as well as teachers and students and parents are being forced to accept external standards about acceptable content and performance, which demands that these standards be taught, practiced, and governed. The new focus is on the individual school rather than the school district as a whole; individual schools

must meet academic standards. In the past, districts were held accountable for school compliance, and aid was withheld if schools did not meet standards. Today, the increased focus on individual schools includes more significant consequences, such as loss of bonuses or threat of school closure. All leaders (administrators, principals, and teachers) must develop new roles that focus on continuous instructional improvement in the classroom and school, and they must make judgments about whether these standards are being enforced.

According to Lezotte (1990), the role of the leader in a school or school district is to manage changes and dissatisfaction. Lezotte stated that dissatisfaction in the minds of people must actually be created with the understanding that educators and students can do better. Next, steps to improve the situation must be addressed. The leader must build a vision and let followers know what is needed in the school. To achieve this goal, leaders must study current research and understand best practices as well as principles involved in human learning. All aspects of the goal must be understood by the leader and communicated to the students, parents, and teachers. Lezotte (1990) also noted the importance of getting rid of old methods that do not serve the goals of the school.

Lezotte (1990) emphasizes seven correlates of an effective school that must be communicated and maintained by the leader:

1. a safe and orderly environment
2. clear expectations for success
3. a clear and focused mission
4. strong instructional leadership
5. opportunities to learn (time on-task)

6. frequent student progress monitoring

7. positive home-school relations

The leader must ensure that schools enhance learning and student monitoring must continually assess this goal. This monitoring must include multiple methods and not rely on student assessment alone. Lezotte (1990) stated that each of these correlates is supported individually by research; there is also research supporting the use of this set of characteristics.

To determine effective leadership roles, Lezotte (1990) studied schools with higher student achievement to determine leadership correlates, but this did not yield the information he sought. Lezotte (1990) found that leadership was only one of the components necessary for needs for high student achievement, as students are capable of learning in a variety of situations. Instead, leadership was viewed in relationship to creating changes in schools to increase student achievement. A look at disadvantaged students with high and low achievement pointed to leadership correlates that led to these outcomes. Strong instructional leadership was found in schools with students that performed at higher levels (study details were not provided). Besides this factor, Lezotte (1990) found no specific personality profile that was associated with effective leadership. However, effective leaders did have the ability to put existing pieces together in an instructional program that was effective for the students served. Lezotte also noted that at a district level, it is important that leaders refuse to accept excuses for a poor job. Instead there must be an attitude that if all work together and do their best, it can be done and it will work. In addition, the leader must be clear about the mission and be able to communicate mission goals.

Lashway (2001) reported that schools must deal with external accountability systems resulting in new roles for administrators. The school leader must demonstrate a job well done, as well as hard work and doing a good job. Thus, school leadership must adhere to elements of accountability systems that ultimately provide improved student learning (Lashway, 2001). These elements include the establishment of rigorous content standards, testing of student progress, professional development to deal with standards and testing, public reporting of results, and rewards for results.

Lashway (2001) stated that leaders play a crucial role in the new school system. Strong principals are needed to develop and nurture a vision, promote a safe and orderly school, sustain continuous improvement, utilize data driven plans to improve student performance, use standards-based assessments, monitor plans, manage resources, and communicate with all involved. School district leaders must support principals, and provide a framework for policy and planning and adequate resources. Principals in low-achievement schools must be trained to work with teachers to improve conditions. Principals must also promote shared decision making with teachers to shape new roles (Lashway, 1997, 2001).

The school leader faces frustration since roles shift every few decades and must now include both transformational and facilitative strategies (Lashway, 1998). Lashway (1998) opened that principals must be flexible and decide which strategy to use, balancing short-term and long-term needs while serving institutional values. Strategic principal leadership works to build stronger relationships with teachers in order to execute the vision and meet goals. Thus, in order to overcome the constraints of limited resources, the effective principal creates communication networks by building teams that

provide feedback, manage conflict, and practice collaborative policies. This leads to a democratic environment and a positive school climate required for effective school transformation (Lashway, 1998).

Today's principal must also choose the appropriate strategy within an accountability system (Lashway, 2002). The need to accommodate external expectations is a focus for the principal that can be used to guide leadership choices. Leaders who are mindful of accountability goals choose methods that help teachers deal with changes. According to Lashway (2004), all low-performing schools must be helped to meet the No Child Left Behind mandates. Leaders in failed schools must deal with low-performing students which often include minority populations. Reasons for low performance include demographics, insufficient resources, and ineffective school practices (Lashway, 2004).

Poor leadership with superficial instructional strategies and an uncoordinated curriculum leads to ineffective practices and low performing students (Lashway, 2004). Alternatively, a strong school leader can transform a low performing school with a focus on intentional instruction and assessment data that guides instruction (Lashway, 2004). Principal support of teachers is equally important. Based on a research study done in Texas, Lashway (2004) found that certain practices were implemented in schools servicing students in socio-economically disadvantaged neighborhoods that resulted in high performing student outcomes. These schools were transformed through active principal leadership and engagement, prioritized instructional planning, data-driven professional development, continuous assessment and measurement, research-based instructional goals for student needs, and proper remedial intervention for the low-performing students (Lashway, 2004).

Low student achievement and poor student attitudes and behaviors are predicted by factors such as the school environment and parent involvement, which are also influenced by school leadership (Griffith, 1998, 2000). Griffith (1998, 2000) stated that classroom and school climate is associated with school effectiveness. For a school to have a positive climate and high levels of student achievement, this climate must include high expectations of the students among all participants (teachers, students, and parents), orderly class and school environments that include high morale, positive social relations among all, and active participation of all. The school principal must provide leadership in these areas.

Today's school leader faces the challenge of meeting high standards within an accountability system (Elmore, 1997; Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). These standards, while frustrating, can also be challenging and help guide leadership practices (Lashway, 2002). According to Lezotte (1990) the school leader must manage goals within the school context and maintain that if all work together, the job can be done. Effective leadership leads school transformation with positive school climates, increased parent involvement, effective instruction, and increased student achievement (Griffith, 2001; Lashway, 2004).

### **School Climate**

Climate, in general, is defined by Kowalski and Reitzug (1993) as an organizational culture that is comprehensive of the physical environment, people and social relationships, group dynamics and individual behaviors. Thus, the climate of a school is not static but subject to change in association with changes in its consistent components.



A comprehensive analysis of the components of school climate has been conducted by Howard, Howell and Brainard (1987). According to the authors, an effective school climate promotes the productivity and satisfaction of both students and school personnel. Moreover, it meets students, faculty and administrators basic needs. These needs include the following areas: physiological, safety, acceptance, achievement, friendship, and recognition.

As to the factors or components which Howard et al. (1987) list as the pivotal elements of school climate, these can be defined as follows:

1. Continuous Academic and Social Growth. Effective school climates support student growth both academically and socially in a variety of ways including positive teacher expectations and faculty commitment to student learning. In other words, the staff is optimistic about student achievement and helps students to believe that hard work will bring reward.
2. Respect. A school with a positive climate enables students to feel that they are of worth and that their views and ideas are respected by teachers and administrators. The learning environment generally is one of mutual esteem, and appreciation on the part of all.
3. Trust. A positive school climate is one in which students have confidence that teachers and administrators have integrity, and, conversely, teachers and administrators trust their students.
4. High Morale. Schools with positive climates are schools in which everyone feels good about him- or herself. There is a willingness to

perform assigned tasks in a self-disciplined manner. Defeatist attitudes do not exist.

5. Cohesiveness. Schools with positive climates are cohesive and the quality of the school serves as an attraction to all. There is a certain esprit de corps and a sense of belonging. It is a school with low teacher turnover and high student retention.
6. Opportunities for Input. A school with a positive climate helps people to feel that they can contribute ideas to school programs.
7. School Renewal. If a school has a positive climate it is continually experiencing growth. There is both development and change, and a constant improvement of the environment.
8. Caring. Schools with positive environments have faculty and administrators who care about their students. There is almost a family environment that is existent.

A positive school climate is present when all students, parents, staff, and faculty feel comfortable, wanted, valued, and accepted. This type of environment affects everyone associated with the school. School climate is commonly referred to as a culture or integrated belief-system that motivates the daily functions and operations of a school community (Bulach & Malone, 1994).

Because of the process of socialization occurring within a school, schools have their own climate in and of themselves. They offer a climate that is conducive to the cultivation of knowledge and inspiration for intellectual development, as well as a forum for the practicum of social skills. Relationships are created and behaviors are

encouraged to promote a community of education and learning. This process is inclusive of the student, academia, staff, community, and extra curricular events. Given the required interaction with others, this is a process that can forge strong commitments and opportunities for collaboration in many ways. A resulting connection among the individuals involved in the process can take place, leading to a greater sense of team unification and organizational mission (Fullan, 1993).

A school's climate builds on the qualities and characteristics of an environment that is driven by the development of knowledge and intellectually stimulated growth. Based on this, school climate is developed through the cultivation of discipline, dedication, commitment, and leadership. Through the process of socialization, these school norms become the rudimentary foundation of school climate that is essential in the formation of a viable school community (Moore, 1997).

Currently, the exploration of school climate is more performed at the level of a specific school (cultural analysis of a specific school), rather than at the level of a certain system of schools. The 1990s shifted the attention from the school as a whole towards individual sub-cultures; teachers, pupils, teaching, and decision-making, or toward partial elements or processes, which are perceived as relevant for, manifested through, or influenced by the climate of the school (Maslowski, 1998). This is explained as due to varied developments: theoretic progress, increased focus on individual functioning within a social context, or new educational policies in many countries, underlining such educational aspects as leadership, curriculum, learning and teaching processes, improvement, and academic outputs (Hargreaves, 1994). Many consider these themes as important dimensions of school climate (Prosser, 1999).

The Geneva Centre for Autism (1998) presented findings on the aspects of a positive school climate. The school climate must have a positive physical, social, emotional, and learning environment. The physical environment includes noise, light, air quality, and all factors that affect the student in a physical way, for example fluorescent lighting, alarms, telephones, public address systems, and other distracting factors that can negatively impact student learning. Factors that affect the social and emotional environment include all variables that affect interactions with others such as a caring atmosphere that is safe and provides clear expectations, and respect for all. The learning climate must include teacher attitudes and methods, and instructional techniques that are conducive to learning within a caring student-teacher relationship.

Berg (2000) presented conclusions related to leadership in a positive school climate. Berg stated that when studying the relationship of principal leadership to school climate the following dimensions must be considered: individualism and its relationship to cooperation, present situation versus long-term planning, and rigidity versus flexibility. A charter school's culture is characterized by individualism, present-day orientation, and structure.

Based on the research findings of Berg (2000), if the principal's policy is aimed at increasing cooperation, long-term planning, and flexibility within the school, but changes are pursued with an authoritarian manner, the school climate may be less than optimal. When the principal acts as a rigid policy-maker, teachers may need to determine whether they are for or against the principal. This may lead to rewarding only those for the principal. This strategy would create new problems such as polarization between the staff and result in tension. Cooperation in this instance would include only certain

teachers cooperating and pursuing project activities among themselves, resulting in splitting and disorganization. Planning would also become divided and long-term planning would be thwarted by this division.

Griffith (1998) found that the parental views of a school's social climate were related to positive perceptions of school climate and parent involvement. Parents viewed the school as more positive when they felt empowered and they felt that their student was recognized; these factors were related to increased parental involvement. This study pointed out the importance of social climate when considering overall school climate. A positive social climate must include parent empowerment and student recognition.

Adequate principal leadership in schools is linked to improved parent involvement and school climate (Griffith, 2001). Griffith (2000, 2001) stated that school climate and parent involvement are important factors in student success and increased academic achievement. This is particularly true in environments where children and their parents are typically socio-economically disadvantaged, the children are non-English speaking, and students demonstrate low achievement levels. Factors associated with the low student achievement levels include parent and student perceptions of the school and their discomfort related to the school climate. Based on Griffith (2001), these factors directly relate to the role of the school leader; the principal is in a direct position to affect school performance for transformation.

Griffith (2000, 2001) arrived at these conclusions from survey responses of elementary school students ( $n = 25,557$ ) and their parents ( $n = 23,107$ ) that determined school climate and its effects in 122 schools (school details were lacking). Parents and students completed written surveys that were developed with questions from the

Effective Schools Student Survey and the Effective Schools Project Student Survey. Both, parent and student participants completed the same survey items. Findings revealed that students and parents had similar ratings of positive or negative school climate, however schools with more ethnically and racially diverse student populations and more newcomers showed less student and parent agreement about ratings of the positive or negative school environment. Student/parent positive evaluations of the school climate were related to high levels of student outcomes of academic performance and parent outcomes of involvement and satisfaction. Parent satisfaction was related to perceptions of a safe and empowering school climate for parental involvement and student success.

