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# Faith-based charter school success at education ground zero

Tambrelyn D. Quick

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Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

FAITH-BASED CHARTER SCHOOL SUCCESS AT EDUCATION GROUND ZERO

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy

by

Tambrelyn D. Quick

July, 2012

Robert R. Barner, Ph.D. – Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Tambrelyn D. Quick

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

Doctoral Committee:

Robert R. Barner, Ph.D. – Chairperson

June Schmieder-Ramirez, Ph.D.

Eric Todd, Ed.D.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ who has called, saved, kept, and equipped me for my pilgrimage here on earth…

My grandparents Napoleon and Florence Quick who lived through an era in United States history when this type of accomplishment was not possible for them, but, who managed to instill the value of education in their children and grandchildren.  Their dream is manifesting 100 years later...

My mother, Lorraine Quick whose love for her children, education, and the language arts has inspired me and whose unconditional love and support encouraged me through this process and continues to encourage and amaze me on a daily basis.

  "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Isaiah 40:31

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My sincerest thank you goes out to all the exceptional leaders who took the time and invested the effort to help make this dissertation study possible. Your righteous resolves, unguarded and transparent demeanors, and self-less service make me proud to be named

among such extraordinary leadership in education. You are all much needed beacons in a searching community.

And finally, from the deepest part of my heart, a grateful thank you to my nephew, niece, aunts, uncles, and cousins.  Your understanding when I was absent from events and gatherings and your willingness to keep me included even though a demanding schedule kept me away, served to affirm what people tell me all the time, I have a wonderful family! May the blessings of God continue to shine upon us, binding us together with cords that cannot be broken.

# VITA

## Tambrelyn D. Quick

## ACADEMIC PREPARATION

**PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY**
Los Angeles, CA                                                2012
Doctorate of Education
Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATION
SYNDICATE, EMBASSY CES**
New York, NY                                                  2001
Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA)

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**
Ypsilanti, MI                                                 1999
Administrative Certification
Elementary and Secondary Administration, K-12

**WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY**
Detroit, MI                                              1994- 1996
Master of Arts in Teaching
Teacher Certification

**WILLIAM TYNDALE COLLEGE**
Farmington Hills, MI                                          1984
Bachelor of Religious Education

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF INKSTER**
Inkster, MI                                              2004-2011
Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

**WAYNE COUNTY REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE
AGENCY**
Wayne, MI                                               2003-2004
English Language Arts Consultant

**DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Detroit, MI                                             1993-2003
English Language Arts Instructional Specialist
English Language Arts Teacher

ABSTRACT

This study examined the practices of three faith-based charter schools with sustained student enrollment within the Metropolitan Detroit area. Qualitative data analysis methodologies were used to identify the similarities and differences between the structural components/correlates manifested within these three schools and Effective Schools Research.

The goals of this project were two-fold. The first goal was to look in-depth at the internal make up of three separate institutions to identify whether or not they aligned to the tenets of Effective Schools Research. The second goal was to compare these tenets across schools to identify their similarities and highlight their difference in an attempt to provide possible explanations for their success. The objective of this project was to identify, for administrators and the educational community, elements within these schools that may have been effective in sustaining enrollment and viability, and might be identified as or perhaps labeled among research-based best practices for urban charter schools.

A combination of adult entrepreneurs and leaders from three successful charter schools were formally interviewed. Each participant was interviewed separately for thirty to sixty minutes on their own individual campuses. A twenty-one question interview protocol was used to extract information, beliefs, ideals and perceptions from leaders in reference to the five original correlates of the Effective Schools Research. A

non-participatory facility walkthrough was conducted at each individual campus and an informational document review was performed for each school.

The study concluded that all three schools shared total alignment in three of the five correlates: (a) High Expectations for Student Success, (b) Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance, and (c) Safe and Orderly Schools.  In addition to this alignment, however, schools held unique qualities which may also contribute to their individualized success. The remaining two correlates, (d) Strong Administrative Leadership, and (e) A Focus on Basic Skills, revealed a distinctive dissimilarity in leadership style and their approach to student mastery of basic skills.

**Chapter 1. The Problem**

**Background**

For over two decades, our nation has been struggling to find solutions for the lack of student achievement in schools across the country (Legters, Balfanz, & McPartland, 2002).  Global competition and the state of the world's economy reveal the need for national student preparedness if the United States will remain a leader in innovation and forward progress (Pink, 2006).  A national challenge has led states to develop frameworks for curriculum, institute mandatory assessments, and even attach achievement to school funding.  Still, our nation's problems persist.  Students from urban and rural areas are dropping out in staggering numbers.  According to Bridgeland, DiIulio, and Burke-Morison (2006), the national high school drop-out rate hovers at around 68-71%.  Colleges and universities admissions offices report that many of the students who do actually enroll are deficient in the necessary skills to pass basic freshman courses.  Large, comprehensive high schools have become plagued with problems ranging from students skipping class to blatant acts of violence against fellow classmates. "Students age twelve to eighteen were victims of more than 2.7 million total crimes at school" (IES National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000, para. 2).

In an attempt to address the problem, many school districts, local public schools, management companies, and states have redesigned, reconstructed, or taken over existing schools that have failed to effectively educate students (Grundle-Krieg, 2009). While individual schools have experienced success (Coalition for Community Schools, 2010), whether the initiatives are effective on a much larger scale remains to be seen.

A drawback to this type of solution is the probable transferring of the problem to a supposedly new school. Redesigning, reconstructing, and take over strategies often change the structure and daily functions but keep the same mentality in both staff and students. This could possibly build a terminal condition into the school's foundation and eventually become more of the same all over again.

For a fresh start, a new outlook, and lasting change in performance, moral values, culture, and operations, the launch of a new school is controversial but paramount (Hawkins, 2010). Here culture, performance, moral values, and operations have the opportunity to be created, defined, and structured in ways that are meaningful for the population without the interference or intrusion of systemic bureaucracy and traditional methodologies (Young, 2009). Authentic change, greater focus, and access to opportunities can thrive in a new environment that seeks to augment education and develop character in the process. Educational and professional competition in a global society are unfriendly to those who are not astute or do not hold the integrity for lasting relationships and partnerships. At present, this nation's free and compulsory education is not producing these types of graduates in mass (Ethics of American Youth, 2000, 2010). This study seeks to focus on the common characteristics of three independently run charter schools with sustained enrollment in the Metropolitan Detroit area that appear to serve as viable models of educational alternatives to traditional public schools.

**Statement of the Problem**

The movement to establish more private, academy, Christian, and especially charter schools in lieu of failing public schools is one riddled with controversy (Rosen & Mehan, 2003). Ideally, this approach was proposed as early as the 1970s in order to

decentralize public schools and provide choice for those who are most disenfranchised (Kolderie, 2005).  Minority families and families of low socioeconomic status rarely find the means to relocate their children to more ideal situations and, therefore, find their children trapped in a cycle of disengagement and low achievement (DeMint, 2009).  This movement brings new schools and opportunities into the neighborhood, thereby eliminating the burdens of relocation and transportation issues.  Parents, through this option, are empowered and provided the ability to make life-changing decisions concerning their child's education (Foundation for Educational Choice, 2010).  Here is where the benefits of educational competition shine brightest.  The difference between the perpetuated cycle of failure and the opportunity for guided success may very well lay in the single prospect of much-needed choice.

While the creation of new schools can provide needed choice for disenfranchised families, not all agree that this approach is the most beneficial for all entities involved. Public school employees and especially teachers unions have launched initiatives to halt progress and preserve jobs that range from filing lawsuits to a march on Washington, DC (Weil, 2010a).  The scaling-up of new charter schools threaten the status quo and places in jeopardy the jobs of all those who are employed in failing schools both public and charter (Smith & Petersen-Landry, 2006).  Loss of livelihood, the state of the nation's economy, and the increasing number of unemployed teachers due to district downsizing serves only to escalate the controversy.  The movement is being taken very personally by some.  Public educators argue that, inside charter schools, teacher quality, curriculum and instruction, systems and operations, and school building leadership are as poor as and often worse than in public schools and, therefore, are yielding the same results (Buckley

& Schneider, 2005). Many traditional public school employees see this movement as an attempt to dismantle public education and reduce the profession and salary base to those of non-degreed and non-educated hourly workers. A war to save public schools and educators and against newly developed charter schools has been unofficially declared. While it may be true that politicians and charter school advocates have their own personal agendas, the need for new, smaller, and improved schools in areas where failing schools persist is apparent. And, like successful schools around the country, many charter schools are being met with success (Coalition for Community Schools, 2010). What variables, when combined, make these schools thrive while others fail? Might these variables provide a template for the successful and effective launch of new schools? The answer to these questions and an in-depth investigation into successfully run charter schools through the lens of effective schools research might provide some insight.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to identify what similarities and differences, if any, exist between the structural components of three charter schools with sustained enrollment and were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

**Research Questions**

1. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

2.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

3.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

4.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

5.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

**Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by two theoretical frameworks.  Within the conceptual domain of civil liberties, parents of disenfranchised students should be empowered to exercise their right to pursue educational equity for their child through the mode of choice.  Within the field of education, the nature of this study is informed by the educational reforms that seek to improve the quality of education and to address the need for augmented student achievement.

**Choice.**  From a civil liberties perspective, the right to choose sanctions the actions of parents who make the decision to remove their children from failing schools or to the schools they desire (Friedman, 2004).  When exercised, however, there may be consequences that further erode the already crumbling public educational system

(Ravitch, 2010).  In the late 1980s, the American educational system and its prospects for

the future so concerned our citizens that a national study was initiated.  That study asserts

that:

> All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost.  This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, para. 1)

This study affirms the parental right to pursuit educational equity.

**Reform.**  Lack of performance in our nation's high schools has been highlighted

in both national study and state reports.  According  to Bridgeland et al. (2006), "Each

year almost one third of all public high school students–and nearly one half of all blacks,

Hispanics, and Native Americans–fail to graduate from public high school with their

class" (p. 1).  Poor performance is among the many contributing variables.  The desire

and futile attempts to raise the level of student achievement has brought into the spotlight

the need for radical educational reform. Although varied reform methodologies have been

attempted, still, there is no evidence that these reforms can deliver on their promises

(Ravitch, 2010) or that any effort is transferrable across populations or sustainable over

great lengths of time.  Copperman (as cited in Bridgeland et al., 2006) further concluded

that, "For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one

generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents"

(p. 1).  These supporting theories serve to substantiate the need for continued reform

efforts.  As reform theories develop, efforts in this area may prove to further support the

variables of this study and have a pivotal role in the transformation of the nation's educational system.

**Operational Definitions**

Presented below are the operational definitions of variables the researcher has identified for this study.

*Effective schools research.* Research conducted by Edmonds (1979) in response to a paper funded by the U.S. Office of Education, which concluded that family background alone determined success in school despite school efforts (Coleman, 1966). Edmonds (1979) identified effective schools where students from low income and poor families were highly successful and proved that schools can and do make a difference.

*Structural components.* The school's internal workings as an organization (McNeil, 1986), especially those components associated with academics and operations, such as strong administrative leadership, a focus on basic skills, high expectations for student success, frequent monitoring of student performance, and a safe and orderly environment (Edmonds, 1979).

*Charter schools.* These schools are:

> nonsectarian public schools of choice that operate with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. The 'charter' establishing each such school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. (U.S. Charter Schools, n.d., p. 1)

**Key Terms**

The following key terms have been determined essential to full understanding of information presented in this study.

*Choice*.  For the purposes of this study, the operational definition for choice is, "letting every parent send their child to the school of their choice regardless of where they live or income.  Parents choose schools based on their child's needs, not their address" (Foundation for Educational Choice, 2010, para. 1).

*Educational reform.*  To improve by changing the form and reversion to a pure original objective, the instruction and activity that imparts both knowledge and skill to school age students.  This is accomplished through improving teacher quality, developing better data systems, enhancing standards and assessments, and addressing low-performing schools (Smarick, 2010).

*Educational entrepreneur.*  A school founder (Ancess, 1997) or "visionary thinkers who create new for-profit or non-profit organizations from scratch that redefine our sense of what is possible" (Smith & Petersen-Landry, 2006, p. 1) in order to impart both knowledge and skill to school-age students.

*Educational facility.*  Building or place, be it public, private, charter, or parochial housing, pre-k through 12$^{th}$ grade, where both knowledge and skill is developed or generated from within (Gerwin & Mitchell, 2009) school age students.

*At-risk.*  K-12 students:

> who are not experiencing success in school and are potential dropouts.  They are usually low academic achievers who exhibit low self-esteem.  Disproportionate numbers of them are males and minorities.  Generally they are from low socioeconomic status families.  Students who are both low income and minority status are at higher risk; their parents may have low educational backgrounds and may not have high educational expectations for their children. (Donnelly, 1987, para. 1)

*Process.*  "A process is an activity which takes place over time and which has a precise aim regarding the result to be achieved.  The concept of a process is hierarchical

which means that a process may consist of a partially ordered set of subprocesses"

(Muller, 2010, p. 1).

*Faith-based.* "A faith-based charter school is a charter school that is quite simply

in some way based on faith." (Weinberg, 2008, p. 9).  The critical point for religious

leaders considering opening a charter school is whether they will be able to fulfill their

desired mission through a school that may accommodate religion but not endorse

religion." (Weinberg, 2008, p. 8).

*Ethics*. **"**Ethics are about making choices that may not always feel good or seem

like they benefit you but are the right choices to make." (Curry, n.d., para 1).

*Walkthrough.* "a systematic and coordinated method of gathering data to inform

district-and school-level decision making. They involve establishing a focus and then

engaging strategically selected teams of individuals in collaborative observations of

classrooms and the interactions among teachers, students, and academic content."

(Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010, p. 2).

*Interdisciplinary. "*a knowledge view and curriculum approach that consciously

applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central

theme, topic, issue, problem, or work." (Concept to Classroom p.1 as cited in Jacobs,

1989).

**Importance of the Study**

The compulsory education system of the United States has been functioning in the

same manner for over 150 years (Chavous, 2010).  Its ability to educate all children has

come into question as our nation struggles to meet individual needs.  This has encouraged

a host of educational initiatives that seek to remedy the marked decline in the academic

performance of students. Educational reform efforts, ranging from standardized testing measures for students to teacher quality within institutions, have become a part of societal discussions nationwide. And, even though the vast majority might come into agreement that "an accountability system that deems a large majority of schools to be failures is not a sensible way to discern which schools are truly low-performing" (Jennings, 2010, p. 2), we are consumed with finding solutions. Among the many options to address the nation's need for augmented student achievement are the controversial alternatives to public school education. At the center of the controversy is the rapidly developing alternative of charter schools (Teske, Schneider, Buckley, & Clark, 2000).

In the Metropolitan Detroit area, in particular, the decline of the automobile industry and the massive migration of citizens searching for jobs to the southeastern region of the United States from Detroit, have created an educational and economic challenge unique to the area (Ingrassia, 2008). The systematic dismantling and state take over of the Detroit Public School System, the dramatic decline in student enrollment, along with the continual lack of student achievement have created a disdain for public education among both students and parents alike (Weil, 2010b). The situation has become so dire that U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, called it "Ground zero for education in this country" (Murray, 2011, p. 1) and, when speaking about its situation as a whole, stated that "What's been going on in Detroit is a disgrace" (Oosting, 2010, p. 1). Schools of choice options and charter school alternatives have attracted students and parents in large numbers. The situation at best is dire for local public schools but is extremely advantageous for public school alternatives. Concurrently, the rising cost of employees and benefits, running facilities, purchasing materials, and transportation has

contributed just as much to the economic stress on alternative schools as it has on public schools. Still, these schools thrive. This highlights the prevalent assumption that variables other than economics might have greater influence.

The level of disenfranchisement of both students and voters in the city has not only sparked controversy (Grundle-Krieg, 2009), but has left the children of concerned citizens trapped in failing schools without the expectation of immediate systemic change. Reform will take years, something parents are certain they do not have. With the passing of time comes leaner prospects and further disenfranchisement. For these parents, *choice* is not optional, but rather forced. There are no other alternatives. The current situation has forced the economically and educationally underprivileged into acts of desperation and fear in the hope that education and, eventually, lives will be salvaged in the process (Wayland, 2011). This study attempts to discover the methodologies, practices, and identifiable processes of successful, highly effective, and sustained charter schools in this unique geographic area.

An understanding and identification of effective charter schools will accomplish two objectives that stand to impact national policy and redefine the organizational landscape of public education. At the onset, clearly identifiable components for assessing effectiveness could possibly impact how schools are evaluated. Educational entrepreneurs and institutions that have had great success with students, implemented innovative educational ideas, and are discontented with the systemic bureaucracy to accomplish simple tasks will have the knowledgeable option of effective charter school launch rather than capitulating to the status quo of public education (Smith & Petersen-Landry, 2006).

The experienced educator may be encouraged to launch and lead schools that are both effective and sustainable over time. This helps not only to ensure that choice is available to the disenfranchised but rather that *quality* choice is available. Additionally, it seeks to encourage replication. Like the industrial era, when small businesses and factories began to emerge offering specialized goods and services to the major industries, likewise, cities across the nation stand to benefit from the possibility of small and specialized learning facilities reshaping the landscape and addressing the much desired need for eventual citizens whose achievement and productivity are varied in both scope and outcome. Those matriculating are prepared for all facets of life: work, continued education, entrepreneurship, and homemaking.

Although it is much too early in its history to know the long-term effects of public school alternatives, a look into individual components and small identified places of success provide information that may be deemed paramount to and supply valuable information toward the unanswered questions of effectiveness and viability over time. Whether all of the energy concerned politicians, legislators, school districts, educators and even parents have invested in charter schools as a method of educational reform for the success of students remains largely unevaluated. Even more evasive are the reasons for the success of some over the unrealized success of others. Schools similar in demographics, socioeconomic status, and focus may differ distinctly in their ability to address the needs of the population (Hawkins, 2010). Chosen reform strategies, methodologies, and adopted procedures are contributors to success or failure. How much and to what extent these variables contribute value and worth, however, remains elusive. Therefore, the benefit of this study is that it may supply valuable and worthy

evidence of adopted strategies  and shared methodologies for school success that are both replicable and sustainable for charter and non charter institutional leadership alike.

**Limitations**

Within the realm and scope of the study, there are certain limitations that exist. The first limitation is that this study is limited to character/faith-based Preschool-12th grade charter institutions located within the Detroit Metropolitan area only.  This not only reduces the number of schools studied, but factors such as geographic, demographic, and economic issues along with religious ethics, may be unique to the individual schools and therefore the results cannot be generalized to include all charter institutions in the Detroit Metropolitan area.  These factors may skew the decisions and actions of participants chosen for study.

Second, the findings within this study may not be applicable to or representative of all charter schools that may have elected to open in urban areas.  Additionally, independent charter schools across the state of Michigan and the broader spectrum of the United States may be experiencing urban success but for vastly differing reasons.  Those differing factors in other areas will not be studied.  The broader scope may or may not reveal another trend or pattern for success by these types of schools in general.

Finally, the findings of this study are limited to the researcher's level of access to the institutions studied.  The collection of qualitative data is dependent upon the level of transparency and availability of the leaders of the institutions.  Further, limitations may exist with institutions that have experienced longevity.  Some may require additional historical research, as many original leaders may be deceased, relocated, or retired.

**Assumptions**

It is assumed that leaders will be transparent, forthcoming, and honest in their sharing of data, circumstances, and other information. An attempt at triangulation may very well assess the validity of the responses of leadership. Interviews and walkthroughs, along with historical literature and public data may yield an element of reliability at least in areas of verifiable data. Founder and leadership interviews, conversations, and perspectives may prove to be the most viable methodology to obtain intangible data, such as beliefs and perceptions. Therefore, three areas of data collection will be attempted. Founder and leadership interviews, facility walkthroughs and observation, and analysis of documents, artifacts, and materials collected from historical archives and/or state and local assessment results data will be collected.