Much like any organization, every school also has a climate; some are constructive and hospitable while others are toxic and destructive. Based on the type of climate in place, it can either work for or against school improvement and change. Some schools are comprised of a majority of educators who work as drivers of change, while other schools are populated by gifted and talented teams that are strong in organized communication. One of the most difficult and challenging responsibilities of any school leader is to create change in a prevailing school climate. The mental model of the school is embodied by the school's climate and changing that conceptually engrained idea of "it's the way we do things around here" can be a cumbersome task (Barth, 2002).

A school's climate is among the greatest influences on the life and learning of the school. It dictates more influence on the school's practices and outcomes than does any body of legal power or jurisdiction to lead, create, or authorize change, including the mandates established by the state and federal departments of education or the governing

school board. School climate cannot be changed alone. But leadership practices can be provided that set an example and offer observers to join in reinventing the architect by taking the best of the old and integrating it with the best of the new. The effect of this leadership must be to create a movement, plan, and implementation of the change process of school climate. In order to lead any change movement, the leader must first become aware of the current climate in the organization and recognize the current way things are being done at the school. The observational protocol should include what is being seen, heard, and experienced at the school, as well as, what is not being seen and heard. Climate should be analyzed based on clues that reveal behaviors and outcomes, patterns and systems in place, and hierarchical structures of status and decision-making power, buy-in and response, and level of parental involvement and interaction in the school (Barth, 2002).

Climate, in any organization, is resistant to change. Schools are no different. Because of this resistance, change in school climate, whether internally or externally driven is received with apprehension. Unless, there is complete buy-in from all faculty and staff members, any new element of change will have to be operated around the existing school climate. In this manner, changes will remain superficial and will not be able to seep beyond the surface to the core to make any real kind of difference (Barth, 2002).

Research on school climate has revealed many cultural typologies (Deal & Peterson, 1999). A typology is simply a label given to a set of characteristics. Some school climates have been identified as more supportive of student achievement than others. One can imagine by the labels given to some typologies whether they are desired

context for schools, such as toxic, fragmented, contrived, balkanized, stuck, organic, collaborative, moving and wandering (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

School leaders who are insensitive to the climate of the school are unlikely to have the knowledge and skills to intervene and may also be negatively disposed towards intervention. A preliminary step to shaping school climate is for leaders, whether principals or leadership teams, to become familiar with the concept of school climate. Many researchers have attempted to define climate (Stronge & Jones, 1991).

Monteith (1989) reported that one of the most negative influences on school climate is a top-down bureaucratic decision-making structure. Such a structure is said to debilitate school climate by discouraging participation, flexibility and need satisfaction. According to the authors, a more participative management style will work to increase the degree of positiveness of a school climate.

In a study of school climate in nine schools of diverse sizes in British Columbia, Coleman (1984) found that several behaviors of both principals and teachers operated to create a positive climate. Specifically, maximally positive climates were found in schools where principals challenged and motivated their teachers and students, focused on academic achievement, utilized social contracts to accomplish goals, and made students and teachers feel welcome. Also important to school climate were collegiality among teachers and administrators and having teachers who worked to solve instructional problems.

### **Student Achievement**

In an early study on the effects of school climate on learning achievement, Dunn (1976) examined a principal's effort to develop a school climate of teaching and learning



to improve academic achievement for students at Intermediate School 158 in the Bronx borough of New York. The program encouraged the staff to create a diversity of learning environment related to the learning styles of pre-adolescent inner-city youth. Individual teaching styles were also considered. Teachers were given responsibility for selecting instructional methods. According to Dunn (1976), the project resulted in a variety of positive learning experiences for students, as well as increased levels of academic achievement.

Watkins (2000) analyzed a group of studies regarding school leadership and approaches to learning to determine cross-cultural perspectives. The author proposed that achievement would be associated with approaches focused on higher student achievement and greater self esteem in students, regardless of student socio-economic backgrounds and differences. Data were collected from a literature database, looking at more than 20 studies and a total of 8000 subjects from 8 Western and 8 non-Western countries. Findings showed that at school and university levels, higher student self esteem and greater student achievement were related to higher quality learning strategies. These strategies included classrooms in which students were involved, teachers were supportive, workloads were fair, and assessments reflected learning beyond grades. While Chinese educators were found to view creativity and understanding as a slow process that required repetition and much effort, and Western educators focused on memorization and getting students on task with behavioral problems resolved. The higher quality learning approaches benefited students across cultural domains.

Lezotte (1990) found that while schools are improving, they are not keeping up with current needs of society. Students must communicate orally and in writing, work

with a diverse population, and use computers for basic processes if they are going to graduate from school, work, and have access to the middle class income. Most students are not achieving these goals; only 10% of school students meet these basic standards. Therefore, change is required for schools and students in order to do better (Lezotte, 1990).

According to Lashway (2004) low-performing schools include students who do not meet academic standards; many of these schools tend to be urban with minority student populations whose test scores fall below white student scores. Phillips and Rosenberger (1983) examined a school improvement project designed to elevate the school climate of an inner city school. The project included student involvement in planning and peer counseling, teacher modeling of optimistic attitudes, increased teacher expectations of students, parent participation, rewards for student achievement, and cooperation in a variety of activities from community businesses. Evaluative data collected on the project showed that the project not only improved the school climate but also led to "dramatic" gains in student attendance, achievement, and behavior.

Standards provide criteria for quality related to professional development, curriculum development, and curriculum frameworks; these help districts, schools, and teachers develop daily curricula (Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). According to Elmore (1997), content based frameworks and student performance standards are being adopted, developed, and implemented by states and localities to meet national education goals. However, standards are easier to make than they are to meet, and teachers are facing increased needs to meet accountability pressures. Standards do not take into account the time needed by teachers to build background knowledge in addition to the time students

need to learn the content of the current standards. While leaders create manageable goals and instructional materials for teachers and extract time and money from the resources available to reach these goals, they must deal with incentive issues, rewarding teachers and students for their efforts during the process (Elmore, 1997; Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001). According to Elmore, for every school pressure related to accountability for student performance, equal investment should be applied towards the education and professional development of learning how to meet these new performance expectations for all (Elmore, 1997; Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001).

Based on a study of a Mid-Atlantic school district conducted on climate, it can be noted that climate is related to student achievement at some level, as several of the examined studies evidenced an association between the two variables. However, it appears that the relationship does not hold for all studies and may differ as a function of such factors as type of school, characteristics of students, and achievement area being measured.

There have been studies showing that positive school climates lead to improvements in measures of learning performance (e.g. Comer, 1985, 1986; Cordero, 1996; Dunn, 1976; Johnson, 1996). However, the great bulk of the studies on school climate and academic performance/achievement did not examine school students and many did not use samples of inner-city youth while investigating school climate.

Based on the foregoing findings, it can be concluded that the research on school climate and achievement conducted at inner city schools shows a stronger relationship between achievement and school climate than the general studies (more positive and less mixed findings). However, the school climate/academic performance or achievement

relationship was not found in every study. Schools with low student achievement rates, such as are found in urban areas with minority populations, require improvement and leadership assistance in this transformation (Lashway, 2004; Sellers, 2002).

### **Charter Schools**

Charter schools have become more common since the 1980s and 1990s as a part of the educational reform movement for options in public schooling (Poland, 1996). More than 800 charter schools have originated in 29 states because of this movement (Hadderman, 1998); the number of charter schools continues to grow annually.

According to Poland (1996) charter schools are defined as “public schools which operate through a contract with a sponsoring agency... this contract states the education plan, the teaching methods, and curricular concepts to be employed” (p. 1). In addition, Poland (1996) reports that the contract often also includes specifications of evaluation plans and outcome measures. The school's plan for management, fiscal accountability, and services are often provided as part of the charter's business plan for school differentiation and student success. Poland further points out that autonomy is granted to charter schools from all district rules and regulations. The only exception is that of state requirements regarding financial disclosure, civil rights and school safety.

Charter schools are part of either a sponsoring district or an independent entity (most often under a charter management organization) operating as its own local education agency. The autonomy of a charter school is based on its legal status. Charter schools that are a part of the local school district, have to comply with the same regulations as other traditional public schools in the same district. Charter schools that hold independent status and operate either as an independent school or through a charter

management organization, are likely to have more autonomy in school regulation than their traditional public school counterparts.

Schwartz (1994) has examined some of the equity and diversity issues associated with charter schools. Schwartz notes that in accordance with the mandate of the federal government, all schools receiving federal funds must adhere to civil rights statutes for students, including an equal opportunity to attend the charter school. Thus, charter schools cannot discriminate against any group of students, or otherwise it would be a violation of the federal mandate. Through the examination of a few different studies, Schwartz (1994) found that the research shows a substantial amount of variability in respect to equity in charter school enrollment.

For example, Schwartz (1994) reports that in a national survey of about 100 charter schools (about one-third of all charter schools in operation at the time of the study), it was found that minorities, on average, are equally represented in charter schools. On the other hand, it was found that minority representation can greatly differ from school to school given the school neighborhood and the mission of the charter organization.

While the foregoing data seems fairly equitable, not all large studies have shown such data. Through another study, Schwartz (1994) found that the majority of the student body population of charter schools was comprised primarily of minority group members at 63%.

According to her analysis of the review of data, Schwartz (1994) concludes that it is too soon for any conclusion to be made about charter school fulfillment of federal requirements for equity and diversity. However, Schwartz (1994) did recognize a trend

in charter school attraction of minority students, especially in urban areas. The concern for these charter schools is whether they may or may not be attracting the most vulnerable minority and disadvantaged students.

Nathan (1999) further discussed several key principles said to be associated with charter school principals, such as their responsibility for creating a school climate that promotes an increase in student achievement. The four schools which Nathan (1999) examined were:

1. O'Farrell Community, a middle school servicing roughly 1,400 inner-city students in San Diego. Organized into educational families, students pursue an enriched curriculum, including problem-solving skills, community service, thorough knowledge of the research process, and presentation of the school's vision. Nathan (1999) notes that the core practices hold much promise for the development of a positive school climate.
2. New Country School, a year-round 6-12 grade school, provides service to students from rural Minnesota. The school does not use traditional classrooms. Nor does it have traditional classes. The key focus for teaching is technology-centered, and learning is project-based, both independent and in small groups. Nathan (1999) believes that this school will promote academic competencies among its student population to meet the demands of the digital information age.
3. City Academy provides an alternative education for students between the ages 15-21 in St. Paul, Minnesota. This charter school has a student population of 60 students from racially diverse backgrounds, who dropped out of school or

did not earn their school diploma. Nathan (1999) views the small school size as an asset for the opportunity it provides to build close relationships among students and teachers.

4. The Academy Charter School in Castle Rock, Colorado, offers educational services to 315 disabled and gifted students in grades K-8. Nathan (1999) found that the school combined innovative teaching with a conservative curriculum. An improvement in students' standardized test scores has been recorded at this school.

Thus, in general, in the schools examined by Nathan (1999), equity in terms of having a diverse student body tended to be present; the schools also appeared to be working toward increasing the academic achievement levels of its student bodies.

In contrast, not all qualitative studies indicate that the student bodies of charter schools are this diverse. McKinney (1998) conducted a descriptive study of charter schools in Arizona and found that charter schools are not meeting the needs of proper service of students with disabilities. His observations indicated that only 4% of the student population in Arizona charter schools were students requiring and receiving special education services at the time of the study, a figure well below the national average of 10 to 12%. Charter school principals cited the higher cost of educating these students as the main reason for the figures being so low (McKinney, 1998).

Fuller (2000) found that an increasing enthusiasm in public school choice has far outpaced careful and methodical scientific study of these effects. In an effort to obtain more scientific information, Fuller examined a large sample of families, investigating which families exercise choice, whether innovative schools and schooling can come from



pro-choice options, and whether choice improves student performance and strengthens parents' commitment to their child's education.

Charter school founders are identified as social entrepreneurs since they are catalysts for social change that create a new enterprise for the betterment of children's lives. They provide new opportunities to foster creative activity and independent action, serving as change-agents who apply innovative and creative thinking to fulfill unmet needs within our society. Based on this assumption, for the purposes of this study, entrepreneurship is defined utilizing the key elements offered by Timmons (1994).

Timmons' (1994) synthesized entrepreneurship as the following:

The ability to create and build a vision from practically nothing. Fundamentally, it is a human, creative act. It is the application of energy to initiating and building an enterprise or organization, rather than just watching or analyzing. This vision requires a willingness to take calculated risks--both personal and financial--and then do everything possible to reduce the chances of failure. Entrepreneurship also includes the ability to build an entrepreneurial or venture team to complement your own skills and talents. It is the knack for sensing an opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction and confusion. It is possessing the know-how to find, marshal, and control resources often owned by others. (p. 57)

Entrepreneurship has a role in the founding of new charter schools. The current evolution of school reform is stimulating the adoption of more entrepreneurial practices in the operations of public schools (Walstad, 1986). Hill (2003) argued that a better understanding and acceptance of entrepreneurship could make public education more



adaptable, efficient, and relevant to the needs of modern society. The current push for charters schools, vouchers, and other forms of privatization are evidence of the fact that the public is willing to entertain the notion of entrepreneurship in the public sector.