Charter schools in the Detroit Metropolitan area that are chosen for this study will be doing well. These schools should not be marginal in their performance outcomes nor slated for state takeover or closure.

## Chapter 2. Review of the Literature

**Introduction**

This review of literature will look briefly at the history of the charter school movement in the United States and the State of Michigan. It will also examine the original five components of effective schools. These components, defined as *correlates* include (a) strong administrative leadership, (b) a focus on basic skills, (c) high expectations for student success, (d) frequent monitoring of student performance, and (e) safe and orderly schools.

**History**

**The call for reform.** The backdrop that explains why the effective schools research fathered by Dr. Ronald Edmonds (1935-1983) is relevant today begins with a look at what Lezotte (2009) calls the *perfect storm* to launching the educational reform movement. Lezotte highlights three trends that ushered in the environment that has led to present-day reform efforts. The first of the three trends is the emergence of a competitive global market. We have evolved from a national to an internationally focused society. The second trend is a change in the demographics associated with the education of children. The middle-class birth rate is down while the low-income birth rate is escalating. According to Lezotte, this means that the students who are more difficult to teach are the main population in schools. And, thirdly, the amount of resources being funneled into education has either remained the same or has declined over time. These three trends, the market, demographics, and resources have paved the way for school reform.

In addition to the trends, Lezotte (2009) also associated three truths about public education in the United States that inform the climate of change. The first truth is that our public educational system was not designed in order for all students in attendance to receive a high-quality education. This was not the original mission. Second, contrary to popular opinion, Lezotte asserts that performance in American schools has not declined, rather the mission has changed. He identifies the change agents as the mandates of accountability and *No Child Left Behind.* Thirdly, he purports that there have always been some schools that were more effective than others even though they were similar in circumstance. Research generated as a result of this third *truth*, according to Lezotte, is what policy makers use as proof that the new mission is able to be accomplished: The Effective Schools Research.

**U.S. charter schools.** The movement to mobilize public schools into autonomous entities began as early as the 1970s with an educator by the name of Ray Budde. Budde (1974) outlined what he saw as the answer to school district change in the United States. His proposal would decentralize districts and restructure them in order to place students and teachers at the center of the organization. Most educators and politicians at the time of Budde's paper saw little or no need for such drastic reform. This early timing pushed Budde's ideas onto the back burner, where it laid dormant until 1988 (Kolderie, 2005).

Between the time that Budde (1974) introduced his paper and 1988, when he widely distributed it, the situation of our nation's schools changed. *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), a very prominent report on the nation's schools, and *A Nation Prepared* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986), a report highlighting the need for better teachers, created an outcry for

change, which then led the way for dramatic reform. These reports revealed that

American students were not achieving like other industrial nations and that they would

not be able to compete in a global economy. They further revealed that the teaching,

standards for teachers, and level of teacher preparation needed augmentation. The

climate throughout the country was created for change. In 1988, the head of the

American Federation of Teachers, Albert Shanker, gave a speech proposing the idea of

autonomous schools (Shanker, 1988). These schools would be led by teachers. The look

of autonomous schools and the envisioned design by Budde would not be realized, but

steps began that launched what we have known as the Charter Movement.

Another factor in the development of charter school history was and remains our

nations desire for educational choice, especially for and when considering the

disenfranchised. Many see choice as the precursor to the charter movement. The history

of choice is laden with controversy. While Budde (1974) and Shanker's (1988)

contributions definitely get them acknowledged as forerunners to charters, many

educators, historian, and researchers refer to Brown v. Board of Education (1954) as the

catalyst and forerunner for the Choice Movement (Foreman, 2005).

Opponents of the choice movement criticize choice reform efforts because of its

ties to the anti-desegregation agenda in the 1950s (Parker, 2001). Foreman (2005) agrees

that states in the south used choice as a means to avoid Brown v. Board of Education

(1954) compliance and to further the segregation of students. However, as time evolved

and the demographic populations changed, so did the need for much of the legislation

concerning integration (Foreman, 2005). Today, choice has evolved into many reform

ideas, ranging from alternative schools like magnets to more progressive ideas like

vouchers and charter schools.  Where historians, authors, and researchers must agree now is that the debate for or against choice and/or charters is futile, charters have emerged from virtual obscurity to being the primary school reform choice (Foreman, 2005)

The 1990s proved to be the pivotal decade for the charter schools movement.  For the first time since the ideas originated, many states began seriously looking at charters as a viable option for raising student achievement.  What was once considered unneeded or drastic in nature had taken center stage and was providing parents and students with options in situations where options did not exist.  The state of Minnesota became the forerunner in legislation that paved the way for charters as a reform initiative.  The first charter school, City Academy High School, opened in St. Paul, MN, in 1992; and, before the turn of the century, there were over 1600 charter schools across the United States (Parker, 2001).

After the turn of the century, between the year 2000 and the 2003-2004 school year, the growth rate of charter schools averaged about 340 additional charter schools per year.  The largest increase in charters was the 2004-2005 school year, where 448 charter schools opened for operation.  By the next school year, there were over 3,300 charter schools registered across the nation.  Charters were represented in Washington, DC, and 40 of the nation's 50 states.  More than 50% of all charters were concentrated in seven states: California, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin (Ziebarth, Celio, Lake, & Rainey, 2005).  It appeared that charter schools had passed the test of time and were not listed among the passing fads alongside other educational ideas and trends.

*From movement to reform initiative.*  The focus and purpose of charter schools in the United States began to change in the early years of the 21$^{st}$ century.  In their 2005 article, Hill and Harvey described the movement as a 15-year-old adolescent.  And, as characteristic of 15-year-olds, it needed to be watched carefully over the succeeding five years.  Despite the fact that charters were doing well at that time, any given moment could prove to the contrary.  What charters provided toward achievement and how they met the needs of the school community remained paramount to survival.

Simultaneously, analysts and politicians began to explore some of the issues surrounding the charter movement and focused upon three prevailing ideas that changed the movement to decentralize schools into a public education reform initiative.  These widespread ideas were (a) the scaling-up of charter schools, (b) charters schools as a replacement strategy, and (c) charter schools as a school turnaround strategy (Hill & Harvey, 2005).  One of the most popular options that charter schools offered to parents was the uniqueness of their configurations over traditional public schools.  Most schools were configured as K-8 or even K-12 institutions.  This gave parents access to schools that could provide a quality education and made accommodations for families with multiple children (Ziebarth et al., 2005).  Schools that could meet the demands of parents seemed worth replicating.

The idea of scaling-up charter schools would mean the creation of more charter schools patterned after those that were successful.  This would happen as fast as the demands and laws permitted (Hill & Harvey, 2005).  The last decade has possibly seen the greatest scale-up to date. With the help of well-known organizations and networks that drive charter school development and advancement, replication has started and is

proving to be successful (Alderman, Carey, Dillon, Rotherham, & Tucker, 2009). The primary organization that emerged to replicate successful charters schools was the NewSchools Venture Fund. Inspired by the performance of schools like the Amistad Academy in New Haven, Connecticut, NewSchools began its campaign of replication. This goal began near the turn of the century and is ongoing at present. Charter management organizations (CMO) and educational management organizations (EMO) like Aspire Public Schools, LearnNow, Edison, and the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) have all been recipients of NewSchools' funding and progressive agenda (Alderman et al., 2009).

The replacement of low-performing public schools with charter schools is known by several names. These names include *charter conversion, starting fresh,* and *reopening*. They are distinctly different from new independent start ups. In the years following the passing of *No Child Left Behind* in 2002, a host of public schools throughout the nation found themselves persistently performing low and failing to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). Districts were given the option of restructuring those schools. Among those options was an option to close down and then reopen as a public charter school with a clean slate (Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2005). The expectation was and remains that this charter will be significantly different from the failing public school it once was and that achievement would be imminent.

Struggling and failing high schools and their transformations are the driving forces that propel the turnaround reform initiative at present. The emergence of charter schools as a school improvement option is becoming a widespread phenomenon (Lazarin,

2011).  Large school districts appear especially attracted to it, along with the use of CMOs.  In 2008, the city of Los Angeles partnered with Green Dot in order to address one chronically underperforming high school.  The School District of the City of Philadelphia partnered with Mastery Charter Schools in turnaround initiatives from 2005-2010 and is planning a continued partnership with them and several other CMOs in their 2011-2012 Renaissance Schools Initiative (Lazarin, 2011).  A look at the landscape appears to suggest that other cities are positioned to follow suit.  New Orleans, New York, Chicago, and Washington, DC, like Los Angeles and even Philadelphia, may very well be on their way to implementing monumental turnaround reform initiatives.  In 2011, what is yet to be seen is whether or not these charter schools reform initiatives are as effective as they are innovative.

**Charters schools in Michigan.**  The road to public charter schools in the state of Michigan was not without problems.  Michigan has always been a cradle of resistance when it comes to educational reform.  When the results from *A Nation at Risk* (IES National Center for Educational Statistics, 1983) came in, then-Governor John Engler sought to know how the state of Michigan fared.  Investigations and inquiries began.  This evoked immediate concerns from local districts and their leaders.  The investigation results eventually led to the passing of PA 25 and Proposal A.  Together, this legislation on school improvement and funding set the stage for charter school reform.  It very quickly became clear that the legislature was split.  Strong opposition from the Michigan Educational Association (MEA) and local teachers' unions lasted about a decade.

In 1994, amid the controversy between the legislature and public teacher entities, Central Michigan University (CMU) answered the call for a university willing to be the

front runner in charter reform. Out of 14 universities, it was the only one willing to take

the risk. In the fall of 1994, 31 new schools opened that were all chartered by CMU. The

decision by the university president, Leonard Plachta, and the Board of Directors placed

CMU on the cutting edge of Michigan educational reform. By 2009, Central Michigan

University boasted that it was "the Nation's foremost, leading authorizer, having

chartered 57 schools that serve more than 28,000 Michigan students" (Center for Charter

Schools, 2009, p. 1).

What remains an area of interest is how the landscape will unfold in light of

changes in national focus and charter school options. Will the state of Michigan embrace

charter school innovation like its contemporaries or will it remain embattled in court

cases and gridlocked with teachers' unions? In March of 2011, Michigan's largest city,

Detroit, launched what it expected to be its most aggressive charter school plan to date:

Renaissance Plan 2012 (Abowd, 2011). It immediately became engrossed in court battles

that threaten to thwart efforts that move both the state and city forward. Time alone will

tell whether this reform effort will meet with success in another year.

In spite of their turbulent beginnings and rocky roads, charter schools have an

increasing presence in Michigan and especially across the country. Like their public

school contemporaries, if they are to remain viable, they must meet the demand of

constituents and stakeholders. That demand is to provide a first-class education that

equips students for success in a post K-12 environment (Lezotte, 2009). In order to

achieve this, the everyday structural components that determine success or failure may

need to be addressed. Analysis and redesign might prove extremely beneficial when

using research-proven best practices and methodologies, such as those identified by the effective schools research.

## Structural Components of Effective Schools

Effective schools research reveals that there are five foundational themes or *correlates* associated with or connected to augmented student achievement and the effectiveness of schools. These five correlates are interconnected and function as co-dependents upon each other (Edmonds, 1979). They are identified as (a) strong administrative leadership, (b) a focus on basic skills, (c) high expectations for student success, (d) frequent monitoring of student performance, (e) safe and orderly schools.

While other research studies and researchers have expanded upon these foundational correlates, they remain the basis for or the foundations within these subsequent studies and school improvement programs across the nation (Sudlow, 2003). These studies have served to validate and support the original assertions of Edmonds (1979) that these elements, while they may be expanded upon, are quintessential to school effectiveness.

**Strong administrative leadership.** A review of the research literature supports the fact that successful schools may contribute a portion of their success to good leadership. Good leadership has been defined in a variety of ways and characterized by a number of tasks. Some call them transformational, others call them managers, and, still, educators agree that they are pivotal (Chell, 1995). There are two types of leadership that are identified as a focus for this review. The first is instructional leadership, and the second is ethical leadership. According to Edmonds (1979), effective schools need instructional leadership to address student achievement.

***Instructional leadership and governance.*** In an attempt to clarify the role and qualities of an instructional leader, Chell (1995) looks at several definitions and functions that lend themselves to a clearer and functional concept of instructional leadership. As Chell shares, instructional leadership addresses curriculum, interacts with teachers, manipulates the public, staff and students, sets goals and expectations, organizes and coordinates, makes decisions, effectively relates to people, has vision and is able to translate that vision into actions, focuses on student achievement, and is a practitioner. Most researchers agree with Chell on any number of these attributes. In essence, what Chell has shared is that an instructional leader is well rounded and is skilled at a number of operations and tasks.

In light of Chell's conclusions, it is no wonder that Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) take the concept of instructional leadership further and assert that the followers and lay leaders help define the practice of leading. Their concept views leadership expertise as distributed. Other capable adults share in the responsibility of leading in an effective school community. This idea of distributed leadership is further clarified by Lashway (2003) in an attempt to empower developing instructional leaders. Lashway expels the notion that distributed leadership is simply passing out assignments and distributing the labor. Much like Edmonds' (1979) five correlates, Lashway sees distributed leadership as five entities (policy makers, researchers and developers, superintendents, principals, and teachers) that are interdependent.

MacNeill, Cavanagh, and Silcox (2003), who provide an interesting perspective on leadership in general, are not supporters of the term *instructional leadership*. In an article suggesting movement beyond instructional leadership, according to MacNeill et

al., the word *instruction* creates problems in that it only addresses part of the teaching and learning spectrum. They further purport that *leadership* in research is generally characteristic of a principal's behavior rather than including other members of the school community. Like Spillane et al. (2001), and in much the same vein as Lashway (2003), MacNeill et al. are also supporters of leadership being distributed.

Interestingly, though, where MacNeill et al. (2003) provide a unique perspective on leadership is in the area of what leadership does. They remind educators and inform others of the impact of leadership. They suggest that there is relationship and expectation from followers that they will receive some type of positive situational change from leadership, and that is how followers are attracted. Leadership and followers are co-dependent. If leaders do not deliver, followers wane. In short, leadership is all about change. If change does not occur, then the leader, by default, becomes a manager of the status quo.

Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010), in a study conducted for the University of Wisconsin, both identify and confirm leadership as the powerful force for effective schools that it is historically perceived to be. They contextualize leadership into day-to-day practices that are measureable, observable, and ethical. While much of their work does not denote ethics, the connotations of ethics permeates the study and supports ethical practices not only at the leadership level but for those involved in the education of students in general. These range in practice from personal and professional motives of leaders to blatant acts or unobservable perceptions concerning curriculum and instruction, and population.

Reitzug (2008) further contends that leaders must address diversity as an ethical practice to be viewed as moral and empowering. According to Reitzug, there are two categories in particular that ethical leadership engulfs. The first addresses the morality and personal practices of leaders. This category identifies the decision-making motivations of leadership and especially warns of decisions grounded in personal or professional gain for the leader at the expense of the educational community serviced. The other category focuses on non-routine issues within the practice such as teacher-student conflict and the disclosure of sensitive information. This category may not involve personal gain but is still a matter of individual ethics.

Like Reitzug (2008), Shaw (2008) looks at the leadership practitioner as an ethical and moral being who practices the principles of educational service. Both authors stress the importance of placing the interest of others first. Whether ethical issues are as subtle as motives suggested by Louis et al. (2010) or blatant immorality (Reitzug, 2008), these authors help leaders to recognize the responsibilities associated with ethics in leadership and making decisions.

In studying perceptions of ethical leadership, Kaucher (2010) identifies the ethical characteristics valued most in leaders. What Kaucher found was that honesty and integrity ranked highest for desired traits. Leaders were perceived as ethical when they modeled ethical honesty and integrity through their actions and when making decisions. Additionally, Louis et al. (2010) highlight outcomes that show the actual perceptions of educators as ethical issues. Educators in high poverty, urban areas, with increased enrollment and diverse communities, perceived their situation as negative. In contrast, those in low poverty, rural areas, with decreased enrollment and homogeneous

communities, perceived their situation as positive. Student achievement, ability, and behavior were not factors.

*Ethical leadership and decision making.* In stark contrast to the previous researchers and authors in education, Burkett (1998), Sergiovanni (2007) and Monroe (2003) ascribe to leadership values that transcend skills, abilities, and general ethics. Their outlooks engulf the natural abilities and further embrace the spiritually developed characteristic/aspect of ethics in a leader's actions and especially a leader's character. This type of character is grounded in Biblical presuppositions and may not be typical to leadership preparation or typical as an employment expectation.

Their literature further supports an ideology that leaders, in order to truly be effective, must *be* ethical or moral. This is in contrast to the idea of only practicing ethics. Burkett (1998) used Biblical principles to guide leaders into practices that place them at the center of moral and ethical consciousness. He stated further that there are two key elements to the success of organizations. The first is the leadership and the second is the people. These two entities function in partnership and bring varied skills and resources to the organization. The leader's personal attitudes and outlook toward their people, an internal quality that reveals who they are, will frame every decision they make. In this light, perhaps we can understand the condition of many organizations and specifically local schools. As a Christian author and businessman, Burkett is not ignorant of the trends and bottom lines of organizations. It is his deduction that a focus on eternity rather than a focus on the bottom line is the Biblical way of conducting business. In "Business by the Book," Burkett outlines in depth six *minimums* along with the basic 10 commandments that leaders are encouraged to practice if they desire to function

according to God's best.  These minimums, basic to a leader of any organization's ethical success, are presented in Table 1 below, with the scriptural references that serve as a foundation for each minimum.  The scriptural references are written in the New American Standard (NAS) version of the Bible.

Table 1

*Burkett's Six Basic Business Minimums*

| No. | Basic Business Minimum | Scriptural Reference |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reflect Christ in your business practices. | "For the crooked man is an abomination to the Lord; but He is intimate with the upright" (Proverbs 3:32). |
|   |   | "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put devious lips far from you" (Proverbs 4:24). |
| 2 | Be accountable. | "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). |
| 3 | Provide a quality product at a fair price. | "He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out" (Proverbs 10:9). |
| 4 | Honor your creditors. | "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.  Do not say to your neighbor, 'Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it,' when you have it with you" (Proverbs 3: 27-28). |
| 5 | Treat your employees fairly. | "But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors" (James 2:9). |
| 6 | Treat your customers fairly. | "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important that himself" (Philippians 2:3). |

The first minimum is "Reflect Christ in your business practices."  Burkett (1998) references Biblical scriptures Proverbs 3:32, "For the crooked man is an abomination to

the Lord; but He is intimate with the upright" and Proverbs 4:24, "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put devious lips far from you" (p. 11).  Here he pushes the developing ethical leader to the adoption of the practice of honesty.  The inference being that God rewards good actions and punishes bad deeds.  The second is to be accountable. It may be very difficult for an independent entrepreneur to submit his or her actions to another, but that is just what Burkett suggests.  This accountability is not merely reporting in but actually being held accountable by other like-minded leaders concerning how you treat people, especially your spouse and family.

Third, provide a quality product at a fair price.  Burkett (1998) highlights several companies that operated using this Biblical principle and thrived even though their practices seemed to make them vulnerable to competition.  In the end, customer satisfaction and positive word of mouth placed these businesses above their rivals and attracted the masses.  Fourth, honor your creditors.  Burkett describes integrity as " . . . a rare commodity in our generation, especially when other people's money is concerned" (p. 19).  Integrity is tied to a person's deeds.  If a leader desires a good reputation and an excellent witness, paying creditors on time and consistently is paramount.  Fifth, treat your employees fairly.  Most leaders have little problem with fairness when it involves wages and benefits.  The law for the most part will provide guidelines in that area. However, Burkett adds the focus of attitude and relationship which challenges leaders to establish the principle of fairness that deems all people to be important, regardless of their education or income level.  Sixth and finally, treat your customers fairly.  The line between the need to move a product, deplete revenues or inventory, or preserve the bottom line and customer satisfaction often takes leadership down avenues that have little

to do with the actual needs of customers and more to do with profits and viability concerns.  Burkett's approach to fairness encourages the leader or organization to a conviction that places customer need over the desire for personal or business gain.

Ethical practices for the effective leader, while it begins with these minimums, must advance into all areas of personal life and even business life.  There are three other areas of ethical priority that leaders must set, and they are taxes, fraud, and misuse of the company's assets (Burkett, 1998).  He defines tax deceit as failing to pay your apportioned amount of taxes.  While it is a common practice in society, it has no place in the life of an ethical leader.  Fraud, he describes as consistent dishonesty, breaking the rules, and cheating.  And, while misuse of company vehicles, copy machines, and telephones are recognizable to most as being wrong, Burkett takes misuse to another level.  The misuse of pencils, pens, and paper that most consider employee perks is also considered unethical under this category.

Sergiovanni (2007) described leadership or administration as a moral craft.  The role of the leaders is his primary focus.  This role transcends mere attention to the processes and procedures within school and embraces practices that are based in presuppositions.  When leadership is viewed as a moral craft, school leaders first see themselves as ministers to those who do the daily work.  This is far from our society's perspective, where leaders are the boss.  Sergiovanni stated that leadership is personal and it is comprised of three dimensions: the heart, the head, and the hand.  Practicing in concert together, the heart, the head, and the hand enable leaders to transform schools.  This transformation touches not only culture, process, and the institution, but it commences a much greater mission of the school and that is, it transforms students.

Sergiovanni stated that this is accomplished through the building of character and instilling virtue. This is the moral craft Sergiovanni highlights. The molding and shaping of character and attitudes within schools produce communities that are saturated with virtuous and thoughtful people. This type of ethics toward employees and students is rare. Ethics that hold leaders responsible for and obligated to the development of the ones they lead not only shapes character, but fosters the ideas of collective responsibility.

In addition to being ministers responsible for character building, Sergiovanni (2007) purported that:

> One of the greatest secrets of leadership is that before one can command the respect and followership of others, she or he must demonstrate devotion to the organization's purposes and commitment to those in the organization who work day by day on the ordinary tasks that are necessary for those purposes to be realized. (p. 34)

In other words, leaders must be seen as proven and trusted workers for the cause, servants. His foundational basis is grounded in Scripture:

> Ye know that rulers of the Gentiles lorded over them, and that their great ones exercised authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant. Matthew 20:25 (American Standard Version)

Sergiovanni (2007) further outlined management theory by highlighting several sources of leadership practice authority: bureaucratic, personal, technical-rational, professional, and moral. The first three leadership practices provide little or no direction toward moral leadership but are vulnerable to situation and other contributing factors. The dominating source is bureaucratic. This leader provides for followers the hierarchy, rules, regulations, and the script. Sergiovanni stated that those who follow (in this venue, teachers) either comply or face consequences for their non-compliance. He further

described the leader who functions within the realm of personal authority as the expert in

relationship development. This leader may soon find him or herself utterly exhausted by

the work. To be an expert in reading the daily needs of a host of personnel takes both

skill and agility. Balancing this with other responsibilities forces a reward system for

compliance. Sergiovanni defined technical-rational in terms of logic and scientific

research. In this leaders practice, beliefs and values are null, and an applied science

approach is embraced. Teachers and students, however, are not devoid of beliefs and

values, and so challenges within this ideology are apparent.

The final two sources of authority acknowledge the importance of morality,

human emotion, and motivational bonds. The first is professional authority. "Leadership

based on professional authority seeks to promote a dialogue among teachers that make

explicit professional values and accepted tenets of practice" (Sergiovanni, 2007, p. 45).

Here it is the teachers who hold each other accountable for exemplary practice. This is a

direction that many have shifted toward in recent years (Leal & Martindale, 2011).

Sharing the center of practice with professional authority should be moral authority,

according to Sergiovanni. Moral authority derives from the obligations and sense of duty

felt by teachers who have become truly connected to the community's values and ideals.

The author puts it this way, "The school community's norm system and the internal

connections of teachers to it become substitutes for leadership as teachers become

increasingly self-managed" (Sergiovanni, 2007, p. 47).

The 21st century leader is inundated with making a host of decisions on a daily

basis. These decisions affect the lives of countless individuals, whether directly or

indirectly. When we consider the profound effect that these decisions can have on the

personal and professional lives of others, we understand that something far greater than skill and the bottom line must guide our decision-making processes. Monroe (2003) stated in her introduction that she is often asked to speak about the characteristics of good leaders. She described these characteristics as adjectives. Good leaders are smart, inspirational, and a host of other qualities. She distinguished good leaders from great ones by the fact that great bosses, while they possess the characteristics, take them further by putting them into action (Monroe, 2003). There are many characteristics that leaders can possess. However, some in her estimation are more valuable than others. Monroe describes three characteristics that are highlighted below. These leadership characteristics are: Bear-Give-Sanctify!

The first leadership characteristic is Bear. Monroe (2003) described a great leader as one who bears himself or herself in such a way that they become a testimony of doing what they say and what they believe in. Further, staff members will see this leader model for the organization what is expected, inspected, and respected. This line of thought is consistent with Sergiovanni (2007) in that he also encourages leadership to gain the support of staff through the leader being a proven and trusted worker among the people. This testimonial among staff is birthed from the belief that the leader, too, is part of the community and does not stand alone or aloof from the day to day tasks. For the leader, belief or non-belief in this supposition will manifest, eventually.

Monroe's (2003) second leadership characteristic is Give. It is easy for leaders to become so involved in doing the work that that they become goal and outcome driven to the extreme. With this drive often comes the propensity to want things done in a certain way and manner. Monroe offers the driven leader the alternative of giving as a remedy

for this state of being. If indeed you hold to the positive presupposition that employees want to do a good job, Monroe demands that leaders, "Give people the authority, power, and support to work their dreams in order to make the organization and its people bloom" (p. 84). Further, her advice to leadership is to "Give up total authority" (p. 84). This is a difficult task for the dominating boss, but it enables the employee and supports what Sergiovanni (2007) describes as self-management.

The third leadership characteristic of Monroe (2003) is Sanctify. She defines sanctify as "1. To set apart as dear to. 2. To dedicate, to set aside a part in honor of. 3. To make inviolate, that is, not to be profaned" (p. 172). Spirituality and holiness are seldom spoken of in an educational context. However, for the ethical and moral leader, it is quintessential as a fundamental presupposition that permeates every area of life and manifests itself even within the sanctity of the organization being lead. Therefore, the conscientious leader sanctifies their work through caring about the work and the people, making certain the work is worthwhile, demanding that the work benefits both staff and clients, and never allowing the work to exploit the workers or the organization. In comparison, Burkett's (1998) six basic business minimums include much of this line of thinking. His thoughts on the treatment of staff and clients and his focus on laying a foundation that lies within Biblical principles is in harmony with Monroe's assertions toward the treatment of people. The commonality here is that neither relies upon human nature or the organization or the work to inspire value producing feelings concerning people but rather rely upon a much higher authority. Monroe also adds that sanctifying the work involves creating win-win situations. The underlying suppositions are, when clients win or when employees win, the organization wins; when clients profit, when

employees profit, the organization profits.  Building upon Monroe's ideal, there is the assertion of Covey (1989) that implies to every leader in negotiation with potential clients that one can always place on the table the option of Win/Win or No Deal.  This option places the value of human relationships and genuine concern at the forefront of every deal.  It also promotes great business and personal relationships between people and organizations.

Ethical practices and characteristics of effective leadership are quintessential paradigms that leaders simply cannot fail to address.  These paradigms are shaped and molded in the realm of the Spirit and exercised through commitment and conviction outside and above personal and professional arenas.  Burkett (1998), Sergiovanni (2007), and Monroe (2003), each from their individual and unique perspectives, advocate for a deeper level of dedication to these that is bonded through relationship with a higher source.  Burkett demands the Biblical approach where every decision and action is guided by a belief that the Bible is the ultimate authority.  His assertions go beyond the typical and stretch the leader's thinking beyond his own desires.  Sergiovanni commands an approach where leaders view themselves as ministers and/or servants. His subservient and selfless approach to leadership is rarely visibly demonstrated, thereby adding a spiritual dimension to the role of leadership that many have never witnessed.  Monroe stresses the sanctification of a leader's work and relationship with people, and emphasizes being a walking testimony to your beliefs.

The effective schools research, while it adamantly supports instructional leadership as vital to school success, Chell (1995), MacNeill et al. (2003), along with Spillane et al. (2001), expand upon this ideal and advance the scope of leadership to

include multiple tasks and a host of astute individuals within the school community.

Reitzug (2008), Burkett (1998), Sergiovanni (2007), and Monroe (2003) address

leadership by broadening the realm to include both ethical practices and Biblically based

ethical character. Whichever aspect of leadership is embraced, or whether combinations

of these are adopted, the effective school's leader is quintessential to continued success.

As dynamic as leadership is to an effective school, also essential to the success of schools

are the additional four correlates of the effective schools research. Working in

conjunction with strong administrative leadership is an unrelenting focus on basic skills.

**A focus on basic skills.** The effective schools research characterizes mastery of

basic skills in two ways. In his original correlates, Edmonds (1979) stipulated that

effective schools must educate students well enough to access the next level of schooling.

In an updated, reform-era publication that extends the correlates, Lezotte and Snyder

(1997) characterized basic skills acquisition more in terms of leaders deciding what

essential knowledge and skills students need and how they will be acquired. In either

case, mastery of what is essential is paramount. Educational reformist and researchers do

not seem to disagree with these, however, where the literature reveals some discrepancy

is in deciding exactly what essential skills are. Definitions and focus seem to vary

especially when considering elementary as opposed to secondary skills.

*Elementary language arts.* Many schools and educational entities use differing

definitions of basic skills for varying purposes. The definition that aligns with their

mission and purpose is adopted and provides a basis for scope, sequence, and pace

planning. Expert panelists at Education.com (2006-2011) simplified and clarified basic

skills for elementary students as language and math skills. Basic math skills include

counting, adding, subtracting, and multiplying numbers. Basic language skills include alphabet, phonics, spelling, and grammar. This simplified definition of language skills is too limited. The Michigan Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks' definition added to this provides a broader parameter and lens through which literature may be reviewed. Language arts skills according to the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks and Benchmarks include reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

While educators and their communities are open to define basic skills, acquisition of those skills are demanded by law and concerned reformist. For elementary educators, the task of teaching basic skills to mastery has become paramount. *No Child Left Behind* legislation, the pressure of mastery by third grade completion is mounting. More than labor with what should be taught, most of the focus is on how elementary skills should be taught. A review of literature on basic skills acquisition tends to point to *connectivity* for elementary students. This connectivity may be in relationship to their teachers, it may be in connection with the actual content being taught, or it may be connected or tied in some way with the individual's self esteem.

Like many researchers and educators in the field, when considering student success in basic skills, the focus often turns upon the teacher. Dobler (2009) and Griffith (2010) each isolate a portion of the language arts and examine instructional practices and perceptions of teachers. Dobler followed 18 elementary and middle school teachers and their personal reading habits and experiences. These, she concludes, have an effect on how teachers perceive teaching reading and effects their decision-making practices in the classroom and ultimately student success. Further, she concluded that, if teachers are positive and engage as readers themselves, they pass their motivation and strategies to

their students.  As important as reading skills are to elementary, Dobler suggests teachers develop an understanding of process and comprehension, and that this may be achieved through reflective practice.

Griffith (2010) sees the connection between reading and writing and provides insight into the role of the teacher in guiding writing.  Like Dobler (2009), Griffith supports the use of the teacher's own experience as a strategy for teaching elementary students.  This supplies a connection not only between reading and writing content but fosters a common experience between students and the teacher.  Where Griffith differs, though, is that experience and strategy evolve into actual modeling of technique before students with the invitation afterward for students to try it.  In addition, teachers provided student with copies of good writing and thereby used reading as a mode for teaching writing.  This Griffith calls reading like writers.  The connection between reading and writing as an art of language is not separated but interconnected and thereby provide for continued student growth.

One of the challenges of basic skills mastery at the elementary level is the lack of interest or disconnect from the content being taught.  McCray, Vaughn, and Neal (2001) in a qualitative study spoke to disability students who had reached middle school level and still had difficulties reading.  Interestingly enough, these student still had the desire to learn but for some reason had not acquired skills.  Even though they had not experienced success, student after student stated that they wanted greater individual attention from their teacher and that they wanted the same type of instruction as their peers without reading problems.  In a much more personal way, McCray et al. stumbled upon

relationship or connectivity with the teacher realized by Dobler (2009) and Griffith (2010).

For those who might think a basal program is the answer to basic skills mastery, in a study on program fidelity, Shelton (2010) studied two Reading Mastery classrooms where teachers were conscientious and program fidelity was high. This was a mandated program, and both teachers were considered to be veterans. Shelton noted after much classroom observation that the scripted instructional program, even though "presented" with high fidelity, failed to engage students. Students were disconnected from the content being taught. Because students need to connect to text when reading, there was no evidence that they understood beyond surface interpretations. Shelton's look at this reading program suggests a missing component to students mastering basic skills, the teacher. The lessons did not make connections to real life for students and were basically comprehension questions and workbook pages. The educational opportunity did not end in acquisition of basic skills.

Missed opportunities for basic skills mastery at the elementary level can be regained when student deficiencies are addressed through remedial programs (Kaniuka, 2010). In his study on the effects of achievement on reading attitude and self-esteem, Kaniuka found that, in order to increase students' self-esteem and their attitude toward reading, they must first experience academic success and not the reversed. The part esteem plays is still undefined; however, according to Kaniuka, it is still determined to play a part. Basic skills mastery in the language arts appear to have muddled and undefined lines, and the process of mastery tends to vary among individual educators. What works consistently and across populations appears to remain elusive.

*Elementary mathematics.* Acquisition of mathematics skills, on the other hand, appears in the literature to be much more concrete in nature as to what needs to be taught in elementary schools and when to teach it. Kline (2000) and Baroody and Benson (2001) look at the early elementary learner and highlight progressive approaches to the introduction of mathematics skills. As early as preschool, students may begin their journey as mathematicians (Kline, 2000). According to Kline, students begin learning math informally through interactions with their environment. Not surprisingly, they purport that young children make sense of the world of math through counting. They are able at this age and level of development to master very basic understandings of numbers and how they relate. Baroody and Benson, like Kline, are in support of the development of numbers understanding very early in a student's experience. They believe that caregivers and those who teach early childhood education can lay a good foundation for future mathematical success for their students.

An interesting look at methodologies that support skills mastery at the elementary level was taken by Durik and Eccles (2006). Durik and Eccles examined how teachers used cooperative learning, competition among students, and individual activities in both reading and math classrooms. Their study revealed that teachers tended to use cooperative learning with students in the lower elementary grades. However, as student progressed in age and grade, teachers tended to use more competition rather than cooperation in math classes. Also, as students got older the more they were expected to function on the individual level. These results appear to be typical of classrooms in elementary schools.

Whether an educator supports the views of Dobler (2009) and Griffith (2010) that teachers are the primary force in basic skills acquisition, that student connection plays a role like McCray et al. (2001), or that mastery come when student begin at an early age like Baroody and Benson (2001), the fact remains that if a school is to be considered effect by the standards of effective schools research, mastery of basic skills must be the goal for all students (Edmonds, 1979).

*Secondary language arts.* One of the saddest claims among American public educators is the claim that the longer a student stays in the public educational system, the worse his or her academic achievement (Carter, 2000). It is not surprising then that, as Carter reflects, American 12th graders ranked last in math and science among industrial nations. Grim as this may seem, other subjects seem to be hemorrhaging as well. Reading, writing and critical thinking skills have become a central focus as well. Students are not acquiring basic skills, which makes acquiring advanced skills improbable (Pusawiro, 2011). Unfortunately, though, prior to reform efforts, not all schools consider the same subjects as foundational to student success. For this review of the literature, a definition of basic skills is taken from the California Community College Basic Skills Initiative (BSI). Their definition of basic skills states foundational skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language. It also includes learning and study skills deemed necessary for college success.

In light of this definition, a number of authors and initiatives have been reviewed. Biancarosa and Snow (2006), in a report to Carnegie Corporation of New York, recommend fifteen elements that seek to improve middle and high school achievement in literacy. The goal is that students receive literacy instruction that develops them into

independent and strong lifelong learners.  In addition the two-fold goal is to prepare students for success in our complex global society.  Like Edmonds (1979), Biancarosa and Snow embrace preparation for the next level.  Concurrently, Graham and Perin (2007), understanding the connection between reading and writing as an intricate part of a balanced literacy program, provides a guide for improved writing instruction.  Similar to Biancarosa and Snow's format for 15 elements of an effective literacy program, Graham and Perin provide eleven key elements for effective writing instruction.  Simultaneously, they seek to address the need for acquisition and augmentation of basic skills for high school students in the Language Arts.

When looking at acquisition of skills for high school students Ediger (2005) seeks to address the students struggling in reading.  Ediger focuses on only one area of the language arts but is emphatic concerning the need to address this high school need.  In the same manner as Biancarosa and Snow (2006), Ediger outlines an acquisition plan for struggling readers at the high school level that is not only challenging but one she deems achievable.  Unlike Biancarosa and Snow, her plan targets the classroom level rather the program level.  Teachers are encouraged to utilize 5 suggestions for increased reading achievement among students.

Almost as prevalent as acquisition of basic skills themselves is the question of the methods by which these skills are taught.  Teachers who desire basic skill mastery at this level are encouraged by some to rethink their present modes of basic skill delivery. Fisher (2009), Lazar (2006), and Alfassi (2004), each support skill delivery that steers away from traditions methodology and avoids the pitfalls of current approaches, masses without acquisition.  It is their belief that mastery in literacy is dependent upon approach.

Fisher (2009), in keeping with Lezotte's (2001) time on task definition, discusses the time high school students and teachers are invested in the task of skills mastery. In agreement with Lezotte, he believes that the amount of time engaged in learning is paramount for student achievement. After studying fifteen high school classrooms, Fisher concluded that the majority of student time in class was spent on listening and waiting. Only 35% of their time was spent actively engaged. His suggestions for skill mastery are interaction and dialogue. Fisher, like many educators believe students are motivated to learn and respond well to games, projects, and hands on activity.

A focus on student needs and desires toward skill mastery is only part of Lazar's (2006) approach to high school literacy. When it is all said and done, it is the role of the teacher that drives achievement. Teachers who desire their students to learn bring less of themselves and more of what students need to the forefront of everyday lessons. Lazar found that the teachers participating in the study were resilient, very confident, had an extraordinary level of commitment to the children. These are all attributes Lazar felt led to increased achievement among students. Ironically, these traits were found in younger teachers rather than in veterans. In contrast to Fisher (2009) who focused on what students need, Lazar focuses on who teachers are when looking at skill mastery.

While basic skill mastery is still the desired outcome, Alfassi (2004) differs from Fisher (2009) and Lazar (2006) in that her focus is on instructional strategy. Alfassi took two well researched methods and combined them in order to accelerate student skill mastery. The two strategies were reciprocal teaching and direct explanation. She concluded that students had greater comprehension when exposed to the combined strategy. The differences between Fisher, Lazar and Alfassi only highlight the challenges

with basic skills mastery in high schools.  Identified skills, focus, and methodology can vary.