According to Walstad (1986), the key to making a successful transition to this way of thinking and operating is by integrating what is known about entrepreneurship with the unique context of the public sector.

When bridging the concept of entrepreneurship from private sector enterprise to the public education sector, the unique obstacles to education entrepreneurship must be highlighted and considered. According to Levine (2003), education is "tough business" due to the fact that it is regulated by the government, monitored through public funding, and scrutinized by the demands of varying sectors. Levine argued that unlike private enterprises that enjoy a more stable business context, schools must "deal with multiple governments who often have conflicting priorities and constantly shifting objectives" (Levine, 2003, p. 88). According to Levine, because of environmental uncertainty, those who place themselves in the position of an education entrepreneur must possess the personal characteristics and skills that enable them to operate effectively in a highly regulated, yet politically uncertain environment.

Although there are multiple definitions for entrepreneurship, there is some agreement that it consists of certain entrepreneurial qualities that are often personal in nature (Gibb & Skiba, 2008). Gibb and Skiba (2008) defined entrepreneurial core qualities as "those skills and competencies that constitute the basic necessary and sufficient conditions for the pursuit of effective entrepreneurial behavior, individually, collectively and in society" (Gibb & Skiba, 2008, pp. 17-18).

Within the field of entrepreneurship, there are a number of characteristics and personality traits that are commonly associated with entrepreneurs. These personal characteristics include: (a) achievement motivation, the desire to be successful (Hull & Seeley, 2010; Kourilsky, 1987); (b) need for autonomy, an independence of others in decision-making (Caird, 1992); (c) creativity, developing innovative methods for improvement and change (Torrance, 1997); (d) initiative, the motivation to begin work independently (Kourilsky, 1987); (e) goal-setting, defining objectives and reaching them creatively; (f) self-confidence, the realistic estimate of one's own abilities (Lawler, 2000); (g) internal locus of control, the belief that results are dependent upon one's own behavior (Caird, 1992; Coppola, Hiltz, & Rotter, 2004); (h) persistence (Kourilsky, 1987); and (i) opportunity recognition (Hull, 1981).

In addition to the personal characteristics of entrepreneurs, Kourilsky (1987) outlined the skills and competencies that are required of entrepreneurial leaders. The seven dimensions of entrepreneurial leadership outlined in her work include: (a) visionary, the ability to inspire by sharing the vision while setting much of the venture's tone through personal example; (b) opportunity and innovation focused, both recognizing and anticipating opportunities; (c) customer and deliverable-focused, reinforcing a culture that views the customer's relationship with the organization as a trust which must be preserved; (d) motivation oriented, ensuring that associates share in the success of the organization through tangible recognition and rewards; (e) content driven, challenging the team to maintain a culture that embraces substance, innovation and quality rather than form and positioning; and (f) risk oriented, demonstrating an openness to take action in the face of uncertainty.

The entrepreneurship research presented thus far has primarily focused on the traits and characteristics of the individual entrepreneur. However, it is widely recognized in entrepreneurship theory that the traits approach is limited in its ability to predict venture outcomes (Gartner & Lipsky, 1998; Lane et al., 2004; Low, 2005). To address this limitation, this study utilizes a process approach that combines the trait approach with the examination of many variables that interact with the individual, such as political factors, the organization itself, the presence of other partners and team members, and the focus on the actual process that is undertaken to create a venture. The process approach is focused more specifically on the series of actions undertaken that result in the creation of a new organization (Gartner & Lipsky, 1998). Davidson (2009) advise that it is unwise to attempt to explain venture outcomes solely based on the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur. The external context of the entrepreneurial venture must also be considered in a full evaluation of venture outcomes.

This approach does not overlook the importance of the entrepreneurial individual(s) as a key element, for it is this individual(s) who recognized the opportunity in the first place and had the courage and self-esteem to act where others may have hesitated (Kourilsky, 1987; Walstad, 1986). However, the process approach also highlights the new venture as an organizational entity. It emphasizes that the venture evolves slowly over time, must seek out resources, and must compete in the market. Most importantly, process centered entrepreneurship theory stresses the fact that a venture's outcome is greatly affected by the environment in which it is created.

Combining the individual characteristics approach with an organizational development perspective provides a useful model for the study of charter school

development. The entrepreneurial qualities of the individual charter school founder as well as the organizational context (both internal and external) in which the charter school is founded (the development team and the multiple constituencies who shape the political environment), are vital elements in determining the success of the charter school venture.

According to Sarason (1996, 1999), creating and sustaining new settings that are consistent with their stated mission and purpose is a challenge that is faced in every arena in life. The reasons why so many new settings fall short of the mark, end up becoming total failures, or are aborted before they are functionally in existence, can be predicted by documenting activities that take place during the "before the beginning" phase of planning and development. Understanding the pre-history of a new setting (role of founders and stakeholders, resource limitations, interpersonal conflicts, bureaucratic constraints, development of the product or service, etc.) can allow one to make a reasonable assessment of its probable outcomes. Time is the single most important factor that causes founders to ignore the predictable challenges they will face in their efforts to create a new setting. This is especially true when a date has been set (or is required) for the setting to open.

According to Sarason (1999), "charter schools work toward creating new settings, [which is] a complex process that begins long before the school opens its doors" (p. 64). According to Sarason (1999), many founders and leaders fail in their efforts to create successful charter schools because they consistently underestimate the complexity of the challenges they will encounter. Among these predictable challenges are inexperienced leadership, inadequate resources, lack of external networks and relationships, unclear goals for teaching and learning, and ineffective governance policies that fail to establish a

unity of purpose among faculty and parents (Sarason, 1999).

Sarason (1999) argued that issues of leadership and governance are crucial in predicting the success of a charter school start-up effort. Sarason (1999) found that leaders of charter schools tend to be self-selected, and that in many cases these self-selected leaders lack the qualities and capabilities that are required to develop and sustain the school. This is considered a definite red flag for predicting failure. This view is consistent with the theoretical framework outlining the traits and characteristics demonstrated by successful entrepreneurs. Sarason (1999) pointed out that a governance system must be in place that allows others to have input in the development of the new charter school. They must be called upon to anticipate problems, conflicts and opposition, and, given opportunities for participation in the decision-making processes. A governance structure must establish a unity of purpose concerning the curriculum and the educational goals for the school among all participants involved. Sarason (1999) argued that chances for success and failure could be predicted by observing these elements during a charter school's planning process, before the charter has been issued and approved.

Hill (2003) found that "entrepreneurs who recognize the potential for improvement in public education, but who also know that the work is hard and demanding, can make a difference, especially in those places where public education now performs most badly" (p. 77). Although charter school founders are not commonly thought of as entrepreneurs, they are undoubtedly undertaking the complex, multidimensional creation of a new venture. Using this conceptual framework to examine the process of a charter school start-up provided authorizers and founders with a

comprehensive view of the challenges they can expect and the skills they need to succeed in creating a successful charter school.

### **Study Population**

The population for this study consisted of four schools, all of which were classified as independent charter entities. Three of the schools operated through a charter management organization. One school operated through an independent organization.

#### **Schools under a charter management organization.**

*LA alliance for college-ready public schools.* One school in the sample is operated by the LA Alliance for College-Ready Public Schools charter management organization, Ouchi Charter School. The mission of Alliance is to prepare students from historically disadvantaged communities that will significantly outperform other public schools in preparation for college success. The vision of Alliance is to challenge the norms of public education by rigorously preparing students for proficiency in state standards, a 100% pass rate on the California school exit exam, and a reduction of the dropout rate to less than 10%. Alliance utilizes a highly accountable model of innovation for best practices in high performing schools in all of its schools. The William and Carol Ouchi School was opened in 2006 and services students in grades 9-12.

*Camino nuevo charter academy.* Two schools in the sample are operated by the Camino Nuevo Charter Academy, Camino Nuevo Burlington K-8 and Camino Nuevo Harvard K-8. Camino Nuevo Charter Academy was founded in the late 1990s through the leadership of the families and communities of the MacArthur Park/ Pico Union area in Los Angeles in an effort to create a new vision for public

education. Their mission is to provide a dynamic learning community in a historically urban community with low literacy rates and high unemployment and change the model of education to prepare students to be college ready and college bound.

Camino Nuevo Burlington was the first school to open under the charter management organization in 2000 and it changed the landscape of the community it served. Burlington is a K-8 school servicing 500 students in class sizes of no more than 20 in grades K-3 and 28 in grades 4-8. Burlington offers students an extended calendar year and a bilingual education program to help them adjust and prepare for the diverse world they live in.

Camino Nuevo Harvard opened its doors in 2001 and enabled to grow the vision of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy of reaching out to more students in the MacArthur Park/ Pico Union area of Los Angeles. Camino Nuevo Harvard is a K-8 school that focuses on the arts, environment, and parent and community outreach. It has also been recognized for its recycling efforts in the community.

#### **Independent charter schools.**

***High tech high.*** High Tech High was opened in 2004 by the Lowell Milken Family Foundation. The mission of the school is to prepare students in traditional academic success with the infusion of real technical applications and problem solving skills. High Tech High operates under four pillars (collaboration, technology, communication, and community ethics and responsibility) to have school success.



## Summary

Bolman and Deal (1991) have suggested that the best organizational and institutional leaders are those who utilize multiple frames of reference when viewing problems and job challenges. In other words, the best leaders bring clarity to their positions, help anticipate future problems, and are skillful at developing and utilizing comprehensive and powerful leadership strategies. Bolman and Deal list the four most effective reference frames as

1. Structural, with a focus on formal roles and relationships. Effective leaders use structural frames to develop clear organizational standards and goals and to increase productivity.
2. Political, for examining a given situation in terms of the inevitability of competition between groups for resources and power. Bolman and Deal believe that effective leaders understand that no matter how challenging they might seem, conflict and compromise are constant sources of renewal.
3. Human resource, with a focus on motivating, enabling, and developing employees in a manner that reaps the maximum benefits from their ideas, skills, commitment, and energy.
4. Symbolic, described as a vantage point that looks at both individual and organizational culture, rituals, and beliefs, with leaders cultivating shared values in order to create a sense of meaningfulness.

Bolman and Deal (1991) believe that these frames represent the variation of ways in which leaders view organizational situations, and therefore the strategies they use to manage those situations. Structural and human resource frames are associated with



managerial effectiveness, while the political and symbolic frames are associated with leadership effectiveness. The two researchers assume that leaders who possess leadership orientations that are applicable to all four frames are the most effective, and that increasingly complex and turbulent organizational environments demand facility in multiple frames.

In terms of the overall leadership skills and qualities described in an earlier section, Bolman and Deal's reframing approach defines effective leaders as those capable of looking at a problem from a variety of viewpoints (including human relationships and roles), of handling conflict and making use of compromise when searching for solutions, of motivating people and understanding their needs, and of understanding solutions in terms of an actual organizational and/or institutional culture. Educational leadership literature emphasizes "across the board" qualities and traits (i.e., traits that are characteristic of leaders in all situations).

The study of leadership style and how it fits into the framework of the school climate is worthy of research. When educational leaders do not take time and find out what the norms and long held beliefs of an organization are, leaders may encounter resistance (Deal & Peterson, 1990). School climate building takes a long time (Fullan, 1993) and is a disruptive process, both personally and socially (Maris, 1974).

A realistic and applicable depiction of a school's climate and how the principal brings about positive change in such an environment has great implication for the education community. The results of this study will provide implications for the significance of school climate and the fundamental ingredients needed to positively

influence school success. Findings from this study can offer further insight on restructuring school climate and redefining roles and practices for leadership.

This research will offer teachers involved in the study a process to analyze the principal's role within the school's climate. The results of the study could provide further opportunities for additional professional development and growth by examining the roles and responsibilities that are essential in creating the climate of the school (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). This study could be helpful in shaping the emphasis of future dialogue.

The findings from this study can be used to prepare future educational leaders, especially with the rise of charter schools and their success. This study can offer insight into best practices currently being applied by successful charter schools. The conclusions drawn from this study can be a useful tool for charter schools in Los Angeles in assessing student achievement based on school norms and best practices of leadership, collectively and individually.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Research Problem**

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between principal leadership, school climate and selected measures of school performance (annual progress index based on California standardized test scores) in a sample of charter schools (K-12) in Los Angeles. This chapter of the study presents a description and discussion of the methods and procedures used in the collection and analysis of data. Information on the sample size and population is also provided.

### **Research Design**

This research employs a quantitative research methodology relying on a statistical analysis of the results. A quantitative research methodology is a reliable and repeatable research methodology that lends itself to accurate representation and interpretation of the evidence. The quantitative methodology is used to collect a large pool of specific data. Within quantitative methods, part of the preparation process for data for use in organizational studies research projects is to identify the various attributes of the data. Typically, organizational research data attributes can be described as being comprised of nominal, interval, ratio, and ordinal types of attributes that are divided among scales (Lei, 2010).

Kettner (2004) and Martin (2009) stress that quantitative analysis is extremely useful in identifying parameters and performance measures in relation to the topic. This is specifically relevant in the study of school environments, in which the outcome of all efforts is embodied within human performance. Since education is becoming increasingly quantitative in its delivery and assessment, it is important to build a more

thorough quantifiable understanding of how school climate and principal leadership is perceived in schools. This observation indicates that standardization and achievement-based assessment strategies can be assessed through quantitative analysis as a means of charting past performance and to predict likely future performance through the use of leadership frames and its impact on the positiveness of school climate.

### **Variables**

There were three variables in the study (see Appendix A):

1. Principal leadership.
2. School climate.
3. School performance.

Principal leadership is divided into one of the four frames of leadership by Bolman and Deal (1991): structural, human resources, political, or symbolic. School climate ratings made by teachers at each of the qualifying and participating charter schools was used to divide schools into one of three categories of positiveness of school climate: Low, Medium, and High. Principal leadership was examined to determine whether it significantly differs as a function of differences in the level of positiveness of school climate. Standardized test data from each school for the last school year was analyzed to determine a correlation between school climate and student performance. The correlation between principal leadership and student achievement was drawn based on the student performance on the annual progress index (API) and teacher responses to the leadership orientation surveys offered by Bolman and Deal.

## **Data Sources**

**Instruments.** Two surveys were utilized, based on their tested reliability and validity standards, for this study. One survey assessed principal leadership in the context of the leadership frames of Bolman and Deal from three perspectives – behavior, style, and overall orientation. The other survey, the National Association of Secondary Principals School Climate Survey, measured school climate based on levels of positiveness. The Leadership Orientation Survey (Others) by Bolman and Deal (1991) was administered to determine principal leadership.

**Leadership orientation survey.** The Leadership Orientations Survey (Others) based on the four frames, identified by Bolman and Deal (1991) was used. The survey assessed leadership orientation from three perspectives: behavior, style, and overall orientation. The survey listed leadership practices based on behavior; teachers were asked to rate the effectiveness of each on a scale from one to four. The survey listed leadership practices based on style, and, teachers were asked to prioritize ratings of 1-4 on the importance of each. The survey listed additional factors related to overall leadership orientation in principal practices; teachers were asked to rate effectiveness in cooperation, individualism, present situation, long-term planning, rigidity, and flexibility (Berg, 2000). The survey had three parts to it: a section for leadership behavior that asked questions based on rating scales, a section for leadership style that asked force-choice questions, and a section for overall leadership orientation that had two one-item measures.

The survey could have been taken by the leader, or by others that work with the leader to assess leadership practices. Research has found the results to be more

beneficial when others rate their leader. For this reason, teachers were given the survey to rate the leadership of their principal. The survey instrument was thought to be ideal in providing a framework for quantitative assessment of data, as it helped provide a framework through which various components were subject to interpretation and analysis. Thus, the survey instrument employed in the research project was best seen as a series of questions that have a distinct purpose.

On the Leadership Orientation Survey (Others), each item in Section 1 (leadership behavior) was rated on a five-point Likert-type scale (1=Never; 2=Sometimes; 3=Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=Always). Section 2 (leadership style) of the Leadership Orientation Survey (Others) was rated on a scale of 1-4 (1 representing least describes leader, 2 representing somewhat describes leader, 3 representing mostly describes leader, and 4 representing best describes leader), with rating being given for descriptors of principal leadership. Section 3 (overall orientation) of the Leadership Orientation Survey (Others) was rated on a 1-5 scale based on percentage categories (1 = Bottom 20%, 2 = Next to Bottom 20%, 3 = Middle 20%, 4 = Next to Top 20%, 5 = Top 20%). All ratings were calculated since items were in a consistent frame sequence to determine the leadership frame each principal was operating from in terms of behavior, style, and overall orientation. All items on the survey followed the frame sequence: structural, human resource, political, symbolic. Each item was identified to its frame source following this sequence. The frame with the highest score total indicated the leadership frame of the principal, based on leadership behavior, style, and overall orientation.

*NASSP survey.* The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) developed and validated an instrument for assessing the climate in secondary schools. Part of a battery of instruments and procedures included in the NASSP's Comprehensive Assessment of School Environments model was the climate assessment instrument which is usable with teachers, parents, and students. For this research study, the survey was administered to teachers only. Collected data were divided into 10 areas that the NASSP had identified as having predictor relationships to student outcomes.

The survey was developed at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln; the final version was normed by Western Michigan University. The question items were created from a review of literature on climate and effective schools and a comprehensive analysis of climate instruments already in place and being used by current researchers.

The NASSP School Climate Survey (see Appendix C) collected data about perceptions on 10 subscales:

1. Teacher-Student Relationships
2. Security and Maintenance
3. Administration
4. Student Academic Orientation
5. Student Behavioral Values
6. Guidance
7. Student-Peer Relationships
8. Parent and Community-School Relationships
9. Instructional Management
10. Student Activities

Groups of questions, from as few as three to the largest group of twelve, were combined to provide categories (see Appendix A). Survey responses to the questions were on a five-point Likert-type scale. A five-point value system was assigned to response choices of 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 being Agree, 5 being Strongly Agree, 6 being Don't Know. Items were weighted such that the higher the score, the more positive the school climate, with the exception of the value point of 6, which is counted as a null score. Ratings were used to yield 10 subscale scores (each of which varied from 3 to 60) and an overall total climate score computed across all of the 10 subscales; this overall value varied from 55 to 275. The mean score total values observed for each school were assessed by dividing the scale range into thirds.

Those means falling into the lowest third of the scale range were characterized as low in school climate. Those means falling into the second one-third of the scale range were characterized as medium in school climate and those means falling into the top one-third of the scale range were characterized as high in school climate. These characterizations were implicit of the positiveness of school climate.

**School performance data.** School performance data were utilized through public records for annual school achievement on the statewide California standardized tests (CST). School data were used to measure overall student performance and was not segregated based on the subcategories of gender, ethnicity, ELL/ESL or Title I funding. Access to the school performance data for CST was found online at the California Department of Education's website ([www.cde.gov](http://www.cde.gov)) or at the school's homepage.



The California Standardized Tests were developed by educators and test developers from the state of California. They measure student progress towards achieving state-adopted education standards for grade and content level mastery. The CST's are administered annually during a two week window to students in grades 2-11. Students are tested in the four main academic subjects: English/ Language Arts, Mathematics, History, and Science. Test results are reported three months after the month in which the tests were administered.

School data were gathered from the CST tests for the last school year (2009-2010). Only the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school year data were utilized to provide continuity and accuracy to the study results. All other prior school year data were not used, since the parameters of the study were set to assess principal leadership and school climate for the last two consecutive school years under the same instructional leader. In this regard, it must be noted that in order for schools to have been compared with respect to testing data, it was necessary that each school administered the same standardized tests for the last two consecutive school years. Therefore, only schools whose students had taken the same standardized tests were included in the study.

### **Validity and Reliability**

**Leadership orientation survey.** The Leadership Orientation Survey was validated through reliability statistics based on the ratings of managers in business in education. Approximately 1300 ratings were used to determine validity and reliability of the instrument. The internal consistency data gathered from the ratings for each frame is listed below.

1. Structural Frame

- Split Half Correlation = .88
  - Coefficient Alpha = .92
2. Human Resource Frame
    - Split Half Correlation = .87
    - Coefficient Alpha = .93
  3. Political Frame
    - Split Half Correlation = .84
    - Coefficient Alpha = .91
  4. Symbolic Frame
    - Split Half Correlation = .88
    - Coefficient Alpha = .93

**NASSP survey.** During the national pilot and normative studies, the NASSP survey was administered to more than 1,500 teachers. Coefficients for internal consistency of each sub-scale were calculated based on data collected from the studies. The climate sub-scale ranged from 0.67 to 0.92, with the average at 0.81 for internal consistency reliability. The internal consistency for the teacher satisfaction survey subscale was between 0.80 and 0.93, with an average of 0.88 (Halderson et al., 1989). The coefficients for the scale and validity reliabilities were considered sufficient for this study.

### **Population**

The population for this study was a select teacher sample from charter schools in Los Angeles. Online research was completed to obtain a database of all of the charter

schools in Los Angeles; 118 charter schools were located. All 118 schools were contacted.

Eligibility standards were developed around leadership. Eligibility to participate in the study was limited to schools that had been in operation for a minimum of three years (opening year 2007, or earlier), and a school where the current principal had been the administrator of that school for at least 2 consecutive school years, plus was currently in at least his/her 3rd year of leadership at the same school at the time of the study. Third year or longer term principals were sought to ensure first year climate development did not interfere with study results, thus only student achievement from the previous two years were used instead of the last three years (2007-2008 API data were not included in the data analysis). This limitation was set in place to assure a more accurate assessment of the correlation between school climate and principal leadership, and subsequently the resulting affect on student achievement.

Although there were 118 charter schools in the greater Los Angeles area, not all of them qualified. Of the 36 qualifying schools, only 4 were studied for the purposes of this research study and thus made up the population for the study. All four qualifying schools were public, transient, suburban charter schools. The schools were opened and in operation by 2007 or earlier. Some schools in the population were run by the same charter management organization, while others were independent schools.

### **Sample**

For this study, the sample was comprised of a group of at least two-thirds of the teachers at each participating school. Surveys were administered to all teachers, and, since teacher participation was voluntary, it was hoped that at least two-thirds of the

teachers would return the surveys completed. For each school, all of the surveys returned were used for analysis purposes. Since charter school sizes vary greatly, it was hard to assess teacher population, but according to the numbers based on the qualifying schools that agreed for participation, there were approximately a total number of 74 teachers, of which 59 participated in this study from all of the schools altogether; all of that data were used (see Table 1). Criteria for school selection was only sent to charter schools only and was limited to charter schools that had been in operation for three or more years with the same current principal in his/her third consecutive year of instructional leadership at the same school, in order to accurately determine both, principal leadership and school climate, as well as look at school data from the current and previous school year.

Table 1

*Study Sample*

School	Teachers in School	Teacher Participation in Study
1	5	5
2	28	21
3	19	16
4	22	17

**Data Collection**

The preference for sample identification and data collection was through direct phone contact with each principal. If this method did not work, then the charter management organization was contacted via an email letter explaining the nature of the study, followed by a phone conversation or in person meeting. For each school that

agreed to participate in the study, the researcher met with the school administrator to discuss the logistics of administering the survey to teachers (i.e. during lunch, after school, meeting time, etc). Each school had differing methods of gathering teachers for the surveys and disseminating discerning questions related to the surveys, so that was based on each individual school. The goal was to have a meeting with the teachers where the researcher could address their concerns and go over the survey when the researcher handed it out to them, as well as inform them of the collection date and location of where to turn the surveys in at their school (a secured box was placed in the office or teacher's lounge). The duration of the study was from same day to five days on average, unless additional time was requested per school. At this same time the researcher went over the informed consent with the teachers and requested for them to sign and date it and return it to the researcher at that time. Surveys were only handed out to teachers who signed the informed consent to participate, which was not a problem with any teacher.

Once the surveys had been completed and collected, the researcher scored the questionnaires and computed the statistical results. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained with the use of identification numbers throughout the entire study.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher coded responses and sum ratings. Findings were matched to the results of the climate surveys for each school. All data were entered into NCSS (Statistical and Power Analysis) software. Once in this program, a correlation coefficient was conducted to examine whether the performance measures significantly differed based on the research questions and variables. If the conducted correlation was observed to be

significant, two additional tests were performed. First, coefficient of variation were conducted to determine which categories of school climate significantly differed from one another. Next, the coefficient of determination was computed to determine the amount of variance in the school performance measure that was attributable to the school climate variable.

NCSS software was used to analyze and interpret the data from the survey. Subscales were assessed using the correlation coefficient, comparing the responses for significant differences, and summaries of all significant differences were included. The Pearson correlation coefficient  $r$  was used to analyze the data and determine the relationship between school climate and principal leadership.

Results from the survey provided indicators of various frames of leadership that were considered favorable or unfavorable for the level of positiveness of school climate. There were no preexisting measures for school climate, since schools were being evaluated for performance from school year 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 only, and, no other study had been conducted up to that point.

Data collection in this project relied on a random sample of teachers from qualifying K-12 charter schools in Los Angeles. The data were collected by the researcher through the use of a survey instrument. The content analysis process was accomplished through assessment of subject responses based on a Likert-type scale; statistical analysis utilized correlation coefficient techniques for their commonalities, then these commonalities were reported as representative in the perceptions of the sample population. It was important to note in the conclusion of the research project that the sample population was randomly selected, as previously stated, to provide insight into the

perceptions of the school education environment and was representative of only a small percentage of educators currently in the charter school setting.