   ***Secondary mathematics.***  Researchers, authors, and teachers of literacy are not the only entities concerned with the acquisition of basic skills.  Like literacy, mathematics foundational skills at the high school level are an equal concern.  Springer, Pugalee, and Algozzine (2007) share a focus on instructional strategy with Alfassi (2004).  Much like Alfassi's approach to combine strategies in literacy, Springer et al. combined Accelerated Math in addition to regular classroom instruction.  The results were increased achievement in participating students.

   In Edmonds' (1979) definition of basic skills, he includes the notion that preparation for the next level is necessary.  When looking at math skills acquisition, Jamar and Pitts (2005) focused on the quality of teacher and what teachers bring to the classroom.  While their approach is similar to Fisher (2009), where Fisher focused on the teacher's role in student achievement, the conclusion in the study by Jamar and Pitts is much different.  In their conclusion, Jamar and Pitts recognized that other factors like student habits and performance criteria have an impact on achievement also.  In the end they concluded that mastery of the basic skills in mathematics is not enough if true proficiency is desired and expected.  What is typically expected in a high school math class requires more than basic skills mastery.

   In an article written for College Teaching, Cerrito (1996) stated that many people in our society and students in particular, feel that studying mathematics is irrelevant to their professional career and daily life.  Cerrito claims that the early separation and isolation of math in high school has led to only an elite group of students moving past

basic skills to actualized advanced skills.  Unique to Cerrito is the idea that mathematics is foundational knowledge and should be integrated into the total curriculum.  She asserts that all subjects should have math integrated the same way schools around the country have integrated writing across the curriculum.

When Edmonds (1979) defined basic skills, it is without question that preparation for the next level of education was the focus.  That next level could be within a subject, a grade level, or a transition.  In either case, skill mastery should prepare students for whichever or whatever comes next.  At the high school level, one of the prevailing concerns of educational reformist is preparation for the next level.  It does not matter whether that next level is post-secondary education or preparation for the world of work, students must be prepared.

Shelton and Brown (2010) in an attempt to address the widening gap between what happens in high school mathematics preparation for college and actual college entry requirements discovers poor alignment between the two.  Perhaps one of the challenges as stated by Cerrito (1996) is that high schools focus on basic skill mastery when in actuality colleges are expecting advanced skills.  What Shelton and Brown suggested as a remedy for addressing this gap is that the accepted norm for college readiness be changed.  Instead of standardized test, student grades, and teacher generated assessments determining readiness, that college placement tests become the standard for a high school student's readiness.  This might alleviate some of the remedial placement prevalent among college freshmen.

Addressing the gap between what is taught in high school classrooms and what is required in the world of work, Perreault (2006) identified two skills that should be basic.

These two skills are thinking skills and personal qualities. These skills are described as 'soft' because they are not technical or knowledge based. According to Perreault, thinking skills are those which help students to problem solve. Personal qualities include personal management and integrity. These skills, while they are not prevalent in school curriculums, Perreault believes should be integrated throughout the curriculum. While Perreault and Cerrito (1996) both expressed a desire to see skills integrated across the curriculum, they are not ignorant of the challenges associated with it. The competition for time and the push for rigor may make these ideas take a back seat to other pressing reforms.

An academic wholism approach to college readiness is what Giuliano and Sullivan (2007) embraced for underprepared college hopefuls. In their program Summer Success, Giuliano and Sullivan developed a model that integrates the acquisition of all basic and advanced skills deemed necessary for college success. The skills identified are math, well developed reading, writing, critical thinking, and study skills. The much needed commonalities between Shelton and Brown (2010), Perreault (2006), and Giuliana and Sullivan place them concurrently in an area ladled with challenges and difficulties. Closing the gap between high school and college or high school and the world of work may offer opportunity for success in life that has been nonexistent to students previously (Shelton & Brown, 2010).

Whether the focus is on elementary or secondary acquisition of basic skills, the effective schools research asserts that preparation for the next level is the desired outcome. Authors on elementary acquisition such as Dobler (2009), Griffith (2010), Kline (2000), and Baroody and Benson (2001) not only support preparedness for next

level but also acquisition by 3$^{rd}$ grade and beginning as early as preschool. Pusawiro (2011), Alfassi (2004), Springer et al. (2007), and Cerrito (1996), who are focused on secondary level skills acquisition, not only support preparedness but college readiness. In addition, they are convinced that traditional methodologies should be abandoned and instructional innovations be adopted. However, basic skill acquisition alone does not satisfy the effective schools research requirements for effectiveness. In partnership with the first correlate of strong administrative leadership and this second correlate of a focus on basic skills is the third correlate of the effective schools research: high expectations.

**High expectations for student success.** It is not possible to get far before you understand one of the challenges with research on high expectations. While there is much to be learned, it becomes apparent quickly that there are varying yet simultaneous definitions for expectations upon which different works are based. Yatvin (2009) clarified two working definitions. The first, clarifies what Pygmalion researchers in the 1960s conceptualized it to be. Expectations to these historic and influential educational researchers were the power of belief to have an impact on the behaviors of others. In other words, what teachers believed about students became true or *self-fulfilling*. The second, reflective of today's reformers, is the power of those who are in authority to demand compliance from subordinates. In this light, expectations connote harshness or oppression. Still, it is clear that both Yatvin's definitions focus in on teacher and administrator beliefs and behaviors.

In regard to realistic achievement, Ozturk and Debelak (2005) describe high expectations as the "linchpin" of academic achievement. While their work discusses augmented expectations based on "real world" classrooms, they place much emphasis on

standards, raising the bar and global competition.  They are insistent that schools and

districts should establish standards that are both high and realistic in nature.  This

definition of expectations seems to focus more on criteria or requirements that might be

mandated or set for the masses rather than a focus on what teachers believe about

students.  It appears that policy and regulation would preclude practice in this definition.

Both Yatvin (2009) and Ozturk and Debelak's (2005) definitions place students at

the center of expectations.  However, the driving force behind student achievement is

drastically different.  Yatvin's focus highlights teacher and administrator behavior while

Ozturk and Debelak highlight school and district response.  Both perspectives appear to

be received and valued among educators. They each have their own benefits and pitfalls.

Working in concert and collaboration, these simultaneous definitions could possibly

provide a well rounded and comprehensively expanded definition of expectations.

In the same vein as the aforementioned authors, Lezotte (2001) defined

expectations but disaggregated the differences between the effective schools foundational

definition and what he called the second generation definition.  In his works, building

upon the works of Edmonds (1979), expectations were described in terms of externalities

and internal beliefs.  Externalities are the high standards that students are asked to meet.

An example of these might be graduation requirements.  Internal expectations are the

beliefs held by adults that students will meet the high standards that are set.  Lezotte's

definition coincides with the ideas of both Yatvin (2009) and Ozturk and Debelak (2005).

The essential elements of both works come into harmony and blend the two viewpoints

into a definition that helps to simplify the dual focus of high expectations.  The focus of

this review of literature is on the internal beliefs and practices of teachers and administrators toward high expectations.

*Pygmalion influence.* Twenty-first century reform efforts have caused a number of reformers to revisit the works originally published by Rosenthal and Jacobson in 1968 and their findings on expectations. In seeking solutions to raising student achievement, Rosenthal and Jacobson's works, as cited in Yatvin (2009) provide interesting and uncontested evidence to support the impact of teacher perceptions and high expectations on student performance outcomes. In their famous experiment at the Oak School in California, these researchers identified for teachers those students that were expected to have a learning "spurt" that school year. This information was erroneous and the teachers were deliberately deceived. The data, at the end of the year and even two years later, revealed that a significant number of these identified students experienced unusual academic and intellectual gains. Their conclusion, these students received something the others did not, the teacher's faith in them. The teacher's expectations and their unconscious communications made the difference (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1992). And, interestingly, contrary to present day reform efforts to raise student achievement, this was done according to Yatvin, without extra time, advanced curriculum, individual tutoring or differentiated instruction.

In a discussion on high expectations Lumsden (1997) stated that what schools profess that they expect is not always practiced and is certainly not true for all segments of the population. Lumsden supports the assertion that teacher expectations are paramount. What sets Lumsden apart from other authors is her concern for the perceptions of the students. According to Lumsden, poor performing students (a segment

in most schools) eventually begin to believe that the amount of effort they put forth won't make a difference in their achievement. This is in part due to the prevailing assumption that low performance means low ability, and low ability is viewed by some as permanent. The challenge to teachers is to routinely respond to students in a way that implies confidence and shared belief in their abilities.

In contrast to those like Rosenthal and Jacobson (1992), Yatvin (2009), and even Lumsden (1997), who focus on beliefs Diamond, Randolph, and Spillane (2004) support rigor. In a study involving five schools of varying demographics, they highlight the differences in teacher expectations from school to school. Not surprisingly, the lowest performing school had the least amount of teacher expectation and was absent of rigor. While students at higher performing schools received innovative instruction and rigorous curriculum that prepared them for the workforce or higher education, lower performing schools embraced traditional instructional methodologies and neglected complex thinking skills and focused only on the basics.

According to Parsley and Corcoran (2003) and the School Improvement Resource Center (SIRC; 2009), high expectations is a climate that must be created within schools. In an article outlining the teacher's role in preventing school failure, Parsley and Corcoran review a plethora of educational elements within schools that if addressed by teachers serves to augment student achievement and have an impact on the student's entire school experience rather than a focus on only one aspect. In the same manner, SIRC outlines eleven strategic steps for creating a climate of high expectations. These range from beliefs and values to involving parents. In each case, the total school climate

is addressed and high expectations are the mantra under which they umbrella all elements.

The uncontested work of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) dominates the research on high expectations. It seems to matter little whether the focus is on the self-fulfilling beliefs of practitioners, the dynamics of academic rigor is examined by Diamond et al. (2004) or even the profession of a created climate by Parsley and Corcoran (2003) and SIRC (2009) the conclusion appears clear. What is expected is realized. This third correlate of high expectations could, in effect, be realized and expected in all concurrent correlates identified by the effective schools research. The fourth correlate of the effective schools research is frequent monitoring of student success. Because these correlates are so interdependent upon one another, to neglect one is to neglect the essence of a partnership. Its benefits are equivalent to the benefits of each partnering correlate. It is their simultaneous outcome that the effective schools research asserts is what creates a valuable and effective educational experience for students.

**Frequent monitoring of student performance.** Many educators and researchers seem to agree that assessing student performance is a vital part of the teaching and learning process. Where they are divided appears to be on the subjects of what types of assessment, how often, and for what purpose they are administered. Which types of assessment are best? What should we be most concerned about? Whose view or which methodology is most effective? These are all valid questions, but the answers to these controversies are not contained within this review, instead, this review attempts a simplistic inquiry into what the research provides toward a practical use of assessment and its impact on student achievement.

In its foundational correlates, the effective schools movement places significant value on the monitoring of student progress through standardized test scores (Brandt, 1982). Since its inception, the effective schools has evolved and adjusted its position to include more frequent assessment to adjust instruction. This in part is due to the amount of time it takes to receive results that could drive instruction much earlier in the student's quest for achievement (Lezotte, 2001). Edmonds' (1979) original assertion for frequent assessment leads to some variance of opinions on assessment in general.

Stiggins (2008) outlined a much more rigorous approach to student assessment. Like Edmonds (1979), Stiggins describes assessment as possibly the most powerful tool available for helping student's master content. Stiggins, however, takes assessment from the standardized level which usually is completed once a year, to the day to day level that encourages teachers to assess much more frequently. Unique to Stiggins is the system of assessment highlighting three levels that focus upon differing outcomes. These levels are identified as classroom, program, and institutional.

The classroom level assessment is engaged by teachers and students in order to identify next steps in the student's learning. The program level is the primary goal of principals, teacher teams and curriculum staff. Their purpose is to fine tune the instructional program to ensure all standards are being addressed. The institutional level assessment concerns law and compliance. The dual purpose here is to monitor whether the school or district has evidence of effective delivery to students and to communicate that evidence to the community it serves. These tenets of assessment set Stiggins' (2008) work apart from the effective schools research and raise the bar for formative assessment practices.

In his works on assessment, Sadler (1989) focuses heavily upon classroom assessment. While Stiggins (2008) and Sadler share common beliefs about classroom assessment, Sadler delves deeper into the role of the individual student in assessing learning. He asserts that if student are really to learn content, they must be able to consistently self-monitor. This suggests that assessment is not a year to year occurrence, neither is it a day to day occurrence. Sadler's approach to assessment is an up to the minute level of assessment. This however is not simply accomplished with the taking of a test or teacher questioning.

Sadler's (1989) view of assessment requires that students be taught the vital elements of self assessment during acquisition of knowledge. These elements include (a) an appreciation of what high quality work is, (b) the skill to compare their work to high quality work, and (c) that they possess strategies to modify their own work. In sharp contrast to the works of Edmonds (1982) and Stiggins (2008) whose assessment practices are to primarily inform teachers and drive instruction respectively, Sadler places a great deal of the responsibility for assessment upon the individual student. The student has a considerable role to play in knowledge acquisition.

In much the same vein as Stiggins (2008) Black and Williams (1998) view assessment as a day by day teacher task. In addition, because assessment is so vital to student performance, Black and Williams discuss some of the pit falls or challenges of classroom assessment. Among them is the lack of teacher training, and approaches with negative impacts. They argue several points that support their assertions. When looking at teacher behaviors, they have observed that first, teachers encourage rote learning even when they desire deeper comprehension and are oblivious to their inconsistency. Second,

the questions and methods they develop are not shared with other teachers and therefore do not get critical review.  Most times they do not assess what they intend.  Third, teachers tend to focus on quantity rather than the quality of what has been learned.  This, Black and Williams say is especially true of elementary school teachers.  These are problematic but according to Black and Williams, is able to be systemically corrected.

The negative impacts asserted by Black and Williams (1998) are much more controversial.  They are grades and competition.  Rather than an overemphasis on grades and comparative results, which inevitably results in students competing with one another, Black and Williams suggested that feedback about the specific qualities of a student's work be given instead.  This feedback is coupled with advice on what the student can do to improve rather than a summative assessment or evaluation of what has been done.

Continuing with the same line of thought as Black and Williams (1998), Marzano (2003) supports two characteristics involved in student feedback.  The first is that feedback must be timely.  Marzano is resolute that feedback must be received throughout the learning process.  This he defines as *formative* rather than *summative* in nature.  The second characteristic is that feedback must be content specific.  According to Marzano, what is tested on standardized test and what is taught in schools may be drastically different.  Therefore they provide little information concerning a student's specific knowledge and acquired skills.  Reeves (2004) is in harmony with Marzano with respect that feedback must not only be content specific but accurate and given to students in real time.  When looking at 90/90/90 schools, Reeves (2003) reported in congruence to Edmonds (1979) that effective schools indeed used frequent monitoring but also provided multiple opportunities for student to show improvement.

The grading of students is possibly the most controversial assessment protocol of all. Most schools in the United States embrace some form of grading as an assessment and evaluation tool. How students are assessed and for what reasons continue to be a bone of contention in the educational community. Kohn (1994) championed the cause for the elimination of grading all together. He outlined three levels of inquiry aimed at approaches to assessment. Level one is described as the most superficial and is basically concerned with how to grade students. Level two engulfs alternative assessments with the intent of a more robust description of achievement. And, level three poses the question of why grade in the first place?

In addition to his levels of inquiry, Kohn (1994) identifies and discusses three rationales among educational scholars for grading. Although these variables may hold some value in and of themselves, Kohn paints a negative picture of them as appropriate tools for assessing student learning. The first of the three variables is sorting. He equates this with permanent labeling. Besides the label Kohn asserts that even the sorting piles where students are *dumped* aren't the right piles. One issue he raises about sorting is motive. The controversial question is whether students are being sorted as a way of segregating them and in turn educating them separately. The connotation being that they are also, then, being educated into specific levels of occupations. As controversial as it appears, it commands attention from the educational community.

The second of the three rationales for grading is motivation. Kohn (1994) describes this as motivation to work harder. According to Kohn this rationale does not take into account the differences between intrinsic (a genuine interest in learning for the sake of learning) and extrinsic (learning to receive a reward or avoid a punishment)

motivation.  It is his belief that extrinsic motivators undermine intrinsic motivation.  One of his most compelling arguments derives from psychological studies that have shown student desire to learn decreases the more they think about what grade they will receive on an assignment.  Kohn's noted irony here is that the purported purpose of the assessment in the first place is to increase student learning when it in fact does the opposite.

The third rationale for grading is feedback.  In harmony with Sadler (1989), Lezotte (2001), Reeves (2004), and Marzano (2003), Kohn (1994) supports providing feedback to students and helping them to meet or exceed high standards.  Where Kohn separates from these educational gurus is his belief that grading is a totally inappropriate way to provide that feedback.  Letter grades, in his opinion, do not offer to students any ideas or ways that they might improve upon their work nor does it highlight for them the areas in which their work might be exemplary.  Stiggins (2008), however, appears to be a contemporary in thought with Kohn in reference to grades being inappropriate feedback.  Stiggins supports the idea of abandoning test scores and grades as viable indicators of student learning and providing useful feedback.  Instead, he supports a descriptive approach to effectively communicating constructive feedback in order to support student learning.

Despite the differences of opinion on the values of specific types of assessment and their purposes and impacts, it is safe to conclude that the consistent goal is to support student learning and provide for positive outcomes.  The beliefs and avenues may vary among educators but the destination is the same.  For whatever reasons or purposes and whichever methodologies are embraced, what remains constant and uncontested is that

assessment of student progress must be done and must be done timely and on an ongoing basis to improve desired student outcomes.  And in addition, schools that are effective use a variety of assessment procedures (Lezotte, 1991).

**Safe and orderly schools.**  The type of learning environment provided to and for students could possibly be one of the most challenging issues facing schools today.  The convergence of a multitude of personalities, agendas, and varied walks of life can make even simple tasks seem daunting in the face of diversity and the desire to provide the best possible service.  While our world becomes smaller and borders between communities fade, the task of excellent service to all students may become increasingly more difficult.  Fortunately, environmental factors within schools that affect student outcomes are replicable across demographics (Sudlow, 2003).

*Tangible evidence.*  In the early years of effective schools research, the environment in which students were expected to learn was described as safe and orderly (Edmonds, 1979).  Environment, according to Lezotte (2009) was and remains important because it is the first of many considerations among parents who are choosing schools for their children, and was described in terms of what was absent from the environment rather than what it contained.  Effective schools were devoid of any tangible evidence of institutional neglect, disruptive behaviors that interrupted the learning process and teachers who were disconnected from their responsibilities outside the classroom (Edmonds, 1982).  This meant, then, that schools and districts allowing buildings and property to become dilapidated or in ill repair, student behaviors that interfered with any other students since of safety or interrupted the flow of daily instruction, and unaddressed issues outside the classroom but able to be addressed by teachers, were not characteristic

of an effective school. In short, ineffective schools were characterized by neglect, disruption, and disconnect but these are addressed and eradicated in effective schools.

Edmonds (1979) called neglect an extended amount of time in disrepair. A significant portion of our American schools are currently in a state of disrepair. With budget crunches and diminishing funds, many are electing to delay new construction and updates to present facilities. Unfortunately, for our nation's students, many of them find themselves in environments where making do with inept facilities is the norm. Poor facilities that affect the learning environment can come in a variety of forms. They may range from poor lighting, lack of sunlight, bothersome classroom acoustics, limited ventilation and temperature control (Schneider, 2002) to more obvious neglect like broken windows that need to be addressed (Edmonds, 1982).