This research was intended to be illustrative and not definitive in nature. However, it certainly provided useful data for subsequent research that assesses the necessity for improvement in charter school leadership, climate, and student achievement (see suggestions for further research). One of the limitations of this type of research was that not all surveys were completed and turned in; of those that were returned, a certain percentage may not have been completed truthfully or honestly. Another limitation of the study was the limited number of schools that agreed to and participated in the study.

### **Summary**

The methodology for this research study relied on the use of the positivistic process through which results were acquired via a paper survey instrument and were isolated in terms of significant themes. Themes that were significant were either reflective of strong views held by a majority of the respondents, or correlated to similar themes present within the literature, or were unique responses based upon the single perceptions of one subject within the context of the school environment. This correlation coefficient method had been selected as a valid approach to the proposed research study as it offered significant flexibility in application and assessment, which is necessary given the highly personal context of the principal leadership and school climate model. The correlation coefficient also allowed for the identification of dominant themes that were of importance to the study. Subjects in the study were informed of the research process before the subjects consented to participate in the study. In total, 59 subjects (two-thirds or more teachers at each of the 4 qualifying charter schools in Los Angeles)

were consented to respond anonymously to the survey questions which was tabulated and compiled in this research project for analysis.



## Chapter 4: Data Analysis

### Introduction

In this study, four schools were included in the study sample. Teacher surveys were administered to gather data on principal leadership and school climate. API scores for school year 2009-2010 were used for achievement measurement. All four schools were charter schools. Two of them were high schools and two of them were K-8 schools. The principal at each school was female. Each school serviced the inner-city community.

### Quantitative Findings

**Data collection tools and methods.** This study was quantitative in design and presents the findings of statistical tests. Two survey instruments were utilized in this study to conduct quantitative research, the Leadership Orientation Survey by Bolman and Deal, and the School Climate Survey by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Scores on the Annual Progress Index (API) were used from the records at the California Department of Education. Correlative reports and statistical data analysis were run on the results of the surveys to measure correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient was chosen to measure the variation provided by each category in the surveys to the proposed correlation factors. The process for collecting data included the researcher administering surveys to teachers at school sites, and drawing API scores from the online public database at the California Department of Education's website.

**Variable measurement.** Measurement of the variables that tested the hypotheses were defined as follows:

- In the Principal Leadership Orientation Survey, there were 10 variables used to test the correlation between principal leadership and school climate, and principal leadership and the annual progress index.
  - Structural Behavior
  - Political Behavior
  - Human Resources Behavior
  - Symbolic Behavior
  - Structural Style
  - Political Style
  - Human Resources Style
  - Symbolic Style
  - Overall Leadership Behavior
  - Overall Leadership Style
- In the National Association of Secondary School Principals School Climate Survey there were 10 variables used to assess the correlation between school climate and the annual progress index, and school climate and principal leadership.
  - Teacher-Student Relationships
  - Security and Maintenance
  - Administration
  - Student Academic Orientation
  - Student Behavior
  - Guidance

- Student Peer Relations
- Parent and Community – School Relationships
- Instructional Management
- Student Activity

**Validity and reliability.** Validity and reliability indices for data assessment instruments are traditionally recognized with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of .70 or higher through a test-retest measure for accuracy (Lei, 2010). Based on Lei (2010), because the researcher used already established instruments, the validity and reliability of the instruments, had been established and did not need to be tested for the purposes of this study.

**Presentation of data.** This data are presented using the Correlation Coefficient ( $R$ ) and the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ). The following tables explain how the two are interpreted.

Table 2

*Interpreting Results of the Correlation Coefficient ( $R$ )*

$R$ Value	Interpretation
$R$ is Positive	Positive Correlation between X and Y Variables
$R$ is Negative	Negative Correlation between X and Y Variables

Table 3

*Interpreting Results of the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )*

$R^2$ Value	Interpretation
$R^2 = 0.001 - 0.0049$	Little evidence for or against Hypothesis.
$R^2 = 0.05 - 0.25$	Suggestive evidence for or against Hypothesis.
$R^2 = 0.26 - 0.675$	Moderate evidence for or against Hypothesis.
$R^2 = 0.676 - 0.10$	Very Strong evidence for or against Hypothesis.

**Correlation between Principal Leadership and School Climate**

Research question one measured the correlation between principal leadership orientation and school climate. According to the data gathered, there was a correlation between Principal Leadership and School Climate based on multiple variables. The data showed that principal leadership had a direct affect on school climate, positively or negatively, as seen in the following tables.

Table 4

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Behavior (Structural) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	0.28	0.07	Positive Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.12	0.01	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.87	0.75	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	0.18	0.03	Positive Correlation

(continued)

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Student Behavior	-0.11	0.01	Negative Correlation
Guidance	0.32	0.10	Positive Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	0.39	0.15	Positive Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	0.17	0.03	Positive Correlation
Instructional Management	0.09	0.01	Positive Correlation
Student Activity	-0.27	0.07	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed that there was a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership behaviors of the structural framework and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized as higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the structural framework were associated with higher scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented through a positive *R* value. A negative correlation represented higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the structural framework matched with lower scores in each specific category of school climate. This correlation was represented with a negative *R* value.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of teacher-student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 7% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 1% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to lower Security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 75% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 1% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 10% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater guidance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of student peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 15% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to greater parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 0.1% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to higher instructional management in School Climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 7% variation in structural principal leadership behavior had been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

Table 5

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Behavior (Political) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.36	0.13	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.38	0.14	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.67	0.45	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	-0.13	0.02	Negative Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.43	0.18	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.03	0.00	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	0.39	0.15	Positive Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.13	0.02	Negative Correlation
Instructional Management	-0.18	0.03	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.53	0.28	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed that there was a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership behaviors of the political framework and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized as higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the political framework associated with higher scores in



each specific category of school climate. The correlation was represented through a positive  $R$  value. A negative correlation was categorized as higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the political framework associated with lower scores in each specific category of school climate. This correlation was represented with a negative  $R$  value.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 13% variation in political principal leadership behavior had been attributed to lower teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 14% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 45% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 2% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the structural framework and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher structural principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 18% variation in structural principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 0.1% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower guidance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of student peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 15% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 2% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower instructional management in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the political framework and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher political principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 28% variation in political principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

Table 6

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Behavior (Human Resources) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.19	0.04	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.32	0.10	Negative Correlation

(continued)

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Administration	0.40	0.16	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	-0.26	0.07	Negative Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.50	0.25	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.28	0.08	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.20	0.04	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.21	0.04	Negative Correlation
Instructional Management	-0.21	0.04	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.46	0.21	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data show that there was a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership behaviors of the human resources framework and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized when higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework are associated with higher scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented through a positive  $R$  value. A negative correlation was categorized when higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework are associated with lower scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented with a negative  $R$  value.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 4%

variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 10% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 16% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 7% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school

climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 25% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 8% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower guidance in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 4% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 4% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and the category of instructional management in school

climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 4% variation in human resources principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower instructional management in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources framework and student activity in school climate. Schools with higher human resources principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 21% variation in human resources behavior has been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

Table 7

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Behavior (Symbolic) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.18	0.03	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.39	0.15	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.48	0.23	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	-0.26	0.07	Negative Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.53	0.28	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.24	0.06	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.15	0.02	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.23	0.05	Negative Correlation
Instructional Management	-0.25	0.06	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.54	0.29	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data show that there was a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership behaviors of the symbolic framework and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized when higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework are associated with higher scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented through a positive  $R$  value. A negative correlation was categorized when higher scores for principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework are associated with lower scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented with a negative  $R$  value.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 15% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of



administration. Among the four schools in the study, 23% variation in Symbolic Principal Leadership Behavior has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 7% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 28% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 6% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower guidance in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 2% variation in

symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 5% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 6% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower instructional management in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the symbolic framework and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher symbolic principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 29% variation in symbolic principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

Table 8

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Style (Structural) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	0.74	0.55	Positive Correlation
Security and Maintenance	0.75	0.56	Positive Correlation
Administration	0.16	0.03	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	0.78	0.61	Positive Correlation
Student Behavior	0.89	0.79	Positive Correlation
Guidance	0.79	0.62	Positive Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	0.74	0.55	Positive Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	0.74	0.55	Positive Correlation
Instructional Management	0.73	0.53	Positive Correlation
Student Activity	0.81	0.66	Positive Correlation

In this table, the data showed a consistent positive correlation between principal leadership style from the structural framework and all categories of school climate. Because of this positive correlation, schools with a higher structural principal leadership style had a higher school climate in all 10 categories. Among the four schools in the study, the following variations in structural principal leadership style have been attributed to a higher school climate in each of the given categories.

- Teacher-Student: 55% Variation
- Security and Maintenance: 56% Variation
- Administration: 26% Variation

- Student Academic Orientation: 61% Variation
- Student Behavior: 79% Variation
- Guidance: 62% Variation
- Student Peer Relationships: 55% Variation
- Parent and Community-School Relationships: 55% Variation
- Instructional Management: 53% Variation
- Student Activity: 65% Variation

There was no negative correlation between Principal Leadership Style from the Structural Framework and any category of School Climate.

Table 9

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Style (Political) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.37	0.14	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.68	0.46	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.38	0.14	Positive Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.71	0.50	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.33	0.11	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.26	0.07	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.46	0.21	Negative Correlation

(continued)

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Instructional Management	-0.52	0.27	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.79	0.62	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed a negative correlation between principal leadership style from the political framework and nine of the 10 categories of school climate. Because of this negative correlation, schools with a higher political principal leadership style had a lower school climate in nine of the categories. Among the four schools in the study, the following variations in political principal leadership style have been attributed to a lower school climate in the following nine categories.

- Teacher-Student: 14% Variation
- Security and Maintenance: 46% Variation
- Student Academic Orientation: 21% Variation
- Student Behavior: 50% Variation
- Guidance: 11% Variation
- Student Peer Relationships: 7% Variation
- Parent and Community-School Relationships: 21% Variation
- Instructional Management: 27% Variation
- Student Activity: 62% Variation

In this table, the data showed a positive correlation between principal leadership style from the political framework and the category of administration in school climate. Because of this positive correlation, schools with a higher political principal leadership style had a higher school climate in administration. Among the four schools in the study,

14% variation in the political principal leadership style has been attributed to higher administration in school climate.

Table 10

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Style (Human Resources) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.02	0.00	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	0.37	0.14	Positive Correlation
Administration	-0.71	0.50	Negative Correlation
Student Academic	0.08	0.01	Positive Correlation
Student Behavior	0.37	0.14	Positive Correlation
Guidance	-0.06	0.00	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.14	0.02	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	0.09	0.01	Positive Correlation
Instructional Management	0.16	0.03	Positive Correlation
Student Activity	0.51	0.26	Positive Correlation

In this table, the data showed a negative correlation between principal leadership style from the political framework and four of the 10 categories of school climate.

Because of this negative correlation, schools with a higher human resources principal leadership style had a lower school climate in four of the categories. Among the four schools in the study, the following variations in human resources principal leadership style has been attributed to a lower school climate in the following four categories.

- Teacher-Student: 0% Variation
- Administration: 50%
- Guidance: 0.4% Variation
- Student Peer Relationships: 2% Variation

In this table, the data showed a positive correlation between principal leadership style from the human resources framework and six of the 10 categories of school climate. Because of this positive correlation, schools with a higher human resources principal leadership style had a higher school climate in six of the categories. Among the four schools in the study, the following variations in the human resources principal leadership style has been attributed to higher school climate in the following categories.

- Security and Maintenance: 14%
- Student Academic Orientation: 1%
- Student Behavior: 14%
- Parent and Community-School Relationships: 1%
- Instructional Management: 3%
- Student Activity: 26%

Table 11

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Style (Symbolic) and School Climate*

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.15	0.02	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.19	0.04	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.34	0.12	Positive Correlation

(continued)

Climate Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
Student Academic	-0.19	0.04	Negative Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.40	0.16	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.27	0.07	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.19	0.04	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.14	0.02	Negative Correlation
Instructional Management	-0.12	0.01	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.32	0.10	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed a negative correlation between principal leadership style from the symbolic framework and nine of the 10 categories of school climate. Because of this negative correlation, schools with a higher symbolic principal leadership style had a lower school climate in nine of the categories. Among the four schools in the study, the following variations in symbolic principal leadership style have been attributed to a lower school climate in the following nine categories.

- Teacher-Student: 2% Variation
- Security and Maintenance: 4% Variation
- Student Academic Orientation: 4% Variation
- Student Behavior: 16% Variation
- Guidance: 7% Variation
- Student Peer Relationships: 4% Variation
- Parent and Community-School Relationships: 2% Variation



- Instructional Management: 1% Variation
- Student Activity: 10% Variation

In this table, the data showed a positive correlation between principal leadership style from the symbolic framework and the category of administration in school climate. Because of this positive correlation, schools with a higher symbolic principal leadership style had a higher school climate in administration. Among the four schools in the study, 11.5% variation in the symbolic principal leadership style has been attributed to higher administration in school climate.

Table 12

*Relationship between Overall Principal Leadership Behavior and School Climate*

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	0.34	0.12	Positive Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.07	0.00	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.89	0.79	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	0.24	0.06	Positive Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.04	0.02	Negative Correlation
Guidance	0.39	0.15	Positive Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	0.46	0.21	Positive Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	0.22	0.05	Positive Correlation

(continued)

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Instructional Management	0.14	0.02	Positive Correlation
Student Activity	-0.22	0.05	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed that there was a positive or negative correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized when higher scores for overall principal leadership behavior are associated with higher scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented through a positive  $R$  value. A negative correlation was categorized when higher scores for overall principal leadership behavior were associated with lower scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented with a negative  $R$  value.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior in and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 12% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership behavior in and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 0.5% variation in overall principal

leadership behavior has been attributed to lower security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 79% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 58% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 0.2% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 15% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater guidance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of student peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 21% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 5% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to greater parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a higher school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 2% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to higher instructional management in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership behavior and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership behavior had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 5% variation in overall principal leadership behavior has been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

Table 13

*Relationship between Overall Principal Leadership Style and School Climate*

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	-0.09	0.01	Negative Correlation
Security and Maintenance	-0.39	0.15	Negative Correlation
Administration	0.61	0.37	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	-0.18	0.03	Negative Correlation
Student Behavior	-0.47	0.22	Negative Correlation
Guidance	-0.11	0.01	Negative Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	-0.02	0.00	Negative Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	-0.16	0.03	Negative Correlation
Instructional Management	-0.21	0.04	Negative Correlation
Student Activity	-0.54	0.29	Negative Correlation

In this table, the data showed that there was a positive or negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and each of the 10 categories in school climate. A positive correlation was categorized when higher scores for overall principal leadership style are associated with higher scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented through a positive  $R$  value. A negative correlation was categorized when higher scores for overall principal leadership style were associated with lower scores in each specific category of school climate, and was represented with a negative  $R$  value.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher

overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 1% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 15% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 37% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools

in the study, 22% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower student behavior in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 1% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower guidance in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of parent and community-school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 3% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study, 4% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower instructional management in school climate.

There was a negative correlation between overall principal leadership style and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher overall principal leadership style had a lower school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 29% variation in overall principal leadership style has been attributed to lower student activity in school climate.

### Correlation between School Climate and Student Achievement (API)

Research question two measured the correlation between school climate and student achievement based on the annual progress index. According to the data gathered, there was a correlation between school climate and student achievement (API) based on multiple variables. That data showed that school climate has a direct effect on student achievement, positively or negatively, as seen in the following tables.

Table 14

#### *Relationship between School Climate and Student Achievement (API)*

Climate Variable	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Teacher-Student	0.91	0.83	Positive Correlation
Security and Maintenance	0.99	0.98	Positive Correlation
Administration	0.38	0.14	Positive Correlation
Student Academic	0.94	0.88	Positive Correlation
Student Behavior	0.97	0.94	Positive Correlation
Guidance	0.84	0.71	Positive Correlation
Student Peer Relationships	0.82	0.67	Positive Correlation
Parent & Community – School Relationships	0.95	0.90	Positive Correlation
Instructional Management	0.97	0.94	Positive Correlation
Student Activity	0.98	0.96	Positive Correlation

\* Due to small sample size, interpretation of  $R^2$  should be done carefully.

This table showed the data gathered from the surveys. The correlation coefficient was expressed as the  $R$  value and the coefficient of determination was calculated as  $R^2$ .

According to the data, there was a positive correlation between all 10 categories of school



climate and student achievement based on the annual progress index (API). Higher scores on API have been associated with higher scores in school climate for each of the 10 categories.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of teacher student relationships in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of teacher-student relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 82% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater teacher-student relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of security and maintenance in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of security and maintenance. Among the four schools in the study, 98% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater security and maintenance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between Student Achievement based on the API and the category of administration in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of administration. Among the four schools in the study, 14% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater administration in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement based on the API and the category of student academic orientation in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of student academic orientation. Among the four schools in the study, 88% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater student academic orientation in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of student behavior in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of student behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 94% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater student behavior in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of guidance in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of guidance. Among the four schools in the study, 71% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater guidance in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of student peer relationships in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of student-peer relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 67% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater student peer relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of parent and community school relationships in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of parent and community-school relationships. Among the four schools in the study, 90% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater parent and community-school relationships in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of instructional management in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of instructional management. Among the four schools in the study,

94% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater instructional management in school climate.

There was a positive correlation between student achievement on the API and the category of student activity in school climate. Schools with higher API had a higher school climate of student activity. Among the four schools in the study, 96% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater student activity in school climate.

### **Correlation between Principal Leadership and Student Achievement (API)**

Research question two measured the correlation between principal leadership and student achievement based on the annual progress index. According to the data gathered, there was a correlation between principal leadership and student achievement based on multiple variables. That data showed that principal leadership has a direct effect on student achievement, positively or negatively, as seen in the following tables.

Table 15

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Orientation (Behavior) and Student Achievement (API)*

Leadership Variables	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Structural	0.10	0.01	Positive Correlation
Political	-0.37	0.1369	Negative Correlation
Human Resources	-0.35	0.1225	Negative Correlation
Symbolic	-0.41	0.1681	Negative Correlation

There was a positive or negative correlation between all four frames of principal leadership behavior and student achievement based on the annual progress index (API). This table showed that schools with higher API had either higher or lower principal leadership behaviors in the four leadership frames. The interpretations of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) provide the following information, based on the four schools in the study.

There was a positive correlation between structural principal leadership behavior and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had higher structural principal leadership behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 1% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to greater structural principal leadership behavior.

There was a negative correlation between political principal leadership behavior and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had lower political principal leadership behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 14% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to negative political principal leadership behavior.

There was a negative correlation between principal leadership behavior in the human resources frame and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had lower principal leadership behavior in the human resources frame. Among the four schools in the study, 12% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to negative principal leadership behavior in the human resources frame.

There was a negative correlation between symbolic principal leadership behavior and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had lower symbolic principal leadership behavior. Among the four schools in the study, 17% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to negative symbolic principal leadership behavior.

Table 16

*Relationship between Principal Leadership Orientation (Style) and Student Achievement (API)*

Leadership Variables	$R$	$R^2$	Interpretation
Structural	0.78	0.6084	Positive Correlation
Political	-0.68	0.4624	Negative Correlation
Human Resources	0.36	0.1296	Positive Correlation
Symbolic	-0.23	0.0529	Negative Correlation

There was a positive or negative correlation between the four frames of principal leadership style and student achievement based on the annual progress index (API). This table showed that schools with higher API had either higher or lower principal leadership styles in each of the leadership frames. The interpretations of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) provide the following information, based on the four schools in the study:

There was a positive correlation between structural principal leadership style and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had higher structural principal leadership behavior. Among the four schools in the study,

60% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to a positive structural principal leadership behavior.

There was a negative correlation between political principal leadership style and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had lower political principal leadership style. Among the four schools in the study, 61% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to a negative political principal leadership Style.

There was a positive correlation between principal leadership style in the human resources frame and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had higher principal leadership style in the human resources frame. Among the four schools in the study, 13% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to a positive principal leadership style in the human resources frame.

There was a negative correlation between symbolic principal leadership style and student achievement on the API. Schools with higher student achievement on the API had lower symbolic principal leadership style. Among the four schools in the study, 5% variation in student achievement on the API has been attributed to a negative symbolic principal leadership style.

### **Summary**

Based on the data collected and analyzed for this multi-site study, it was evident that there was either a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership and school climate, school climate and student achievement, and principal leadership and

student achievement. The conclusive findings recorded in tables 4-16 demonstrate the correlations found between each group.

Because the survey used on Leadership Orientation by Bolman and Deal (1991) offers four frames, and three categories for measurement (behavior, style, and overall), the data analysis showed differences in correlation based on all three categories and all four frames. Questions related to behavior measured the actions implemented by principals as they correspond to each frame, while questions on style prioritized the type of frame each principal integrated into their leadership practice. The overall category assessed an overall perception of leadership style and behavior in each framework.

The data findings from this multi-site case study showed that there was a positive or negative correlation between principal leadership and school climate, school climate and student achievement, and principal leadership and student achievement. The data showed both positive and negative correlations in the sub-categories of both principal leadership and school climate and their affect on student achievement. These data will be useful for school site personnel and administration, community members, parents, and all others involved in the charter school organization and movement.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gather data useful in assessing the correlation between principal leadership and school climate, school climate and student achievement, and principal leadership and student achievement. The following three questions were utilized for data assessment:

1. What was the relationship between leadership practices and school climate?
2. What was the relationship between school climate and student achievement?
3. What was the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement?

This research study was completed to see if one type of leadership framework was more effective in creating a higher school climate, and in turn if a higher school climate resulted in higher student achievement. Ultimately, this study was conducted to determine the affect of principal leadership on student achievement. This research study was based on the four leadership frameworks offered by Bolman and Deal (1991) to assess principal leadership capacity that was the most conducive to leading to higher student achievement in public charter schools.

The findings of this study will be most useful for school leaders, administrators, teachers, parents, and the school community. This study provides useful insight into understanding principal leadership capacity that best supports a positive school climate for greatest student achievement. This information can be used to implement more strategic hiring requirements for principals, creation of a better assessment for principal leadership evaluation, and more rigorous future principal leadership training.



## **Findings and Interpretations**

**Principal leadership and school climate.** The correlation between principal leadership and school climate was assessed through the use of two instruments, administered to teachers about their respective schools and principal. The instruments used were the Leadership Orientation Survey (Others) by Bolman and Deal (1991; see Appendix B), and the School Climate Survey by the National Association for Secondary School Principals (see Appendix C). The findings supported the hypothesis that there was a correlation between principal leadership and school climate. The aggregated data showed that overall principal leadership behavior and style from the structural framework and principal leadership style from the human resources framework contributed to a positive school climate. The findings showed that the most effective principal leadership framework for school climate was primarily structural, and secondarily, human resources.

Primarily, data from this study showed very strong evidence to support the conclusion that principals displaying behaviors of structural leadership had an overall positive school climate. These behaviors indicate a drive towards analytical systems, accountability measures, and formal relationships. Principals that practice leadership behaviors from a structural framework had a tendency to project a clear organization focus, circumstance-specific processes, and clear expectations, and thus a more positive school climate in administration. Principals operating from the structural framework focus on behaviors that draw clear lines of authority, facts, and logic, over personality and emotions in the execution of tasks. Principal leadership behavior from a structural framework works towards finding a suitable arrangement between necessary roles and relationships and the needs of the organization.

The data support very strong evidence suggestive of principal leadership in the structural framework from the perspective of leadership style for a positive overall school climate. Principals that displayed a leadership style from the structural frame tended to have a more positive school climate in teacher-student relationships, security and maintenance, student academic orientation, student behavior, guidance, student peer relationships, parent and community-school relationships, instructional management, and student activity. Leadership style from the structural frame was centered round rules, roles, goals, policy, technology, and environment. This type of leadership style is hierarchical in structure, where the principal is seen as the leader for direction and control.

This means that principals that hold students, faculty, and staff accountable to expectations, and contribute to a more positive school climate. Principals that express clear expectations of all and keep focus on those expectations build a stronger school climate. Principal leadership that is driven by processes and procedures to manage external issues, develop clear structures for task and environment, and explicitly clarify organizational goals and authority are most successful in creating a positive school climate.

Secondarily, data from this study show that principals with a leadership style driven from a human resources frame of reference have a positive impact on school climate, as well. The data supports moderate evidence suggestive of principal leadership in the human resources framework from the perspective of leadership style for a positive overall school climate. This style indicates principal leadership that perceives people to be at the center of the organization and works towards gaining commitment and loyalty

of the people. Principals operating from a human resources framework emphasize support and empowerment through active dialogue, open communication, and encouraged participation. Principal leadership style from a human resources framework works towards providing a supportive climate in addressing the needs of the organization.

Principals that display a leadership style from the human resources frame tend to have a more positive school climate in security and maintenance, student academic orientation, student behavior, parent & community-school relationships, instructional management, and student activity. Leadership style from the human resources frame is centered around people, including all persons involved in the process of problem solving and decision making. This type of leadership style is more of a social construct in structure, where the principal sees the teachers as part of a team.

This means that principals who include students, faculty, and staff in the decision making process create a more positive school climate. Principals who recognize that organizations are filled with people who bring in their own set of skills and potential, and are open to empowering them, build a stronger school climate. Principal leadership that is driven by creating a family among the members of the organization and build relationships, are more likely to have a positive school climate.

**School climate and student achievement.** The correlation between school climate and student achievement was assessed through the data collected on the school climate survey and student achievement scores on the annual progress index for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years. The findings supported the hypothesis that there was a correlation between school climate and student achievement; the data showed a positive correlation between school climate and student achievement. The findings demonstrated

that school climate has a direct effect on student achievement, either positively or negatively based on the positivity or negativity of the school climate.