Frazer (1993) argues that people are both influenced and affected by the environments in which they find themselves and that students are in no way different. Frazier's assertion is founded in the research of Edwards (1991) and Claus and Girrbach (1985), which revealed a direct relationship between student achievement and building facilities. Students experiencing improved conditions either improved on standardized tests in general or increased specifically in reading and math scores. Since facilities are an essential element of student achievement, many districts are finding innovative ways to address it without taking away from their academic curriculum (Frazier, 1993).

In addition to the visible physical factors of neglected facilities, disruption from the learning process is an element that also commands attention. In the educational community and in classrooms across the United States, no doubt every school is familiar with students whose behavior is inconsistent with the expectations outlined in student

codes of conduct.  These students not only affect their own personal learning but the learning of others.  Burke and Sass (2008) concluded that a single disruptive student can hold back an entire class.  This being the case, the connection between disruptive students and student achievement has been established.  School's reluctance to address disruptive students leaves the population of learners vulnerable to a lack of achievement.

The third visible environmental element of effective schools is slightly less tangible than the former two but a trained eye is able to detect it.  It concerns the level of teacher connectivity to the learning community.  There is no other aspect of education as vital and significant as the women and men who teach the students in our nation's schools (Devi & Mani, 2010).  Like Edmonds (1982) and Lezotte (2009), Devi and Mani see the intrinsic value that teachers and other adult staff bring to the learning community. There are two conditions Edmonds and Lezotte consider crucial in addressing school order.  The first is that all adults accept that they are on duty all of the time and the second is that rules must be enforced with consistency from all teachers and administrators (Lezotte, 2001).  They are passionate supporters of the concept that students need to know that there are no periods of the day and no place in the building where teachers are not on duty.  When teachers both respond and see themselves as on duty all the time during school hours, order and control of their classroom environment and ultimately their total work environment is accomplished.

Together, Edmonds (1982) and Lezotte (2009), Burke and Sass (2008), and Devi and Mani (2010), paint a relevant picture of the tangible environmental factors that schools need to address in order to provide a safe and orderly place for students to engage in the learning process.  These negative and visible factors, if adequately attended and

erased from the learning environment will foster an atmosphere that Edmonds (1982) describes as being conducive to learning. Without these being addressed, schools seeking to enhance student performance will continue to struggle.

*Intangible evidence.* While the previous elements address the visible or more tangible aspects of order and safety, they do not supply sufficient answers to the burning question, If not these, then what? This early focus remains prevalent today but has been partnered in more recent years with viable additions to school environment solutions. These partnering solutions are not tangible and include relationship, responsibility, and collaboration (Engel, Holford, & Pimlott-Wilson, 2010).

Daggett (2005) takes the idea of school environment to another level with the augmented concept of student/teacher relationships. According to Daggett, students at high performing schools have relationships with their teachers. This is representative of the emergent correlate characteristic that not only does an effective school avoid certain pitfalls but infuses specific aspects that replace negative behaviors and eventually have a positive impact on student outcomes. The works of both Sudlow (2003) and Lezotte (2003) support Daggett's assertions that not only should undesirable behavior be eliminated from the environment but a conducive environment has to be created.

A derivative of this type of student/teacher relationship is responsibility. Sudlow (2003), Daggett (2005), and Brookover and Lezotte (1979) each uniquely defines teacher responsibility but make plain that responsibility is directed toward the students. Sudlow (2003) states that effective teachers in effective schools make basic skill acquisition a priority for every student. Everything else takes a back seat. This places student progress at the center of the school's focus, and teachers are the primary deliverer of this

service.  The majority of responsibility rests with them.  This in turn helps create a climate conducive to teaching and learning.

Daggett (2005) takes a much more aggressive approach to responsibility and outlines in a study for the International Center for Leadership in Education, four additional responsibilities associated with developing relationships with students. Teachers collect essential student background information from parents prior to class enrolment, make monthly progress calls to parents, students are assigned peer coaches supervised by teachers, and coach/teacher/and parents meet to share improvement strategies for the student.  Coupled with a character centered initiative, Daggett's approach will create an institution that prepares student for success in all areas of life through an orderly environment that fosters responsible relationships.

Although seemingly simplistic, Brookover and Lezotte's (1979) conclusion that teachers in effective schools assume responsibility for teaching basic skills, it is profound in its affect on student achievement.  These researchers found that when teachers feel there is little they can do to influence their students achievement, they usually don't. Unfortunately, those who don't positively influence student learning usually displace responsibility for that learning onto the parents and/or students.  It is little wonder why these environments do not achieve.  If all students could teach themselves and parents could teach, why have schools and teachers?

Collaboration is widely accepted as a quintessential element of the effective school environment.  Engel et al. (2010), assert that collaborative teachers not only get good results but produce collaborative students.  It may not be difficult to see collaboration as a positive use of human resources but its value to school communities

may be difficult to identify.  Learning buddies, teacher assistants, and mentors are not always visible but play an essential role in the effectiveness and productivity of both staff and students.  Seen through the eyes of Engel et al., collaboration may be a support for the underachieving as well as an improvement to the staff: student ratio.  In either case, whether undergirding an at- risk student, or providing for individualized time from the teacher, the benefits of collaboration on the climate of schools although invisible can be felt in the daily routines of the staff and students alike.

**Summary**

Whether you are creating, sustaining, or restructuring what is to become an effective school, the task is daunting.  While many search for the magic bullet, the research reveals that no single element working in isolation provides what is necessary for running successful and effective schools.  The amalgamation of research-based best practices, key stakeholders, and visionary and astute leadership serve to transform and catapult mundane and non-conducive environments into an atmosphere of creativity, learning, and possibilities for students.

## Chapter 3. Methodology

**Introduction**

The compulsory education system of the United States has drastically changed since the days of early educational forefathers Horace Mann and Henry Barnard. Its ability to educate all children has come into question as our nation struggles to meet individual needs. In the Metropolitan Detroit area, with its huge shift in economic clout, large populations of struggling families, and the daily decline of educational or employment opportunities, there appears to be a growing trend of isolated areas experiencing pockets of educational success that seems unprecedented considering the city's circumstances. The current public educational system has failed to sufficiently educate the masses in the city of Detroit. A significant number of schools are being closed yearly for lack of performance on State exams. Those that remain are struggling to provide adequate educational growth and are in fear of the looming prospect of having to close their doors, also. In the midst of this, traditional public school alternatives are thriving. Some of these are icons in the Metropolitan Detroit area and could possibly serve as viable educational models. A study of these institutions and their leaders has provided some illumination as to why they are successful when others are not, and what common variables contribute to their ability to maintain positive presence and viability.

This study identifies the similarities and differences that exist between the structural components of three charter schools with sustained enrollment and were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

**Research Questions**

      1. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

      2. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

      3. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

      4. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

      5. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

**Locations and Demographics**

      According to the 2000 census, the City of Detroit is 81% Black, 12% White, 5% Hispanic and 2% other (AreaConnect, 2010). In the year 2010, while these numbers may have shifted minutely, they are still representative of the city's population. Historically, the city thrived because of the booming auto industry and Detroit Public Schools boasted at least 180,000 students. Today, there is little evidence of Detroit's heyday left. The decline of the automobile industry and the massive migration of citizens searching for

jobs to the southeastern region of the United States from Detroit, have created an educational and economic challenge unique to the area (Ingrassia, 2008). The unemployment rate in the city of Detroit is nearly 50% (Garcia, 2009).

Independently run charter school alternatives have attracted students and parents in large numbers. In September of 2011, Detroit Public Schools claimed 75,000 students and this number is constantly declining. More than 100,000 students have left the district. The situation at best is dire for local public schools but is extremely advantageous for traditional public school alternatives. Concurrently, the rising cost of employees and benefits, running facilities, purchasing materials, and transportation has contributed just as much to the economic stress on alternative schools as it has on public schools. Still, these schools thrive. This highlights the prevalent assumption that variables other than economics might have greater influence.

The extreme level of disenfranchisement of both students and voters in the city has prompted the state to design a plan for the revival of education in Detroit. The plan is identified as Renaissance 2012. As hopeful as this plan may appear to some, reform will take years, something citizens appear reluctant to give. Time will not allow for the education of their children in the present. *Choice,* for this community, is not optional, but forced. Lawmakers and parents seem swift to embrace charter school education as the most viable option for the students left in Detroit. This study sought to discover the methodologies, practices and identifiable processes for the successful development of highly effective and sustainable components associated with traditional public school alternative institutions in this unique geographic area.

**Site one: Broad Street Academy (BSA).**    The Broad Street Academy is a

Preschool through eighth grade institution with a faith based orientation.  It was formerly

known as New Peace Tabernacle Christian Academy.  It is located in the Detroit

Metropolitan area and draws a considerable and consistent population from the city

residents.  Established in 1997, it offers two locations strategically located for residential

convenience.  The Preschool location has a current enrollment of approximately 350

students.  The Kindergarten through eighth grade location boasts 738 students.  Its

combined population is 97% African-American.

Broad Street has a greatschools rating of three (3) out of ten (10).  This score is

not very good.  Scores on Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) reveal

that it is average in academic attainment and it received a "C" on its institutional report

card (Greatschools, 2010).  Interestingly, the overall popularity in the community places

the institution well above average.  This contrast in ratings would suggest that the

community is receiving something that the State perhaps is not measuring.

Students at BSA are selected by random drawing and attendance at the academy

is tuition free.  Although selection is random, preference is given to siblings of students

previously attending the academy.  The academy was designed with the mission of

developing students socially and emotionally along with academic excellence.  Student

from BSA usually attend private high schools in the area or apply to choice high schools

across the Detroit Metropolitan area.  Few students from BSA elect to attend traditional

public high schools and therefore it has become a feeder school for two local private high

schools operated by the Archdiocese of Detroit.  Students matriculating from BSA carry

the local reputation of being well mannered, very well behaved, and academically equipped.

**Site two: Ross Woods Academy.** The Ross Woods Academy is a Kindergarten through twelfth grade institution with both an elementary and secondary schools located on the same campus. It is a character and college preparatory charter institution located in the Detroit Metropolitan area and draws a significant population from the most disenfranchised area of the metropolis. Between the two campuses, its total population is 98% African-American. It was established in 1997 but facilities were longstanding in the community. These facilities formerly offered education for the areas wealthy and academically privileged students only. The new school has a current enrollment of over 1,700 students.

Much like the Broad Street Academy, the Ross Woods Academy has a greatschools rating of three (3) out of ten (10). Its scores on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) reveal that it also is average in academic attainment and likewise received a "C" on its institutional report card (Greatschools, 2010). Again, the overall popularity in the community places this institution well above average. Another contrast in ratings would support the suggestion that the community is receiving something that the State perhaps is not measuring.

It is widely known that the Woods academy is a beautiful facility that now houses students that have been the most disenfranchised in the area. Its focus on college prep and academic excellence seems lofty to many but has astonished even its doubting critics. While it does not score on State exams like other college prep schools with different demographics, it is currently producing college ready individuals in an area where the

prospects of college attendance were slim if it was considered at all. Woods seems to bring hope to a people who once had very little.

**Site three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.** The Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts is a Kindergarten through twelfth grade institution also located in the Detroit Metropolitan area. It is a faith-based charter school established in 1997 that boasts two locations and houses elementary and secondary students on separate campuses. J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts is named by historians as one of the first five faith-based charter schools to open in the United States. It is greatly influenced by the Arts and Music Industry. Its founder, a six times Grammy Award Winner, has had what most would consider a very successful career in the industry. In turn, the institution seeks to provide opportunities for talented and budding talent from the area to both develop artful skills and academics as well. The elementary campus has an enrollment of approximately 750 students while the secondary campus enrolls about 450 students.

Again, like the Broad Street and Woods institutions, the J. Baker Academy received a greatschools rating of three (3) out of ten (10). The academy's scores on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), however, places it slightly above average attainment in both reading and math at multiple grade levels but it also received a "C" on its institutional report card (Greatschools, 2010). Similarly, overall popularity in the community for this institution places it, along with the BSA and Woods Academies, well above average. This consistent contrast in ratings not only suggests that the community is receiving something that the State perhaps is not measuring, but further alludes to the premise that perhaps the community holds to a completely different set of

standards for their institution's perceived success. Success may not be a cookie cutter template, but rather, varied in its appearance across populations and expectations.

The Baker school has accepted the challenges of the 21$^{st}$ Century and is striving to produce graduates who can compete globally. Both academic excellence and global competitiveness help define and shape the focus of the Baker student. Students attending Baker not only receive a rigorous curriculum but are well travelled. The elementary students study the United States and engage in extracurricular and curricular travel. Secondary students, in order to compete globally, also travel the United States but in addition engage in international travel as well. Baker students are presented with a variety of options upon graduation. Most of them attend colleges and universities. Some elect to pursuit trades, and still others who are very talented may be introduced to the field of entertainment.

**Research Design**

In developing a procedure for conducting this case study, it was first necessary to identify a case with boundaries and could be compared to other cases. Next, the type of case study had to be decided upon. In this instance a multiple case study was in order. The sampling the researcher selected was based upon successful criteria. Thirdly, an organized planning matrix was developed complete with projected timelines and target dates. Fourthly, data collection began using the six recommended types of information suggested by Yin, as quoted in Creswell (2007): documents and important papers, records retrieved from archives, formal interviews, walkthrough building observations, participant-observations, and the study of physical artifacts. Fifthly, a holistic analysis of the data is detailed in a description of the case along with its correlates/themes. Because

this is a multiple case study, analysis is both within-case and cross-case. Finally, the

interpretative phase includes lessons learned from the study. The following research

design chart shows the alignment between the research questions and the effective

schools research (ESR) correlates. An extended matrix detailing the questions is available

in the Appendices section labeled as Appendix A.
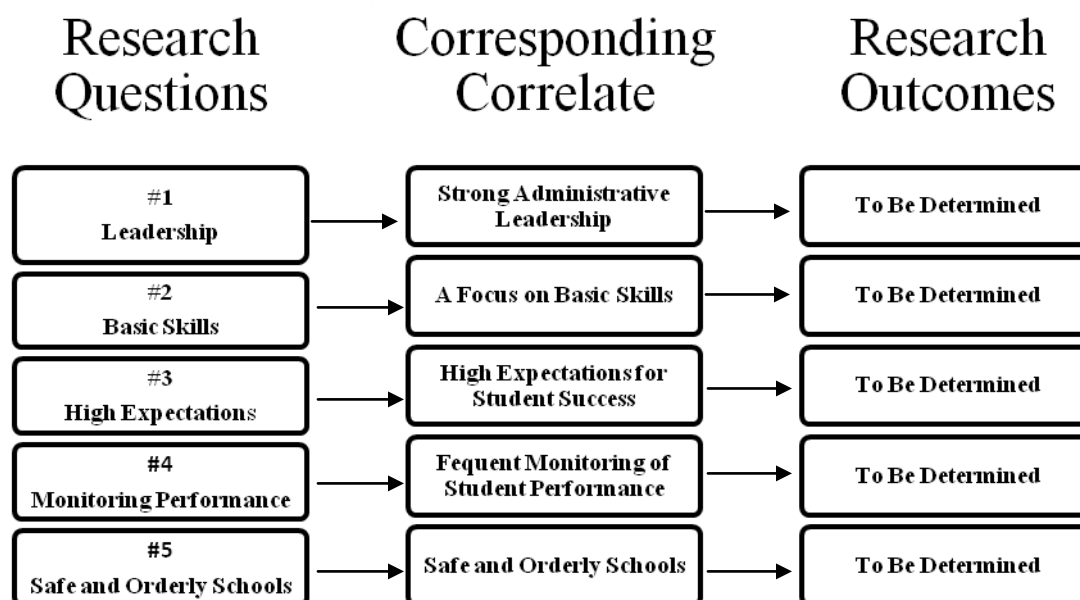


*Figure 1.* Research questions to effective schools correlate alignment depiction for
anticipated outcomes.

**Data Sources**

The educational leaders and/or founder of the institution were encouraged to

agree to a series of contacts including two meetings and two interviews. These contacts

were achieved through a variety of media. There was an initial contact meeting, a one-

on-one recorded interview with the researcher, institution specific questions and answers

during a facility walkthrough, and a concluding meeting.

1.   Initial Contact Meeting: established norms.  Both parties were free to clarify objectives with each other.  This is where intent of researcher, needs of participant (s) protocols, procedures, and schedules were established.

2.   Formal Interview: face-to-face with researcher (this included audio according to interviewee/interviewer agreement)

3.   Walkthrough Interview (Q&A during actual "active" facility walkthrough): with follow-up and clarifying questions.  Active is defined as *school hours, education in progress.*

4.   Concluding Meeting: followed up on any gaps in data or information, thanked you and presentation of a certificate of participation.

In addition to the interviews, the researcher studied and gleaned information from the schools website, performance data, historical archives, handbooks, applications, curriculum and instruction, scheduling, observation and the production of field notes, and any other sources of school medium that might have provided insight into the reasons for sustained viability and commonalities with the other two viable institutions.

These modern methods of collecting data involved a variety of forms supported by the text (Creswell, 2007).  Further, data was analyzed and synthesized from these methods and provided the researcher with a very accessible way of holding an exorbitant amount of information.  Even though researcher memory was good, there was only so much information the mind could hold without getting muddled and confused. Additionally, these vehicles allowed opportunities for the researcher to revisit the actual interviews audibly.  In some cases it was not needed.  Because of the number of subjects and their varied contexts, it was very feasible for interview execution and information to

be captured this way. Further, it afforded the opportunity for the participants to prepare well, knowing that their conversations will be tape recorded. Although these are excellent sources of data collection, the researcher transcribed into hard copy all or selected portions of these interviews.

An interview protocol and 21 questions was developed and designed by the interviewer to extract information from institution leadership. They may be viewed in the Appendices section of this document. The interview protocol is found in Appendix B. Interview questions have been labeled as Appendix C. In addition to these, a question matrix is provided to further illustrate how these questions align to the research questions and thus the broader purpose statement. It is available as Appendix D.

**Participants**

The participants of this study were leaders and/ or educational entrepreneurs of three successful institutions that serve as traditional public school alternatives. These leaders were comprised of both current and previous persons who were instrumental in the start-up, development, or continued success of the schools. The number of vital persons is six. However, in order to streamline the population, the leaders must have been directly involved in the establishment of, or currently leading the institution. This method suggests a criterion based sampling (Miles & Huberman, as cited in Creswell, 2007). Three schools were targeted for this study and this accounted for the projection of a six person maximum.

Leaders and entrepreneurs were chosen because they are the links between the institutions and their stakeholders and they were quintessential to the formation, development, and execution of all day to day and long-term functions of the institution.

Additionally, they held the visions and steered the missions that they encouraged others to catch, engage, and support.  These are the individuals who could change course or consider new avenues when faced with challenges or brick walls.  No other school personnel or community members could realistically have been considered adequate sources for collecting this type of information.  They were essential to purposeful data collection (Creswell, 2007).

The information in Table 2 provides a snapshot of the leaders of the three institutions studied.  These participants range from school founders to existing principals. It also includes such information as site location, their individual age ranges, nationalities, educational levels, and whether or not they had any previous affiliation with the organization.  It was presumed by the researcher that these leaders would be transparent, forthcoming, and honest in their sharing of data, circumstances, and other information.  The researcher also presumed more than an adequate level of access even though some limitations and controls were imposed and/or enforced.  It was obvious and understandable that some leaders may have become anxious about sharing information and was assured that data would be pseudo named to provide confidentiality.  Two data coders were used but only the researcher had access to identification information.

Table 2

*Leader and Founder Participants\**

| Participant | Title | Site Location | Age Range | Race/Ethnicity | Educational Attainment | Previous Affiliation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mary Redding | Principal | Broad Street | <60 | African American | Ed. Specialist | Member |
| Ophelia Shepherd | Asst. Principal | Broad Street | < 60 | African American | Masters | Member |
| Geraldine Majors | ESP | Ross Woods | <60 | African American | Masters | Teacher |
| Kristine Waters | HS Principal | Ross Woods | 60+ | African American | MA+30 | None |
| Matthew Baker | Founder/ Chancellor | The Baker School | < 60 | African American | HS/6 Grammy Awards | Pastor |
| Delmar Hemingway | HS Principal/ Supt. | The Baker School | < 60 | African American | Doctorate | Former Dean |

Note:  The participants and cite locations contained within the chart are pseudo names given to protect the confidentiality of participating leaders and charter schools.


Leaders and founders of these charter school academies were asked by telephone to participate voluntarily.  The telephone protocol is enclosed as Appendix E. A signed consent form was requested of each participant.  The consent form is available and labeled as Appendix F.  Information gathered from individual schools and leaders are being kept in a locked file cabinet and held for a period of five years.

## Chapter 4. Results

**Overview**

Visits to the three charter schools produced a large amount of data that was collected through formal interviews, field notes from facility walkthroughs, and collected documents.  The three modes of data collection and analysis were the researcher's effort to provide triangulation of data. This chapter provides a description of the analytical outcomes of all data gathered. It will begin with a separate look at results from each individual school and conclude with a combined look at the results across all 3 schools. A detailed narrative of the cases' areas of alignment and non-alignment to Effective Schools Research and the emergent themes under each of the 5 correlates will provide some understanding into the possible reasons for sustained presence in communities where many schools have closed.  The data analysis was guided by the following research questions:

1.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

2.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

3.  What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

4. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

5. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

Each case in this study is a faith-based charter school with sustained presence in their individual community. Pseudo names were given to each of the schools and the school leaders who participated in the study. Two leaders from each school were selected to participate. The combined responses of each school were used in analyzing results. The participants in the study were assigned letters and numbers. The letters represent the initials of the school and the numbers represent the order in which they were interviewed by the researcher. Therefore, JB1 would represent the J. Baker School and would be the first leader to be interviewed.

The study contains responses from JB1and JB2, RW1, and RW2 (Ross Woods Academy), and BSA1 and BSA2 (Broad Street Academy). See Figure 3. The original plan was to interview both leaders and founders of each institution. In the case of the Broad Street Academy (BSA), the founder of the institution was deceased. The founder of Ross Woods was elderly and in poor health. In both cases, an additional school leader who was present when the school started was selected. In the end, only the J. Baker School of Fine and Performing Arts provided interviews from both the current Superintendent and the institution's founder/Chancellor.

| Participant | Pseudo |
|---|---|
| Broad Street | BSA |
| Principal | BSA1 |
| Asst. Principal | BSA2 |
| | |
| Ross Woods | RW |
| Principal 1 | RW1 |
| Principal 2 | RW2 |
| | |
| J. Baker | JB |
| Superintendent | JB1 |
| Founder | JB2 |

*Figure 2.* Pseudo names and codes of participating schools, participants, and their positions.

Case one, Broad Street Academy, began as a successful Christian day school located inside the city limits. It was started by Reverend Stephen Goliath. Today it is a public charter school still managed by the original leadership and servicing the same population. However, it is extending its population to include students of all beliefs and does not teach a particular faith. Case two, Ross Woods Academy, was started by Reverend Derrick Champion III. Its journey to educate children in the community began in a church basement and has grown into possibly the most impressive charter school campus in the metropolis. It is managed by the Elijah Group and services a much disenfranchised population. Case three, J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts, was created by six times Grammy award winner Reverend John Cleveland II. The school boasts academic excellence and a fine and performing arts program that is both award-winning and second to none. One location is attached to the church and it has two other locations also inside the city limits, providing much needed choice for parents and students who previously had none. It is managed by the originating leadership.

**Research Question Number One**

What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative

leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past

15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The Effective Schools Research defines the first correlate of Strong

Administrative Leadership as follows:

> The Principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff, parents, and students. The principal understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program.  Leadership is also viewed as a dispersed concept that includes all adults, especially the teachers. The role of the principal will be that of "a leader of leaders," rather than a leader of followers. Expertise is generally distributed among many, not concentrated in a single person.

From this definition the researcher identified three pronounced elements of leadership

that were extracted and served as guides for the interview protocol.  These elements were

instructional leadership, shared decision-making, and leader of leaders. A case by case

analysis led to the following results

**Case one: Broad Street Academy (BSA).**  An in-depth look at the transcribed

interviews, a facility walkthrough, and document review clearly showed that leaders at

the BSA met all of the defined elements of effective schools research.  Both respondents,

while they used other terms, did vocalize that they employed the listed effective

practices.  They responded as follows:

> BSA1 – "It (instruction) has to be specifically communicated, measureable, achievable- we have to let them know what that looks like. I love Lorraine Monroe, we don't use her method per se but definitely there is that influence."

BSA2 – "We sometimes use the democratic participatory process here we include all of our stakeholders."

BSA2 – "Depending upon what it is, there are various ways that we reach decisions. We sometimes use the democratic participatory process where we include all of our stakeholders.  Then there are some decisions that are made solely by administration. But even in that, we do collect data to have a since of perception of where our stakeholders are."

BSA1 – "I would like to think that most of the decisions that are made are collaborative decisions, however, there are certain decisions that have to come from the top."

BSA1 – I try to lead by example. I model."

In addition to the alignment with the tenets of effective schools research, an emergent theme from the leadership correlate for this case was ethics.  Both leaders from BSA spoke with enthusiasm about the culture they were instrumental in creating.  They state:

BSA1 – "… ethics do play a large part…a great role in how the decisions are made. You have to able to maintain integrity. If you are ethical, if there is a level of fairness, that is not only perceived but is a demonstrated reality…that helps in making decisions. I would like to think that most of the decisions that are made are collaborative decisions."

BSA2 – "Ethics are always involved!"

This level of enthusiasm from these leaders seemed genuine and also manifested itself in non interview conversation.  The level of honesty and openness dealing with the researcher made it evident that ethics were more than verbalized, it was practiced.  Table 3 depicts the leadership results for Broad Street Academy.

Table 3

*Broad Street Leadership Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership | Ethics | Aligned |
| | Shared Decision-Making | | |
| | Leader of Leaders | | |

**Case two: Ross Woods Academy.** While the leaders of the Ross Woods Academy met the effective schools criteria of being instructional leaders, the other two elements of shared leadership and leader of leaders did not meet the criteria. Because only one-third of the criteria were established, meaning it was more unaligned than aligned, it is labeled as Not Aligned. This in no way suggests that leadership is not strong and effective. Quite the contrary! However it differs from effective schools research. Leadership at Ross Woods Academy is mastering the pursuit of excellence. There own perceptions of leadership affirm:

> RW2 – "At this institution, decisions are made on the data. And we are not just talking about the academic data but the behavioral data, and community data. It really drives us."

> RW2 – "I have a young staff. Average age is about 30. I spend a lot of time teaching staff. I believe that one of my strong points is that I came up through the ranks. And have come full circle. My other life (in public schools) prepared me for this one."

> RW2 – "I tried to create a *culture* first…one of learning and teaching."

> RW1 – "Decisions, unfortunately some have to be made solo."

RW1 – "I think that people realize that I as educational leader in the building make all of

the decisions that I make based on what's best for children."

At the Ross Woods academy, leaders do not speak in terms of being instructional

in focus, neither do they purport to include other voices or share leadership authority

when making decisions. Table 4 depicts the leadership results for Ross Woods.

Table 4

*Ross Woods Leadership Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership | No Emergent Themes | Not Aligned |
| | Shared Decision Making | | |
| | Leader of Leaders | | |

**Case three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.** At the Baker

school, leadership aligns to all of the tenets of effective schools. Leadership is

instructional in focus, is self claimed to be distributive in decision-making, and models

what they want to be emulated. Their voices are clear:

JB1 –"We have a clear flow chart but we really believe in distributive leadership."

JB1 - "… but as a distributive leader, I quickly ask, "Well what should **we** do? It
allows me to help them see themselves as part of this organization. I make
sure that their voices are included so that there is buy-in.…it allows every
voice to be heard."

JB1 - "distributive, caring, reflective, defines my leadership"

JB1 – "I am always trying to reshape my practice and have a level of fluidity... so that as others observe me they see what they would like to replicate."

JB1 – "One of the understandings that do not come out from our Cannons, our institutions of higher learning, is this sense of the true importance of good leadership. People will model what you do, especially young people. So I demonstrate to them that I love them."

JB2 - "Decisions are made in a consortium. We discuss them. But they are made from the gut."

Although they are aligned, several additional themes emerge from the data analysis. These themes reveal a common theme of Ethics with the Broad Street Academy. However, their ethics seem to derive from a personal place of faith. The other themes revealed are those of care, reflection and role modeling. See table 5 for outcome depiction. While there is little direct quoting of this theme, the connotations come alive under the ethics theme. They are vocalized distinctly. When speaking about care they say:

JB2- "The teachers at all levels and the administrators will not allow the students to fail."

JB1- "Our founder says this. What drives my practice is this…""People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care!"

JB2- "I think people follow me because it's not about me. I always use the adage, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

JB2 -"… I have always been one that placed the needs of others before mine."

Reflection is revealed in their responses as they continue:

JB1 – "People have said that I am reflective. I think about how I impact people's work. There is a level of meta-cognition about me."

JB1 - "Not only am I reflective. I am always trying to reshape my practice and have a level of fluidity."

JB1 -"We have what we define as success. The State has what it defines as success with their new cut scores and assessments."

The enthusiasm and devout place that ethics hold is evident as they further insist:

JB1 -"Ethics absolutely plays a role. "

JB1 -"Like I said, my ethics and my faith drive my practice."

JB2 -"The Bible drives my leadership, what I believe, that's how I live!"

JB2 -"Ethics plays a HUGH roll. Top of the Mountain! You have to have integrity. You cannot have ulterior motives. You cannot say one thing and do something else."

JB2 -"Ethics are important, we don't steal we don't lie. We don't play people against each other. It is very important to be honest. If you want to play games, you will not be comfortable here."

Finally, the conviction of being a role model emerges as JB1 responds:

JB1 -"People will model what you do, especially young people. So I demonstrate to them that I love them. That is something that you cannot do in a public school setting."

Table 5

*J. Baker Leadership Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership<br><br>Shared Decision Making<br><br>Leader of Leaders | • Ethics<br>• Reflection<br>• Role Modeling | Aligned |

**Summary of research question one.** The faces of leadership at Broad Street Academy, Ross Woods Academy, and the J. Baker School are as varied and distinct as the personalities of the people who hold the positions. BSA and J. Baker align to the Effective Schools Research tenets but share a common emergent theme of Ethics. In light of their origins, this theme may not surprise anyone who encounters these institutions. Both institutions sit adjacent to churches and therefore may service a feeder population. In addition, the values of the church may have a considerable influence on the culture of the institutions. Ross Woods, on the other hand, does not align to the leadership correlate of Effective Schools Research and manages to lead a community of stakeholders with a high regard of respect and loyalty. The results of the research would suggest that alignment to the leadership correlate may not be a necessary factor in the sustained presence of these institutions equally.

Table 6

*Summary of Research Question One*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Instructional Leadership | Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Shared Decision Making | Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Leader of Leaders | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Leadership Themes | Ethics | No Additional Themes | • Ethics<br>• Relationship<br>• Reflection<br>• Role Modeling |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

**Research Question Number Two**

What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of

three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in

the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The Effective Schools Research defines the second correlate of A Focus on Basic Skills

as follows:

> Teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in the
> essential skills. For a high percentage of this time students are engaged in whole
> class or large group, teacher-directed, planned learning activities. Teachers are
> being asked to stress the mission that assures that the students master the content
> that is covered. Teachers have become skilled at interdisciplinary curriculum and
> they comfortably practice "organized abandonment." Some things are more
> important than others.

Using this definition the researcher identified three pronounced elements of a focus on

basic skills that were extracted and served as guides for the interview protocol.  These

elements were a focus on essential skills, interdisciplinary instruction, and organized

abandonment.

**Case one: Broad Street Academy.**   Alignment to effective schools research in

the areas of essentials focus and organized abandonment seem to be a high stakes testing

norm.  Broad Street certainly aligns to these.  Where there appears to be no evidence of

alignment is in the area of interdisciplinary instruction.  If in fact across the curriculum

instruction occurs, it is not a priority.  Basic skills focus is primarily in the content areas

of reading and mathematics.  As indicated in the following responses of BSA leaders,

high stakes State testing plays a role in skills focus:

BSA2 – "Our first priority is getting them at grade level. We have a partnership with WSU and trying to ensure that our student don't end up among those freshmen who require remedial simply because they didn't get the basics."

BSA1 – "….. Next level is proficiency at the level they are exiting…"We want them to meet and exceed…at the next level whatever that may be."

BSA2 – "According to our new MEAP data we found that math is our weak area so it's funny you asked.  That is our focus this year.  We have had good outcomes in Reading and ELA so we are working on math."

Two of the three tenets of the focus on basic skills correlate have been met by the Broad Street Academy.  There is a clear focus on the essentials, and some content appears to be more important that others (organized abandonment).  Because one-third of the correlate is unaligned and the majority was aligned, the Academy was given the status of being partially aligned. Table 7 depicts the basic skills results for the Broad Street Academy.

Table 7

*Broad Street Basic Skills Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials | No Emergent Themes | Partially aligned |
| | Interdisciplinary | | |
| | Organized Abandonment | | |

**Case two: Ross Woods Academy.**   One of the obvious traits of Ross Woods is its focus on the essentials and provision for the intervention for the mastery of basic skills. Leadership is very attentive to intervention.  There is a laser-like focus on the basics where organized abandonment becomes a by-product.  The State assesses reading and mathematics and they are attended to with precision.  Like the Broad Street Academy, Ross Woods shows no evidence of an interdisciplinary approach to instruction. One principal responds by saying:

> RW1 – "We prioritize the results.  We find out our strengths and weaknesses.  We then build upon our strengths by continuing to do what is producing positive outcomes and our goal is to improve upon our weaknesses.  We learn from those things we fall short on. Short, intermediate, and long-term planning is essential in deciding how we will move forward and creating a timeline for improvement."

> RW1 – "…there is a component in the teacher's schedule so that they can pull out small groups of those who have not mastered those basic skills."

Two-thirds of the Effective Schools basic skills correlate was met by Ross Woods.  A focus on the essentials and its by-product of organized abandonment are evident.  What is not evident in their responses is the sense of urgency with which they speak of data, planning, and goal setting. These variables permeate the discussion of basic skills acquisition, and are noticeably a priority. Where Ross Woods shows no evidence of alignment to Effective School Research is in the area of interdisciplinary instruction. Like the Broad Street Academy and for the same alignment issue, it too, is given the status of partial alignment.  Results for Ross Woods are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

*Ross Woods Basic Skills Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials | No Emergent Themes | Partially Aligned |
| | Interdisciplinary | | |
| | Organized Abandonment | | |

**Case three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.** The J. Baker School demonstrates all the tenets of the basic skills correlate of Effective Schools Research. It is interdisciplinary in its approach to instruction. There is a focus on the acquisition of the essentials to a high degree, and priority is given to areas they believe to be most important. Leadership describes what they provide and desire for students and student outcomes. They proclaim:

> JB2 –"life is so integrated that we integrate the disciplines in a way that students can handle it."
>
> JB2 -"What is music but math?"
>
> JB1- "Our job is to make sure that they can read both the 'word' and the 'world'."
>
> JB2 -"I want our students to thirst for knowledge through reading"
>
> JB1-"college readiness and higher order thinking"

In addition to the full alignment, there is an additional theme that emerges from the data. It is that of a risk free environment that allows for student vulnerability. Both the founder and the superintendent respond by saying:

JB2 – "You cannot trust that which you fear."

JB2 – "We need each other."

JB1 – "So when we talk about reading here, as we define it for us, yes you must know how to read these symbols, know how these symbols connect, but they should come out and have a particular meaning. That meaning should have some impact upon your life. We create a safe environment for students to do this.  If I don't know a word, it's ok for someone else to help me out. That environment requires everyone to read and requires that we all help each other."

JB2 – "We have an environment and relationship with student where it is ok to tell."

The J. Baker School provides for basic skills acquisition through a focus on the essentials identified as reading and math, subject area contents are experienced cross-curriculum, and foci are decided upon with intention.   J. Baker's focus on basic skills brings them into full alignment with the Effective Schools Research, see Table 9. Because they have met the outlined criteria, they are given the status of being aligned.

Table 9

*J. Baker School Basic Skills Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials | Risk free Environment | Aligned |
| | Interdisciplinary | | |
| | Organized Abandonment | | |

**Summary of research question two.**  None of the three schools were void of a clear focus in terms of basic skills acquisition.  They all show evidence of alignment in this area.  The same is true for organized abandonment.  This may be largely due to the State of Michigan's Ed Yes tenet that requires the assessing of reading and math in

response to NCLB.  Without question, the contents areas of reading and math take first

priority.  Very little discussion transpired about other content areas such as science and

social studies.  Where there appears to be some discrepancy among the schools is in the

area of interdisciplinary instruction.  It is not mandated and remains at the discretion on

the district or local school.  Only one school, the J. Baker School, has shown evidence of

engaging this practice in an attempt to augment student learning.  Still, the other schools -

despite this difference, have been more than able to establish and sustain a viable

presence in their communities.

　　　　The only emerging theme from this category arose from responses given by the J.

Baker School.  That theme was a risk-free environment.  In an attempt at skills mastery

without threat of student embarrassment, J. Baker creates a safe learning environment in

which students are free to show vulnerability.

Table 10

*Summary of Research Question Two*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Focus on Essentials | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Interdisciplinary | Not Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Organized Abandonment | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Basic Skills Themes | No  Additional Themes | No  Additional Themes | Risk free Environment |
| Walkthrough Review | Does not align to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Partially supports outcomes | Supports outcomes |

**Research Question Number Three**

What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The Effective Schools Research defines the third correlate of High Expectation for Student Success as follows:

> There is a climate of expectation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skills, and the staff also believes that they have the capability to help all students achieve that mastery. Teachers will provide intervention for those who don't master skills. Learning is for All.

The two tenets of high expectations that were used in the researchers protocol were those of (a) the adult belief that all student can master content, and (b) that the institution provides for intervention for those students who are in need.

**Case one: Broad Street Academy.** The institution leadership rates the school very high on its ability to communicate high expectations for the entire student population. They believe that expectations are high and cite PLC's and teacher sharing as one of the reasons for their success. The school has made AYP for three consecutive years and does not service an elite population of students. Because of its high expectations, the academy has been chosen by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA) to participate in a 5 year lucrative study. The academy was chosen to continue its efforts at enhancing instruction and closing the achievement gap. Student who have difficulties or require additional resources and services are amply able to be

educated at BSA. According to leadership, no student has ever fallen through a crack at

BSA. When asked about their expectations, leaders at BSA responded:

> BSA1 – "It has to be communicated, measureable, achievable-you have to
> let them know what that looks like. I love Lorraine Monroe, we
> don't use her method per se but definitely there is that influence."

> BSA1 – "YES….We have to be about the business of ensuring student get
> what is taught, assessing that they have learned it, and moving
> them to the next level."

> BSA2 – "Our PLC's and grade level meetings and sharing have been
> productive and have influenced or contributed to our success."

> BSA1 – "… Yes. And I can say that because if a student shows us that
> they have difficulties, we have evaluations and if they have
> disabilities, we are equipped and prepared to service them. We are
> serving All children not just those who do well. Children who need
> special servicing don't fall through the cracks."

While BSA met the criteria for Effective Schools Research expectations tenets,

two additional themes materialized from the data. The first was partnerships.