Data from this study showed very strong evidence supporting the conclusion that a positive school climate in teacher-student relationships, security and maintenance, student academic orientation, student behavior, guidance, student peer relationships, peer and community-school relationships, instructional management, and student activity, leads to greater student achievement. This means that schools with a greater school climate in these areas contribute to a more positive student performance. Because a positive correlation exists between all 10 sub-categories assessed for school climate and student achievement, it is evident that an overall positive school climate leads to greater student achievement.

**Principal leadership and student achievement.** The correlation between principal leadership and student achievement was drawn from the data gathered on the leadership orientation survey and student achievement scores on the annual progress index for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years. The findings supported the hypothesis that there is a correlation between principal leadership and student achievement. The data showed that principal leadership behavior and style from the structural framework, and principal leadership style from the human resources framework, have a positive effect on student achievement. The findings indicate that the most effective principal leadership framework for student achievement is primarily structural, and secondly, human resources.

Data from this study showed that principal leadership style from the structural frame has the greatest positive impact on student achievement. This means that

principals who operate out of a structural framework have clear expectations of student behavior and performance and hold students accountable to those expectations. It has been implied that from a structural principal leadership style, students gain greater task-completion orientation, focused goal setting skills, and explicit performance assessment strategies for academic growth.

Secondarily, data showed evidence that supports a principal leadership style from the human resources frame to have a positive impact on student achievement, as well. This means that principals operating from a human resources framework contribute to student empowerment strategies by involving students in the problem-solving and decision-making processes of school related issues. It is implicated that students feel a greater sense of self worth and view the school as family through this type of principal leadership style.

**Evidence of lack of statistical error.** Evidence of a lack of statistical errors was found through the use of four school sites to measure all three of the hypotheses. Experimental data were used to find statistically significant results, as applicable to a small sample size. A clear picture emerged of the leadership framework that was most effective for a positive school climate and high student achievement, as well as the significance of school climate on student achievement.

**Summary.** A summary of the major findings showed that both school climate and student achievement were the most positively affected by principal leadership from the structural framework, and also from the human resources framework. School climate affects student achievement based on the positivity or negativity of the school climate. A positive school climate leads to higher student achievement, and visa versa. The findings

from this study has been used by charter school organizations and public school districts to implement strategic hiring procedures, performance evaluation metrics, more centralized professional development, make changes to current leadership practices, and continue further research with a larger sample size for accuracy.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations for further use of the data findings from this study are made for school district administration, charter school management, and current and future principal leaders. School district administration should use the results of this study to implement strategic hiring practices while looking at the framework of leadership each principal is naturally inclined to work from. Charter school management should use the findings from this research to implement targeted professional development for administrative growth along the lines of structural and interpersonal (human resources) leadership. Current and future principals should use these results to learn and project more leadership from a structural and interpersonal point of reference. The findings of this research should be applied to further leadership study and practice in an effort to create a more positive school climate and in turn, increase student achievement.

The results of this study provide valuable insight into the leadership orientation of principals at the charter schools in the study population. It emphasizes the importance of the principal to school climate and student achievement. Closer examination should be given to current practices of principal leadership from the principal's perspective, and methodologies for leadership integration from a structural and interpersonal framework. Leaders in the field should examine the implications of such a study to their own leadership, school climate, and student achievement. Policy makers should request

further research on the topic to assess the need for district, state, or federal changes in public school education administration.

From the study, it appears that charter school principals who are more inclined to a leadership orientation of structural and interpersonal leadership frameworks are better meeting the needs of developing a positive school climate and inducing positive growth on student achievement. It is recommended that principals are the drivers of school climate and student achievement. Which way they drive both, school climate and student achievement, depends on the leadership frame from which they operate.

Professional development can be implemented highlighting focused training in areas of structural leadership: analytical orientation, multi-dimensional accountability, processes implementation, procedures expedition, and skills development. Training in analytical orientation could benefit current and future principals in helping them reframe their thinking to view circumstances from a more objective perspective, rationalizing facts and logic as the strongest focal point for growth and change. Providing training in integrating systems of multi-dimensional accountability can increase school efficiency at all levels, as all constituents would be more actively engaged, accountable to meeting benchmarks for growth and progress. Offering a learning module that emphasizes processes implementation could benefit principals to see how a systemic process can be created, designed, and carried out without chaos and abandonment if done properly from a strategic point of reference and organization buy-in. Putting on a workshop that reiterates the expedition process of procedures can benefit principals in carrying out routine practices that help run the school smoothly and effectively. A series of continuous professional development on skills development can increase the



understanding of leadership from a structural framework, encouraging principals to develop a skill set more inclined to such an outlook.

In addition, professional development tailored around a human resources framework would be essential in organizational growth, school achievement, and member investment. Too often, principals feel the burden of solely being held accountable to the demands of the governing organization that they fail to realize they are working with a team, rather than being the team alone. Professional development in team leadership and the understanding of sharing power is crucial for the success of not only the principal but also the school. Greater investment on the part of teachers, parents, staff, students, and community will come from the principal's ability to incorporate leadership through a human resources framework.

**Researcher reflections.** The researcher held biases favoring charter school organizations and assumed the greatest impact on school climate and student achievement would be comprised of principal leadership behaviors from the symbolic framework and leadership styles from the human resources framework. The researcher assumed that charter schools typically have principals that show greater interest in the involvement of people and culture compared to their counterpart in traditional public schools, and thus, was surprised to see a structural leadership style as the strongest indication for direct affect on both school climate and student achievement.

The researcher has spent over seven years in the K-12 public education sector as a teacher, director, and instructional leader, among other roles. Through her experience, the researcher has had the opportunity to work with principals from a variety of leadership orientations, as well as schools with very differing school climates and student



achievement. Based on the researcher's experience in the field of education, her assumption was that principal leadership from the symbolic and human resources frames would be more conducive to a more positive school climate and student achievement. The researcher did not expect principal leadership orientation towards the symbolic framework to yield a negative correlation on both, school climate and student achievement.

The researcher holds a Master of Arts in Education, with an emphasis in Psychology from Pepperdine University. The researcher changed because of this study and gained a better understanding of the type of leadership that is the most beneficial for a positive school climate and high student achievement. The researcher will be able to apply the findings to positions of leadership that the researcher will embark upon in the field of education in general, and K-12 public education more specifically.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Further research should be done using a larger sample size to assess the accuracy and applicability of the findings to a more general population. A larger sample size may indicate new findings that do not support the current findings. In addition, traditional public schools may also be considered for investigation, and not only charter schools. Schools has been categorized and more specific study parameters could be set around grade level, economic and social demographics of the student population, male and female principal leaders, and variation in school performance on the annual progress index, among other distinctions.

A more in-depth study could be done in a variety of areas. Leadership style versus leadership behavior could be assessed to measure differences not noted in the

frameworks presented by Bolman and Deal. A school climate survey could be administered to students to measure student perception of school climate. In addition, a study comparing high and low performing schools could be done to notate differences in the impact of leadership and school climate on student achievement.

### **Summary**

This quantitative multi-site case study explored the effects of principal leadership on school climate and student achievement. The theoretical framework proposed that a positive school climate and high student achievement was linked to one or more frameworks for principal leadership. The literature implied that principal leadership among other factors contributed to school climate and student achievement. According to the 59 participants surveyed in this study, structural and interpersonal (human resources) frameworks are both determinants that guide school climate and student achievement in a positive direction. While sub-categories varied as to principal leadership, the underlying conclusion of the data collected in this research study was that principal leadership does affect school climate and student achievement, either positively or negatively. Subsequently, the greatest positive impact on both school climate and student achievement comes from a structural principal leadership style. This style implies clear expectations, specific goals, and a hierarchical authority structure. Principal leadership style in human resources also contributes to a positive school climate and positive student achievement. An understanding of the significance of leadership frameworks is necessary to develop and inspire great principal leaders to create positive school climate and motivate high student achievement. An overall positive school climate leads to positive student achievement.

Chapter 5 concludes this research study. The findings produced two leadership frameworks that revealed positive school climate and high student achievement: principal leadership from the structural framework and principal leadership from the human resources framework. Recommendations invite all charter school and K-12 public education stakeholders to participate in the recruitment and development of great principal leaders, and further suggest additional research to be conducted on principal leadership in both traditional and non-traditional K-12 public schools.

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## APPENDIX A

## Descriptive Statistics Report

Leadership Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	High	Low	Standard Deviation
Analytical Behavior	4.2075	4.315		0.96	4.58	3.62	0.4169
Political Behavior	3.9275	4.04		1.27	4.45	3.18	0.6221
Human Resources Behavior	4.04	4.055		0.83	4.44	3.61	0.3858
Symbolic Behavior	4.0625	4.055		1.02	4.58	3.56	0.5421
Analytical Style	2.615	2.575		1.25	3.28	2.03	0.516
Political Style	2.4375	2.375		1.66	3.33	1.67	0.7406
Human Resources Style	2.475	2.32		1.26	3.26	2	0.5845
Symbolic Style	2.505	2.52		0.74	2.86	2.12	0.3156
Overall Behavior	4.185	4.355		1.21	4.62	3.41	0.5328
Overall Style	4.3575	4.4		1.09	4.86	3.77	0.5541
School Climate Variables							
Student-Teacher Relationships	4.1925	4.305		1.3	4.73	3.43	0.6386
Security and Maintenance	3.8775	4.285		2.2	4.57	2.37	1.0239
Administration	3.9925	4.03		1.39	4.65	3.26	0.592
Student Academic Orientation	3.6175	3.855		2.26	4.51	2.25	1.0673
Student Behavior	2.9525	3.145		1.78	3.65	1.87	0.766
Guidance	4.0925	4.1		1.67	4.92	3.25	0.7864
Student Peer Relationships	3.675	3.685		1.13	4.23	3.1	0.5629
Parent & Community - School	3.03	3.25		1.92	3.77	1.85	0.9021
Instructional Management	3.9675	4.14		1.41	4.5	3.09	0.6398
Student Activity	3.16	3.52		1.8	3.7	1.9	0.8444
API	771.25	827	859	287	859	572	136.2164



## APPENDIX B

## Leadership Orientation Survey (Other)

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This questionnaire asks you to describe the person that you are rating (your principal) in terms of leadership and management style.

**I. Leader Behaviors**

You are asked to indicate *how often* each item is true of the person that you are rating.

Please use the following scale in answering each item.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always

So, you would answer '1' for an item that is never true of the person you are describing, '2' for one that is occasionally true, '3' for one that is sometimes true, and so on.

**Be discriminating!** The results will be more helpful to the ratee if you think about each item and distinguish the things that the ratee really does all the time from the things that s/he does seldom or never.

1. \_\_\_\_ *Thinks very clearly and logically.*
2. \_\_\_\_ *Shows high levels of support and concern for others.*
3. \_\_\_\_ *Shows exceptional ability to mobilize people and resources to get things done.*
4. \_\_\_\_ *Inspires others to do their best.*
5. \_\_\_\_ *Strongly emphasizes careful planning and clear time lines.*
6. \_\_\_\_ *Builds trust through open and collaborative relationships.*
7. \_\_\_\_ *Is a very skillful and shrewd negotiator.*
8. \_\_\_\_ *Is highly charismatic.*
9. \_\_\_\_ *Approaches problems through logical analysis and careful thinking.*
10. \_\_\_\_ *Shows high sensitivity and concern for others' needs and feelings.*

11. \_\_\_\_ *Is unusually persuasive and influential.*
12. \_\_\_\_ *Is an inspiration to others.*
13. \_\_\_\_ *Develops and implements clear, logical policies and procedures.*
14. \_\_\_\_ *Fosters high levels of participation and involvement in decisions.*
15. \_\_\_\_ *Anticipates and deals adroitly with organizational conflict.*
16. \_\_\_\_ *Is highly imaginative and creative.*
17. \_\_\_\_ *Approaches problems with facts and logic.*
18. \_\_\_\_ *Is consistently helpful and responsive to others.*
19. \_\_\_\_ *Is very effective in getting support from people with influence and power.*
20. \_\_\_\_ *Communicates a strong and challenging vision and sense of mission.*
21. \_\_\_\_ *Sets specific, measurable goals and holds people accountable for results.*
22. \_\_\_\_ *Listens well and is unusually receptive to other people's ideas and input.*
23. \_\_\_\_ *Is politically very sensitive and skillful.*
24. \_\_\_\_ *Sees beyond current realities to create exciting new opportunities.*
25. \_\_\_\_ *Has extraordinary attention to detail.*
26. \_\_\_\_ *Gives personal recognition for work well done.*
27. \_\_\_\_ *Develops alliances to build a strong base of support.*
28. \_\_\_\_ *Generates loyalty and enthusiasm.*
29. \_\_\_\_ *Strongly believes in clear structure and a chain of command.*
30. \_\_\_\_ *Is a highly participative manager.*
31. \_\_\_\_ *Succeeds in the face of conflict and opposition.*
32. \_\_\_\_ *Serves as an influential model of organizational aspirations and values.*

## I. Leadership Style

This section asks you to describe the leadership style of the person that you are rating. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes this person, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like this person.