Surprisingly, this is unique to this institution. There is a distinct and concrete relationship

between BSA and its surrounding community. Businesses in the area have relationships

with administration, the church, and the parents and students. The uniqueness of its

location and the autonomy of its organization and decision-making afford it the

opportunity to partner with local businesses on a daily basis. They all have a vested

interest in the survival and success of the other. They service the same population.

The second theme that emerges is the home–life of students as a possible

barrier to expectation achievement. The school is located in the heart of the city. Along

with its students comes the everyday cares of survival in a city that is struggling.

Economic decline, an increase in crime, and a dramatic increase in foreclosures have had

an influence upon the urgency of student achievement at BSA. BSA services a

population of homeless youth but remains confident that all students will succeed.

Because BSA meets the criteria of Effectives Schools in the area of expectations, it is

given the status of being fully aligned. Two themes of partnership and home life barriers

emerge. When speaking of partnerships, the leaders declare:

> BSA1 – "I attribute our success to having those deep conversations with the staff and even your other stakeholders."

> BSA2 – "We have a partnership with WSU and trying to ensure that our students don't end up among those freshmen who require remedial simply because they didn't get the basics."

> BSA2 – "We have a strong partnership with our business community like the restaurant across the street and so forth."

When speaking of meeting the special barriers they face, one principal explains:

> BSA1 – "We have students who are in transitional housing (homeless), others with economic concerns. These are thing outside of us."

Table 11 depicts the high expectation outcomes for Broad Street Academy.

Table 11

*Broad Street High Expectations Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content | • Partnerships <br> • Environs as a Barrier | Aligned |
| | Provides Intervention | | |

**Case two: Ross Woods Academy.** Not only does this institution have an

impressive campus, but when it comes to expectations, Ross Woods certainly has room to

boast. The Ross Woods student is expected to graduate and after graduation, expected to

be attend to college. The school has a graduation rate of 100% and all of its graduating

class is accepted to college. Ross Woods does not service an elite selection of students.

Students, while they are accepted by application, are representative of the community

population that it services. It services a good percentage of special needs students

alongside the best and brightest in the community. This level of success has surprised

many since Ross Woods services the most disenfranchised students in the area. Leaders

at Ross Woods are eager to say to whom and to what they attribute their success. They

enthusiastically declare:

> RW2 – "We had 100% graduation last year. Every child was accepted to college. So when you talk about 'the end in mind', you have to put things in place, programs, resources and benchmarks. You have to plan for success."

> RW2 – "All of our special services were accepted to community college. There are programs for them, too. Their teachers are accountable too. We have a third wheel in the counseling center; someone full time for college packaging."

> RW1 – "Because our campus is so closely knit, expectations are clear from level to level, and from building to building."

Like the students who dawn its campus, the weight and press of an urban

metropolis carries its burden to the doors of the Ross Woods Academy as well. The

theme of the environmental home-life of students emerges among the accolades of

institutional successes. Here, it is the tug and pull of concerns that only outside entities

can address that threaten to hinder communicated expectations. The staff at Ross Woods

rigorously addresses these concerns and put students and parents in contact with those

who may be better equipped to handle their circumstances. Ross Woods met the two

tenets of Effective Schools for high expectations and was given a status of aligned.

Sadly, like Broad Street leaders, the Ross Woods principal responds to the barrier of student non-school life in the following quote:

> RW2 – "When I think about a barrier that might inhibit a child from reaching a goal, I would say family issues and concerns. Even though these are outside issues, we have social workers and support people in place to meet the needs of the whole child."

The information in Table 12 summarizes Ross Woods' results for high expectations.

Table 12

*Ross Woods High Expectations Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content | Environs as a Barrier | Aligned |
| | Provides Intervention | | |

**Case three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.**   J. Baker students are scholars, musicians, performers, and world travelers.  The J. Baker student is expected to stand beside the best students in the world and be among equals.  Whatever your chosen profession, or whatever your craft, you are expected to master it at J. Baker. Trophies and awards line the shelf in the orchestra room symbolizing and reminding student of their achievements but having the expectation of acquiring new ones.   Clearly, the J. Baker School is getting what it expects. The expectations of leadership go beyond the norm and do not stop short of miraculous.  They state:

> JB2 – "I *really* reach HIGH! They (students) are meeting our expectation, which in turn, gives us the launching pad to take them beyond that to where they totally exceed our expectations."

JB1 –"If you were to look closely at us you would see urban students in uniform, traveling the world, able to compete in a global society, and receiving what only private school student receive.  They are meeting the expectations. People walk in here and they are blown away.  We are one of the best kept secrets in the city and we desire to change that. When people ride by they think we are a private school."

JB1 -"We have created a climate of high expectations."

JB2 -"The teachers, at all levels, and the administrators will not allow students to fail."

JB1 -"Set high expectations, meet students where they are, that does not mean lower the standard…."We are giving our student what wealthy people get. They get what they expect. They expect good things, and they expect quality."

With all of its talent, success, educational, and musical prowess, the J. Baker School has its challenges as well. Located in a declining metropolis, faced with large scale unemployment, social inequity, and moral decay, the J. Baker School finds itself embracing a non-academic problem. Their challenge is that of equipping student to handle the world outside of the school's walls, a formidable opponent. Life, when student go home, is more than some are equipped to handle.  The J. Baker School is addressing and closing that gap, as well.  The J. Baker School meets the tenets of Effective Schools Research high expectations and is given the status of aligned.  Table 13 depicts alignment results.  In harmony with the other two schools, the superintendent at J. Baker also feels the weight of home-life barriers as he responds,

JB1 -"…we always have to juxtapose what we do in here to what's out there. But that's ok because we are teaching them to read the "word" and the "world". It's just a challenge that we have to help them read the 'World' a little faster".

Table 13

*J. Baker High Expectations Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content | Environs as a Barrier | Aligned |
| | Provides Intervention | | |

**Summary of research question three.** All three schools showed evidence of

alignment with Effective Schools Research for High Expectation for Student Success, see

Table 14. The belief that all student can and will master that content is without question.

Provision for those students who fall short is in place. The two tenets were met by all,

however, what each institution's expectations for student were beyond those tenets

differed considerably. Broad Street, being a K-8 school, focused on having students at or

above grade level. Ross Woods focused its extended efforts on graduation and college

acceptance. And, J. Baker focused on academic excellence coupled with world class

experiences for students. What these schools had in common was the environmental

factors outside of the school that can have an effect on student performance. All three

schools, located in different areas of the metropolis, have the challenge of becoming a

bulwark for students and their futures. Some might view this as an indictment upon city

leadership and society as a whole.

Table 14

*Summary of Research Question Three*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Belief that ALL students can master content | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Provides Intervention | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent High Expectation Themes | • Environs as a barrier<br>• Partnerships | • Environs as a barrier | • Environs as a Barrier |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Supports outcomes | Supports outcomes |

**Research Question Number Four**

What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The Effective Schools Research defines the fourth correlate of Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance as follows:

Student academic progress is measured frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are used to improve individual student performance and also to improve the instructional program.

There are three tenets associated with the frequent monitoring of student performance. The first is that students are monitored frequently. The second is that students are

monitored by a variety of methods.  And, the third is that student assessment be used to improve performance and the instructional program.

       **Case one: Broad Street Academy.**  In order to meet student needs, the Broad Street Academy uses a variety of assessment tools to enhance student performance.  The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) is the annual State test.  This test is criterion referenced and is high stakes.  MEAP outcomes are attached to funding. In addition to MEAP, BSA uses Scantron twice a year, DRA, unit test, teacher generated tests and quizzes, and they have a data warehouse called Orange Grove by Red Cedar which disaggregates data down to the individual skill level producing an individualized plan of instruction for each student.  The prescribed use of these assessment outcome data is to improve instructional delivery school-wide. Both leaders describe their efforts by saying:

> BSA1 – "Our assessments absolutely drive our planning and preparation. I remember a story about a man being taught how to drive a car and was then given a boat. When the boat sank everyone wanted to know, why? Teaching and learning have to be connected."

> BSA2 – "We do have the DRA assessments that we use (quarterly).Unit test assessments. We have Scantron, teachers can schedule assessment. The data is used in planning instruction. What we are doing in a sense in similar to individual IEP's (for lack of a better name) for each student. They get precise, prescribed instruction based upon the data."

> BSA2 – "We use MEAP in planning but it is not the only data. We have many pieces of data to inform planning and instruction. It indicates our yearly focus also."

Broad Street Academy meets the three tenets of Effective Schools Research frequent monitoring correlate. It monitors students often, uses at least four sources of data collection, and the collected data is used to improve the overall instructional program of the institution.  As Table 15 depicts, BSA received alignment status for this correlate.

Table 15

*Broad Street Frequent Monitoring Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent Assessments | No Emergent Themes | Aligned |
| | Varied Assessments | | |
| | Used for Improvement | | |

**Case two: Ross Woods Academy.**   Being a college preparatory institution and desiring that all students attend college, it is not surprising that the Ross Woods Academy employs a variety of assessment tools.  They have aligned the curriculum with the State of Michigan core curriculum for high schools, use both formative and summative assessments, DRA, and the annual MEAP and MME results to achieve an instructional program that is both rigorous and relevant.  Leaders are Ross Woods have a noticeable passion for data.

It seems natural that the Ross Woods would have an emergent theme of being data driven in its approach to day to day choices.  This emergent theme goes beyond using data as stated in the Effective Schools frequent monitoring correlate.  It involves a passion to include data in all areas of the school's functions.  Ross Woods involves the

voices of all stakeholders in their decisions toward operations and academics. Ross

Woods meet the criteria of the Effective Schools frequent monitoring correlate therefore;

it was given the status of alignment.  The principals' responses were as follows:

> RW2 – "We use the Middle State University/State of Michigan Department of Education High School Standards core curriculum. We have both formative and summative common assessments. 9th grade does MEAP.  And, we have Explore and Plan. It is not just the teachers that use this data.  We use it as an administrative team. We look at the data. Come together, disaggregate it and identify students who are not meeting the standards. We then revise instruction to meet their individual and collective needs."

> RW1 – "We have, again DRA.  It is done two to three times a school year to track students reading levels. We have common assessments that are given three times a year in ELA and Math.  We follow the Direct Instruction model. So, on a daily basis teachers are assessing students to find out if they are mastering content.  I think this is a big plus for us.  We use all data to drive our instruction. Of course, we use MEAP but that is not given often."

The emergent theme of being completely data driven is a sense of pride for leaders, they

state:

> RW2 - "At this institution, decisions are made on the data. And we are not only talking about the academic data, but the behavioral data, and community data. It really drives us."

> RW1 - "We use all data to drive our instruction."

 A snapshot of the alignment results for the Ross Woods Academy, depicting its

alignment to the frequent monitoring correlate is provided in Table 16.

Table 16

*Ross Woods Frequent Monitoring Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent Assessments | Data Driven | Aligned |
| | Varied Assessments | | |
| | Used for Improvement | | |

**Case three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.** In order to

provide students with the best possible instruction, J. Baker utilizes a number of

assessment vehicles. The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) is the

annual State test for grades 3-9 and the Michigan Merit Exam/ACT (MME-ACT) is used

at the high school level.  Aside from this criterion references test, J. Baker is instituting

the Terra Nova-CAT in the spring.  Teachers in classrooms do weekly and unit

assessment on an on-going basis and all data is used to both inform and improve

instruction.  The superintendent describes progress monitoring by saying:

> JB1-"We use 2 directly from the state MEAP and MME-ACT."

> JB1-"We are employing the Terra Nova CAT pre (spring) and post (fall) starting next fall so that we can rightly say how much they have moved."

> JB1 -"Then we do weekly assessments. Every teacher in the district is required to assess what students have learned for the week or the week prior. We try to look at that data to inform our instruction for the next 3 or 4 weeks."

Table 17 shows that the J. Baker School meets the three tenets of the Effective Schools research correlate related to frequent monitoring of student performance. Assessments are given frequently, in a variety of forms and used for instructional and performance improvement.  The evidence of these three tenets allowed this institution to receive the status of aligned.

Table 17

*J. Baker Frequent Monitoring Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent Assessments | No Emergent Themes | Aligned |
| | Varied Assessments | | |
| | Used for Improvement | | |

**Summary of research question four.**  The findings for research question four are uneventful and expected. Like most schools across the country they are required by law and adhere to the mandates of State testing and must demonstrate that they know and are addressing the needs of all students. All of the three selected schools are in alignment with the Effective Schools Research in this correlate.  In addition to the State testing, each school has a number of its own assessment tools that are utilized by teachers.  All schools have on-going assessments and they use the data to inform instruction and the school's instructional program.

One of the schools separates itself from the other two in overall practice.    While Broad Street and J. Baker use data to drive instruction, Ross Woods takes being data driven to another level.  They do not simply use data to drive instruction; they use data to drive the institution! Throughout the conversations with the leaders you understand how comfortable they are with and how well they know their data.  This is not information they leave in the charge of other staff members. This institution is wrapped in the data of all stakeholders and it appears to serve them well. A comparative look at all three schools for the frequent monitoring correlate is provided in Table 18.

Table 18

*Summary of Research Question Four*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequent Assessments | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Varied Assessments | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Used for Improvement | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Frequent Monitoring Themes | No Additional Themes | Data Driven | No Additional Themes |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

**Research Question Number Five**

What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The Effective Schools Research defines the fifth correlate of Safe and Orderly Schools as follows:

> The school has an orderly, purposeful, business-like atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning. Relationship, responsibility and collaboration may be visible.

**Case one: Broad Street Academy.** Extracted from the definition of safe and orderly schools, four tenets were used to identify schools as either aligned or unaligned to the Effective Schools Research correlate; Safe and Orderly Schools. The four tenets include (a) Not Dilapidated (b) Conducive to learning (c) Not oppressive, and (d) Safe and business-like. As charming as the appearance of the building is on the outside, a facility walkthrough reveals the inside of BSA as even more inviting. It is well kept and the sounds of teaching and learning ring throughout the building. Staff and students appear happy. When asked about security, the leaders responded:

> BSA1 – "We have implemented both internal and external safety measures for our students and staff."
>
> BSA1 – "But what we do have are people who are visible and physically out there. Watching! Everyone is vigilant."
>
> BSA2 – "We have taken great care to enhance our esthetics of our building and we are pleased with our progress."
>
> BSA2 – "....They (neighboring businesses) look out for us. They give us calls and let us know if anything out of the norm seems to be

happening. We look out for each other. We have had no incidents or accidents to report out here."

BSA had one emergent theme of perimeter security. This theme is unique because it not only places a high value on securing its internal population but it takes extra measures to ensure safety on a major thoroughfare. This focus on external security is shared among businesses in the area. All four of the tenets of safe and orderly schools were met; see Table 19, and BSA was determined to be aligned to Effective Schools Research correlate five. Both leaders cite perimeter security features as follows:

> BSA1 – "You have to be buzzed into the building and we have television cameras around this entire building, and all of the acreage."

> BSA2 – "We have a strong partnership with our business community like the restaurant across the street and so forth."

Table 19

*Broad Street Safe and Orderly Schools Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| | | | Aligned |
| | Not Dilapidated | Perimeter security | |
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Conducive Climate | | |
| | Not Oppressive | | |
| | Safe and Business-like | | |

**Case two: Ross Woods Academy.**   The researcher's facility walkthrough resulted in labeling this the most impressive facility the researcher has seen servicing student's of this demographic.  The Ross Woods facility is State of the Art and second to none.  The atmosphere is warm and friendly.  Throughout the building, a professional and respectful ambiance resonates.  Leadership is very verbal concerning security and order, they respond:

> RW2 – "Did you see any metal detectors? Did you see any wands? NO. That's with purpose for me. You know, I have been everywhere. Metal detectors, wands, 360 degree cameras, and high tech security were the norm. I felt like I was a warden of a prison. But the children were wonderful.  If you are treated like a prisoner, and it feels like a prison, they will act like prisoners.  We created the culture of this high school.  I knew that if we didn't we would be running after a culture.  We would be whatever children decided we would be. So we met and laid everything out from uniforms to applications. The culture was created in the beginning.  It is hard to change a culture once the horse has gotten out. So this has been a true blessing.  Teachers and administrators did it together.  Rules come from the bottom up so there is buy in. They are enforced. We all agree, this is what we do.  Staff and students stay because they feel safe and they know what happens elsewhere."

> RW1 – "We have so many procedures and protocols in place.  This is done in an attempt to create an environment that does not need metal detectors and those types of nuances that are common in urban areas.  We are a family and we all look out for each other on this campus.  Procedures are well communicated and we all understand the importance of doing what we need to be doing to maintain a safe environment. If you are not here, you have a back-up in place.  One missing link in the chain could break what we do. I really do think that students and staff feel safe here."

There was one theme that emerged from the data collected from Ross Woods Academy.  It is the theme of relationship.  Ross Woods calls itself a family.  People are

treated like members of that family.  The voices of leadership cite elements that they feel

make Ross Woods the high profile institution the community embraces:

> RW2 -"Collaboration is high "This is a family" We have even created a partnership with students who have to babysit younger sisters and brothers but want to participate in extracurricular activities after school."

> RW1-"We are a family and we all look out for each other on this campus."

> RW1 -"Responsibility is high! "Everyone has to be responsible, not only for their little corner of the woods but our whole learning community. "It's a family." It only works with everyone being responsible and involved."

> RW2 - "You have to know the community. You have to know the people. I have been in this community 30-40 years. One thing about these parents, if they know we are all in this together, they are fine. But perhaps in other communities in other places, that is not the case. But over here some things don't bother me. They already know we care, and they appreciate this school district. People love what we do here"

Ross Woods Academy meets the tenets of the safe and orderly schools correlate of

Effective Schools Research and outcomes are provided in Table 20.

Table 20

*Ross Woods Safe and Orderly Schools Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Not Dilapidated | Relationship | Aligned |
| | Conducive Climate | | |
| | Not Oppressive | | |
| | Safe and Business-like | | |

**Case three: J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts.** It does not

matter from which angle you view the J. Baker School. It stands stalwart and pristine in

its community. The first tenet is clearly achieved on the outside. The guided facility

walkthrough revealed an environment that was open, business-like and sensitive to

student's social and emotional needs. Students were comfortable within the learning

environment and the level of respect and manners was refreshing. A culture and climate

is immediately obvious. When asked about order and safety leaders responded:

> JB2 – "People may not do what you expect but they will do what you
> inspect. We have to inspect our expectations."
>
> JB2 – "We have an environment and relationship with student where it is
> ok to tell."
>
> JB2 – "Appearance is high! Super High!!You have to look successful.
> You have to come to a place that is prepared."
>
> JB1 – "It is important that students see a clean school. It says there's care.
> Aesthetics is everything."
>
> JB1 – "Safety is Paramount. We are considered one of the safest schools in
> the city. The State has told us that."

Emerging among the many things that students, teachers, and administration have

been able to create is the saturating theme of trust. What J. Baker is able to accomplish is

an atmosphere that is saturated with trust on a personal level. Trust is not kept at arm's

length. Members of this community co-exist and rely upon the good nature of each other.

The results depicted in Table 21 show that the tenets of safe and orderly schools are met

by the J. Baker School and therefore it has been given the status of aligned. When asked

about school safety, both the founder and the superintendent responded:

> JB1 - "We will NEVER have metal detectors here."

JB2 -"The wonderful thing is that we have never had a metal detector in any of our schools. And the day that we do is the day that we shut down."

JB1 -"…relational trust is everything. Adults are required to give out their cell phone numbers. I don't have relationship with you if I don't talk to you."

JB1 -"Example I give my cell phone number to students. How can I say I care about them when I only want to hear from you from 7:30-3:30? My ethics should drive my practice."

JB2 -"You cannot trust that which you fear."