1. The individual's strongest skills are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Analytic skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Interpersonal skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Political skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Ability to excite and motivate*

2. The best way to describe this person is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Technical expert*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Good listener*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Skilled negotiator*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Inspirational leader*

3. What this individual does best is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Make good decisions*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Coach and develop people*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Build strong alliances and a power base*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Energize and inspire others*

4. What people are most likely to notice about this person is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Attention to detail*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Concern for people*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Charisma.*

5. This individual's most important leadership trait is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Clear, logical thinking*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Caring and support for others*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Toughness and aggressiveness*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Imagination and creativity*

6. This person is best described as:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *An analyst*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. *A humanist*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. *A politician*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d. *A visionary*

### III. Overall rating

Compared to other individuals that you have known with comparable levels of experience and responsibility, how would you rate this person on:

1. Overall effectiveness as a **manager**.

1	2	3	4	5
Bottom 20%		Middle 20%		Top 20%

2. Overall effectiveness as a **leader**.

1	2	3	4	5
Bottom 20%		Middle 20%		Top 20%

## APPENDIX C

## School Climate Survey

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**Directions:** This survey asks different groups in a school and community what most people think about the school. These groups include students, teachers, school administrators, other school workers, school board members, and parents or other members of the community.

The survey has a number of statements that describe situations found in many schools. Most of those statements will fit your school, but for those that do not, mark the “don’t know” answer.

**Answer Choice Key:**

- 1 = Most people would *strongly disagree* with this statement.**  
**2 = Most people would *disagree* with this statement.**  
**3 = Most people would *neither agree nor disagree* with this statement.**  
**4 = Most people would *agree* with this statement.**  
**5 = Most people would *strongly agree* with this statement.**  
**6 = I *don’t know* what most people think about this statement; I *don’t know* whether this statement fits the school.**

Please refer to the answer choice key above when making your selection for each of the following statements.

**TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Teachers at this school like their students.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Teachers in this school are on the side of the students.      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Teachers give students the grades they deserve.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Teachers help students to be friendly and kind to each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Teachers treat each student as an individual.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Teachers are willing to help students.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Teachers are patient when a student has trouble learning.     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. Teachers make extra efforts to help students.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Teachers understand and meet the needs of each student.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Teachers praise students more often than they scold them.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Teachers are fair to students.                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. Teachers explain carefully so students get their work done.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**SECURITY AND MAINTENANCE**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. Students usually feel safe in the school building.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. Teachers/workers feel safe in the building before/after school.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. People are not afraid to come to school for meetings/programs in the evening. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. Classrooms are usually clean and neat.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17. The school building is kept clean and neat.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18. The school building is kept in good repair.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

19. The school grounds are neat and attractive. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**ADMINISTRATION (Principal, Assistant/Vice Principal, Etc.)**

20. The administrators in this school listen to student ideas. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 21. The administrators in this school talk often with teachers/parents. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 22. The administrators in this school set high standards and let teachers, students, and parents know what these standards are. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 23. Administrators set a good example by working hard themselves. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 24. The administrators in this school are willing to hear student complaints and opinions. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 25. Teachers and students help to decide what happens in this school. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**STUDENT ACADEMIC ORIENTATION**

26. Students here understand why they are in school. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 27. In this school, students are interested in learning new things. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 28. Students in this school have fun but work hard on their studies. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 29. Students work hard to complete their school assignments. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**STUDENT BEHAVIORAL VALUES**

30. If one student makes fun of someone, others do not join in. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 31. Students in this school are well-behaved even when the teachers are not watching them. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 32. Most students would do their work even if the teacher stepped out of the classroom. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**GUIDANCE**

33. Teachers/counselors encourage students to think of their future. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 34. Teachers/counselors help students plan for future classes or jobs. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 35. Teachers/counselors help students with personal problems. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 36. Students in this school can get help and advice from teachers/counselors. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**STUDENT-PEER RELATIONSHIPS**

37. Students care about each other. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 38. Students respect each other. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 39. Students want to be friends with one another. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 40. Students have a sense of belonging in this school. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**PARENT AND COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS**

41. Parents and members of the community attend school meetings and other activities. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 42. Most people in the community help the school in one way or another. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 43. Community attendance at school meetings and programs is good. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 44. Community groups honor student achievement in learning, music, drama, and sports. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT**

45. There is a clear set of rules for students to follow in this school. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 46. Taking attendance and other tasks do not interfere with classroom teaching. 1 2 3 4 5 6  
 47. Teachers spend almost all classroom time in learning activities. 1 2 3 4 5 6

48. Students in the school usually have assigned schoolwork to do. 1 2 3 4 5 6
49. Most classroom time is spent talking about class work or assignments. 1 2 3 4 5 6
50. Teachers use class time to help students learn assigned work. 1 2 3 4 5 6
51. Outside interruptions of the classroom are few. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

52. Students are able to take part in school activities in which they are interested. 1 2 3 4 5 6
53. Students can be in sports, music, and plays even if they are not very talented. 1 2 3 4 5 6
54. Students are comfortable staying after school for activities such as sports and music. 1 2 3 4 5 6
55. Students can take part in sports and other school activities even if their families cannot afford it. 1 2 3 4 5 6

## APPENDIX D

## IRB Certification

## Completion Certificate

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This is to certify that

**Pardeep Kullar**

has completed the **Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams** online course, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), on 02/28/2007.

This course included the following:

- key historical events and current issues that impact guidelines and legislation on human participant protection in research.
- ethical principles and guidelines that should assist in resolving the ethical issues inherent in the conduct of research with human participants.
- the use of key ethical principles and federal regulations to protect human participants at various stages in the research process.
- a description of guidelines for the protection of special populations in research.
- a definition of informed consent and components necessary for a valid consent.
- a description of the role of the IRB in the research process.
- the roles, responsibilities, and interactions of federal agencies, institutions, and researchers in conducting research with human participants.

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National Institutes of Health  
<http://www.nih.gov>



## APPENDIX E

## Letter to IRB

June 2, 2010

Jean Kang, Manager  
Graduate and Professional School Institutional Review Board  
Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology  
6100 Center Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear Ms. Kang,

On April 21, 2010, I submitted my application for exemption to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Enclosed in the application, were my IRB Application for a Claim of Exemption, along with the following hard copies:

- 2 copies of this cover letter.
- 2 copies of the survey items.
- 2 copies of the Application for a Claim of Exemption and the full set of relevant appendices, including the informed consent form.
  - Appendix A: 2 copies of Faculty Supervisor Review form
  - Appendix B: Survey Item Use Approval Letters/Emails
  - Appendix C: Principal Consent for School Participation
- 1 copy of the Human Subject Training Certificate completed by the principal investigator (PI) and her faculty advisor.
- 1 copy of the dissertation proposal.

Upon the IRB's initial review, some required clarifications/changes were requested. Per those requests, the following changes have been made to my Application for a Claim of Exemption: Under #6, a timeline for record keeping has been established and a method of destruction has been identified. Per the required revisions needed for the Informed Consent form, the following changes have been made: Item #7, #11, #12 from the original Informed Consent Form submitted on April 21, 2010 have been deleted as they do not pertain to my study, and the required faculty name and contact information have been added to item #9 on the new Consent Form.

Two copies of all revised material (Application for a Claim of Exemption and Informed Consent Form) have been provided with this letter (2 copies of letter).

Thank you for your time and consideration of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Pardeep Kullar

## APPENDIX F

## IRB Approval Letter

# PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

**Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board**

6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, California 90045 □ 310-568-5600

June 10, 2010  
Pardeep Kullar

**Protocol #: E0410D07****Project Title: *The Effect of Principal Leadership on School Climate and Student Achievement in Charter Schools in Los Angeles, California***

Dear Ms. Kullar:

Thank you for submitting the revisions requested by Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools IRB (GPS IRB) for your study, *The Effect of Principal Leadership on School Climate and Student Achievement in Charter Schools in Los Angeles, California*. The IRB has reviewed your revisions and found them acceptable. You may proceed with your study. The IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46 - <http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsr/site/guidelines/45cfr46.html> that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

(b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:

**Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research

protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to “policy material” at <http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact me. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Doug Leigh, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Education  
Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology  
6100 Center Dr. 5th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90045  
dleigh@pepperdine.edu  
(310) 568-2389

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Associate Provost for Research & Assistant Dean of Research,  
Seaver College  
Dr. Doug Leigh, Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB  
Ms. Jean Kang, Manager, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB  
Dr. Margaret Weber  
Dr. Spring Cooke  
Ms. Christie Dailo

## APPENDIX G

## Letter to Principal

Dear Principal,

I am a graduate student in the Organizational Leadership program at Pepperdine University. As part of the requirement for the Doctor of Education degree, we are required to conduct an in-depth study on a specific research topic. I have chosen to look at the correlation between principal leadership, school climate, and student achievement in charter schools in Los Angeles, California.

I am writing this letter to request your permission for the participation of your school in this study. After having set strict parameters for the study, I have found that your school meets the qualifications for participation. Schools were qualified based on the number of years the school has been in operation and the number of years the current principal has been in leadership at the current school site. Among all of the charter schools in Los Angeles, only a select number qualify for participation in this study. Your school is among one of those.

This study is intended to be completed through the use of a survey tool for the entire teacher population at the participating schools. No disruption should be incurred by the school for teacher participation time in this study, as surveys will be completed by teachers during their own time. The data collection window will be for an approximate length of two weeks, sometime in June or September, based on when the school year ends for each school. All information and data gathered will be kept confidential and study results will be made available to you upon completion.

The goal of this study is to find useful information that provides insight into principal leadership, school climate, and student achievement. The results of this study will provide useful data that can be used in creating cohesion in school vision and a stronger school climate.

In order to continue with the study, I must receive written approval from you. Your permission for school participation is needed. If you would choose to allow your school to participate in this study, please respond to this letter by signing the attached Consent for Participation. I thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this study. It is leaders like you that make the world of education a better place.

Sincerely,

Pardeep Kullar

## APPENDIX H

## Principal Consent for Participation

You are invited to participate in a project conducted as part of the requirements for a class project in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. For this project I will be doing a survey on principal leadership and school climate to examine any correlations. The research will be supervised by my dissertation chair, Dean Margaret Weber.

The purpose of this research project is to help identify a possible correlation between principal leadership, school climate, and student achievement. This study is only for research purposes. All information obtained will be treated confidentially. No personal information will be asked or used.

For this project, you will give permission to allow your teachers to be surveyed. One survey will ask teacher to answer questions about you and your leadership orientation as their principal. The other survey will ask teachers to answer questions about the school climate based on 10 sub-categories.

For this project, I will administer and collect the surveys, disseminate data, and draw conclusions based on the findings.

By signing this consent form you agree to the above requirements for teacher participation at your school, and give the researcher permission to conduct the survey questionnaires with your teachers.

You are free to withdraw your participation at any time should you decide to do so. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me. I hope you will enjoy this opportunity. Thank you for your help.

Please sign both copies, keep one copy and return one to the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher / Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant / Date

## APPENDIX I

## Informed Consent Form

**INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator: Pardeep Kullar

Title of Project: Principal Leadership and School Climate

1. I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the research study being conducted by Pardeep Kullar under the direction of Dr. Margaret Weber of the Graduate School of Education at Pepperdine University.
2. The overall purpose of this research is to evaluate a correlation between principal leadership, school climate and student achievement at charter schools in Los Angeles, CA.
3. My participation will involve the following:
  1. Completing a survey on the climate of my school.
  2. Completing a survey on leadership of my principal.
4. My participation in the study will require up to one hour of my time. The study shall be conducted on my own time via paper or online.
5. I understand that the possible benefits to myself or society from this research are:
  1. Improved awareness of school climate and principal leadership.
  2. Greater understanding of correlation between school climate and student achievement.
  3. More relevant professional development.
6. I understand that there are certain risks and discomforts that might be associated with this research. These risks include:
  1. Addressing difficult questions in the surveys in full honesty.
  2. The length of the surveys.
  3. The intensity of the questions.
7. I understand that I may choose not to participate in this research.
8. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to participate and/or withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

9. I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact **Dr. Margaret Weber at (310) 568-5600 or Margaret.Weber@pepperdine.edu** if I have other questions or concerns about this research. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I understand that I can contact **Dr. Doug Leigh, Chairperson of the Graduate and Professional Schools IRB, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, 6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90045, (310) 568-2389, dleigh@pepperdine.edu**.
10. I understand to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have received a copy of this informed consent form which I have read and understand. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.

---

 Participant's Signature

---

 Date

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person's consent.

---

 Principal Investigator

---

 Date