Table 21

*J. Baker Safe and Orderly Schools Alignment*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Not Dilapidated | Trust | Aligned |
| | Conducive Climate | | |
| | Not Oppressive | | |
| | Safe and Business-like | | |

**Summary of research question five.** All three of the selected charter schools fully aligned to the safe and orderly schools correlate. While all schools can boast of a safe and secure environment, their approach to school and student safety varies. None of the schools appear to be intimidated by the type of students and outside behaviors that plague other urban institutions. Neither of them uses metal detectors or other paraphernalia that would suggest mistrust of the student population.

Broad Street is especially concerned with outside security of students. The busy location, without adequate processes and procedures could prove disastrous for student safety. The heavy security is for protection *of* students not *from* students. J. Baker is unique because it is attached to the church. While it has its own systems in place to provide a safe environment, it benefits greatly from the church security systems as well. The elements of trust and trustworthiness within this educational community set it apart from neighboring schools. The campus relationship of Ross Woods draws the community together as a family. This feature may be a major factor in its ability to remain viable in such a disenfranchised area of the city.

However unique these institutions may be, their commonality remains that parent and students continue to favor these schools as their school of choice. And, in an urban metropolis where school safety is not the norm, these schools have won the confidence of their communities as safe and nurturing environments. Table 23 shows each school's alignment to the safe and orderly schools correlate. Additionally, facility aesthetics is a high priority to each institution. Each school offers a unique appearance but is not unique in their level of attendance to the appearance of the facilities. You will not see broken windows, uncut lawns, trash and debris inside or outside, graffiti on walls, or any of the other aesthetic embarrassments of other urban schools. It is obvious that all stakeholder: administration, staff, parents, students, and the communities they service have a vested interest in these places as service providers for the children.

Table 22

*Summary of Research Question Five*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not dilapidated or visually decayed | Aligned | Aligned+ | Aligned |
| Conducive Climate | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Not oppressive | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Safe and Business-like | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Safe and Orderly Schools Themes | • Perimeter security | • Relationship | • Trust |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

The results of the three schools participating in this study and the five original correlates of Effective Schools Research has provided a helpful look into the aligned and unaligned structural components of each school. All schools demonstrated some degree of alignment in all five correlates.  Only the J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts aligned to all of the tenets of each correlate.  While alignment to the correlates and its tenets was evident to varying degrees, still these schools remained unique in their emergent themes and approach to servicing their educational communities.

**Holistic Research Outcomes of Individual Schools**

Unlike the previous distribution of the results, Tables 23, 24, and 25 provide a holistic snapshot of the individual schools. The Broad Street Academy represented in Table 23 shows that it aligns fully to four of the five original correlates. In A Focus on Basic Skills, however, it is partially aligned because it lacks the interdisciplinary element. Broad Street has one emergent theme of ethics in correlate one, Strong Administrative Leadership, two emergent themes of environs as a barrier and partnerships in correlate three, High Expectations for Student Success and one emergent theme of perimeter security in correlate five, Safe and Orderly Schools.

Table 24 portrays the alignment of the Ross Woods Academy. Of the five original correlates, Ross Woods fully aligns to three. In correlate one, A Strong Administrative Leadership, it is unaligned in instructional leadership and shared decision-making. In correlate two, A Focus on Basic Skills, it is unaligned to the interdisciplinary element. Ross Woods has one emergent theme of environs as a barrier in correlate three, one of being data driven in correlate four, and a final one of relationship in correlate five.

The final school, the J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts is illustrated in Table 25. The J. Baker School is fully aligned to all five of the Effective Schools Research correlates. It has emergent themes in four of the five correlates. Strong Administrative Leadership has four emergent themes of ethics, relationship, reflection, and role modeling. One theme emerges from A Focus on Basic Skills, it is a risk-free environment. High Expectation has a theme of environs as a barrier. Finally, the theme of trust emerges from Safe and Orderly Schools.

Table 23

*Broad Street Academy - Research Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership Shared Decision-Making Leader of Leaders | Ethics | Aligned |
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials Interdisciplinary* Organized Abandonment | No Emergent Themes | Partially aligned |
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content Provides Intervention | Environs as a Barrier  Partnerships | Aligned |
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent assessments Varied Assessments Used for Improvement | No Emergent Themes | Aligned |
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Not dilapidated Conducive Climate Not Oppressive Safe and Business-like | Perimeter security | Aligned |

*Note:* Elements unaligned are identified by an asterisk (*).

Table 24

*Ross Woods Academy - Research Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*

| Effective Schools Correlate | Correlate Elements | Emergent Themes | Alignment Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership* Shared Decision Making* Leader of Leaders | No Emergent Themes | Not Aligned |
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials Interdisciplinary* Organized Abandonment | No Emergent Themes | Partially Aligned |
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content Provides Intervention | • Environs as a Barrier | Aligned |
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent assessments Varied Assessments Used for Improvement | • Data Driven | Aligned |
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Not Dilapidated Conducive Climate Not Oppressive Safe and Business-like | • Relationship | Aligned |

*Note:* Elements unaligned are identified by an asterisk (*).

Table 25

*J. Baker School - Research Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*

| Correlate | Elements | Themes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strong Administrative Leadership | Instructional Leadership Shared Decision-Making Leader of Leaders | • Ethics<br>• Relationship<br>• Reflection<br>• Role Modeling | Aligned |
| A Focus on Basic Skills | Focus on Essentials Interdisciplinary Organized Abandonment | • Risk free Environment | Aligned |
| High Expectations for Student Success | Belief that All student can master content Provides Intervention | • Environs as a Barrier | Aligned |
| Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | Frequent assessments Varied Assessments Used for Improvement | No Emergent Themes | Aligned |
| Safe and Orderly Schools | Not dilapidated Conducive Climate Not Oppressive Safe and Business-like | • Trust | Aligned |

*Note:* Elements unaligned are identified by an asterisk (*).

**Comparative Results across Cases**

The Ross Woods Academy clearly does not align to the Strong Administrative Leadership correlate of the Effective Schools Research. Its contemporaries BSA and J. Baker are not only aligned but share a common theme of ethics. In addition, J. Baker uniquely has three additional themes of relationship, reflection, and role modeling. Facility walkthroughs and document reviews revealed element alignment for J. Baker and BSA. The Ross Woods walkthrough did not reveal the correlate elements and limited access to documents did not allow for an adequate review. Table 26 outlines similarities and differences among schools in relationship to this correlate.

Table 26

*Research Question # 1- Strong Administrative Leadership*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Instructional Leadership | Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Shared Decision Making | Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Leader of Leaders | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Leadership Themes | Ethics | No Additional Themes | • Ethics<br>• Relationship<br>• Reflection<br>• Role Modeling |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

The Broad Street and Ross Woods academies are only partially aligned to the A Focus on Basic Skills correlate. The J. Baker School on the other hand is fully aligned and has an emergent theme of a risk free environment. Facility walkthroughs revealed element alignment for Ross Woods and J. Baker. However, a facility walkthrough did not reveal alignment for Broad Street Academy.  Document reviews supported alignment outcomes for the Broad Street Academy and the J. Baker School.  Outcomes were partially supported for Ross Woods, however, limited access to documents may not have allowed for adequate review.  Table 27 outlines similarities and differences among schools in relationship to the Basic Skills correlate.

Table 27

*Research Question #2 - A Focus on Basic Skills*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Focus on Essentials | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Interdisciplinary | Not Aligned | Not Aligned | Aligned |
| Organized Abandonment | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Basic Skills Themes | No  Additional Themes | No  Additional Themes | Risk free Environment |
| Walkthrough Review | Does not align to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Partially supports outcomes | Supports outcomes |

All three schools, Broad Street Academy, Ross Woods Academy, and The J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts are fully aligned to the High Expectations for student Success correlate. Interestingly, they all share a common theme of the students' life away from school as a potential barrier to success. Facility walkthroughs revealed alignment to the correlate elements for all three schools. Documents reviewed supported alignment outcomes in all three cases. Table 28 outlines similarities and differences among schools in relationship to the High Expectations for Student Success correlate.

Table 28

*Research Question #3- High Expectations for Student Success*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Belief that ALL students can master content | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Provides Intervention | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent High Expectation Themes | • Environs as a barrier<br>• Partnerships | • Environs as a barrier | • Environs as a Barrier |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Supports outcomes | Supports outcomes |

Analysis of the Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance correlate revealed that the three schools, Broad Street Academy, Ross Woods Academy and the J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts each align to the elements of this correlate. Only the Ross Woods Academy had an emergent theme. That theme was being data driven in all decisions. Walkthroughs of the facilities revealed evidence of alignment to the correlate at Broad Street Academy only. Supports for outcomes did emerge through document reviews for both Broad Street Academy and the J. Baker School. Limited document access did not allow for adequate review for Ross Woods. Table 29 outlines similarities and differences among schools in relationship to the Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance.

Table 29

*Research Question #4 - Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequent Assessments | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Varied Assessments | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Used for Improvement | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Frequent Monitoring Themes | No Additional Themes | Data Driven | No Additional Themes |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements | Does not align to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

The final correlate Safe and Orderly Schools analysis finds all three Schools, Broad Street, Ross Woods and J. Baker in complete alignment to all of the elements. Each school has a unique emergent theme: Broad Street- perimeter safety, Ross Woods-relationship, and J. Baker-trust.  Facility walkthroughs resulted in an astonishing and impressive confirmation of alignment to the correlate elements. A document review of each school supported alignment at Broad Street and J. Baker.  Limited access to documents did not allow for adequate review for Ross Woods. Table 30 outlines the similarities and differences among schools.

Table 30

*Research Question # 5 - Safe and Orderly Schools*

| Reviewed Elements | Broad Street Academy | Ross Woods Academy | J. Baker School |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not dilapidated or visually decayed | Aligned | Aligned+ | Aligned |
| Conducive Climate | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Not oppressive | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Safe and Business-like | Aligned | Aligned | Aligned |
| Emergent Safe and Orderly Schools Themes | • Perimeter security | • Relationship | • Trust |
| Walkthrough Review | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements | Aligns to ES elements |
| Document Review | Supports outcomes | Limited document access | Supports outcomes |

## Chapter 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this case study was to identify what similarities and differences, if any, existed between the structural components of three charter schools with sustained enrollment and were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research.

The following questions guided the study:

1. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

2. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

3. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

4. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

5. What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research?

The study used a qualitative research approach. The primary data source was from leadership interviews conducted by the researcher. These interviews came from three faith-based charter schools whose leadership agreed to participate in this study.

Facility walkthroughs and institution documents were also analyzed to enhance analysis and provide triangulation. Coding was achieved using 'a priori' categories and resulted in emergent themes within and across schools.

**Summary of Finding**

Data collected from the three faith-based charter schools was analyzed and compared to the five original correlates of the Effective Schools Research. Careful analysis of the interview data found that while the three schools fully aligned to the correlates of High Expectations for Student Success, Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance, and Safe and Orderly Schools, their alignment to the Strong Administrative Leadership and A Focus on Basic Skills correlates varied in degree of element alignment from school to school. Each of the five correlates produced emergent themes. The only common emergent theme shared among the schools was environs as a barrier to student success.

The J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts was the only school that aligned to all five correlates and their individual elements. Second in alignment to the Effective Schools research correlates was the Broad Street Academy with four of the five correlates totally aligned and one correlate partially aligned. Ross Woods Academy did not align to the Strong Administrative Leadership correlate and was partially aligned to the A Focus on Basic Skills correlate. The three remaining correlates were completely aligned.

**Strong administrative leadership similarities.** Leaders at the two aligned schools were instructional leader. (Chell 1995; Edmonds 1979; Spillane et al. 2001) and embraced the distributed leadership attribute of the first correlate (Lashway, 2003;

MacNeill et al., 2003). These leaders are highly effective in their communication to staff concerning instructional delivery and the instructional program of the institutions. All participants at some time engaged in either modeling to produce leaders or allowing teachers to lead on occasion (Lezotte, 2009).

The emergent similarity between the Broad Street Academy and J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts is the matter of ethics. These institutional leaders do not only believe in practicing ethics (Kaucher, 2010; Louis et al., 2010 Reitzug, 2008; Shaw, 2008) but hold to a higher authority and believe in being ethical (Burkett, 1998; Monroe, 2003; and Sergiovanni, 2007).

**Strong administrative leadership differences.** The leaders at the Ross Woods Academy were not categorically instructional leaders. This in no way diminishes their effectiveness as leaders. On the contrary, their abilities to lead a diverse staff and address a wide array of student needs is contingent upon their abilities to masterfully interact with all stakeholders (Louis et al., 2010; MacNeill et al., 2003). This institution holds to a top-down approach to decision-making. J. Baker differed in that it had additional themes to emerge. These themes included relationship, reflection, and role modeling. Administration and staff are encouraged to have personal relationships (Dobler, 2009; Griffith, 2010) with students to demonstrate their love and care. Leadership is also reflective upon practice to keep skills sharp and on the cutting edge. Finally, being a role model to staff and students is an important part of the life of leadership at J. Baker. Who they are and what they believe drive what they do (Reitzug, 2008; Shaw, 2008).

**A focus on basic skills similarities.** Mastery of the basics and an unconscious result of organized abandonment is a high priority for each of the schools. The priority

given to English Language Arts (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Dobler 2009; Ediger, 2005; Graham & Perin, 2007; Griffith, 2010; Shelton, 2010) and Mathematics (Benson, 2001; Cerrito, 1996; Durik & Eccles, 2006; Jamar & Pitts, 2005; Kline, 2000) is not only common among schools but serves as a focus in part because of state testing. The Broad Street and Ross Woods Academies share the common trait that they do not align to the interdisciplinary curriculum element of the correlate and there are no emergent themes among them.

**A focus on basic skills differences.** The J. Baker School of the Fine and Performing Arts is the only school of the three that aligns to all three elements of the correlate. As a performing arts school, interdisciplinary curriculum is by design and the focus on skills acquisition at all levels (Alfassi, 2004; Fisher, 2009; Lazar, 2006) is paramount. Unique to the J. Baker School is the theme of a risk-free environment. Students at the academy are provided the opportunity to learn in an environment that accepts their deficiencies and allows them to make mistakes free from ridicule and embarrassment. This climate is created in an attempt to involve peers in the helping of skills acquisition of friends and to augment student learning.

**High expectations for student success similarities.** Of all the Effective Schools correlates, the three schools align to this one most. The adults in these schools have the belief that students can and will master all content given (Lezotte, 2001; Ozturk & Debelak, 2005; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1992; Yatvin, 2009). In addition, their beliefs go beyond acquisition and contend that students will go beyond (Diamond et al., 2004) their expectations. Each school makes ample provision for students when they do not acquire skills. These interventions (Kaniuka, 2010) range from one-on-one teacher assistance to

after school group tutorials.  One common theme sadly runs through the veins of each of these institutions.  Leaders at all three schools identified the life of students outside of the school as a barrier to student success.  This may be what some might call a huge indictment on the city.  These schools are scattered across the metropolis and do not share communities, but identify the same problem.

**High expectations for student success differences.**  Surprisingly, the only differences between Effective Schools Research and these three schools is the emergent theme from the Broad Street Academy.  Broad Street relies heavily on partnerships to help meet expectation for student success.  They have partnered with universities and businesses in order to augment the accomplishment of outstanding student progress and outstanding instruction.

**Frequent monitoring of student performance similarities.**  In synchronization with the previous correlate, the three schools are fully aligned to the frequent monitoring correlate, also.  The students at all schools, Broad Street, Ross Woods and J. Baker, are assessed on a regular and on-going basis (Lezotte, 2001; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2004; Sadler, 1989; Stiggins, 2008) and the assessments of choice are varied.  Teacher created assessments, textbook unit assessments, purchased program assessments, and State assessments all play a role in monitoring at these institutions.   The data gleaned from these assessments are used to improve daily instruction and the instructional program in general.

**Frequent monitoring of student performance differences.**  The Ross Woods Academy distinguishes itself from its peers through its emergent theme. Ross Woods boasts of being data driven.  While the other schools use data to inform instruction also,

the Ross Woods School frequently assesses the students and the institution in order to service students and the extended school community effectively. This unique use of assessment and data may account for the tremendous presence of Ross Woods in its community.

**Safe and orderly schools similarities.** The most impressive finding of the five correlates is the three schools' alignment to the elements of the Safe and Orderly Schools correlate. One visit to any of the three schools would afford any visitor the immediate opportunity to assess and determine that these are places any parent would choose for their children. They each command a regal and devout presence in their communities. They are aesthetically pleasing and show no signs of wear, decay, or neglect (Burke & Sass, 2008; Lezotte, 2009; Schneider, 2002). Internal climates are warm, inviting, and business-like (Sudlow, 2003) in their approach to student learning. They foster very student and parent-friendly environments. Safety is skillfully mastered through a combination of non-visible state of the art surveillance and the old tradition of attention. Everyone is expected to attend to safety (Devi & Mani, 2010). Metal detectors, wands, and other search paraphernalia are not a part of these school communities.

**Safe and orderly schools differences.** All three schools have a unique emergent theme. For the Broad Street Academy it is perimeter security. Located on a major artery of the city and housing a population of lower elementary students makes this adherence to perimeter processes and procedures a non-negotiable. They take extra precautions to keep students safe from accidents especially at arrival and dismissal times. The Ross Woods Academy's unique theme of relationship assists in securing an extremely large campus. Their family approach to safety encourages all members to be responsible for

each other.  This relationship theme (Daggett, 2005) is different from the relationship

theme of the J. Baker School under Strong Administrative Leadership that highlights

teacher/student relationships.  This uniting of the campus is instrumental in thwarting

potential threats and assists in ensuring student and staff safety.  The J. Baker School

invokes trust among its students.  Their eyes, ears, communications, and goals are an

important part of everyday security.  This trust encourages them to inform adults when

they see activity that may create imbalance in security or safety within the school

community.

**Conclusions and Discussion**

This research study was designed to examine the structural components of three

faith-based charter schools in an attempt to discover their similarities and differences in

comparison to the Effective Schools research. The results of this study can be used to

guide reform efforts of entrepreneurs and management companies endeavoring to create

new charter schools to service the Detroit Metropolitan area.  Additionally, it may inform

existing faith-based and traditional charter school practices and potential outcomes.

Findings from this study support the following conclusions:

The similarities between the three faith-based charter schools and Effective

Schools Research may account for the continued success of the institutions (Edmonds,

1979; Sudlow, 2003).  Effective Schools Research has been tried over time and across

populations.  It is proven to be quintessential for producing desired educational outcomes.

It is interesting to see the parallels and know that there was no organized attempt to align

to the research. Participants gave no indication through responses, walkthroughs, or

documents that would suggest such modeling. Still, all of the Effective Schools correlates

manifested in each participating schools. Instead, schools focused on choosing best practices to implement and took time to master them. Those individually adopted best practices are known only when grouped together as the Effective Schools Research.

The differences between the three faith-based charter schools and Effective Schools Research are not crucial enough to nullify the effects of alignment. These areas of uniqueness do, however, make these institutions able to service their individual communities with precision. Leadership type and style (MacNeil et al., 2003) along with a host of other community and stakeholder based best practices (Lashway, 2003) can vary and assist in producing high achieving and sustainable institutions.

The belief of these school leaders and teachers that students can and will succeed (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1992) is a vital characteristic of their school communities (Parsley & Corcoran, 2003). The number one correlate aligned by all three schools was High Expectations for Student Success. This belief in students is a priceless contributor to maintaining their populations, viability in their communities, and sustained presence as an urban charter school. They believe in the children. Expectations are the least expensive of the five correlates for schools to adopt, yet it is the greatest contributor in giving these metropolis schools longevity.

A combined amount of planning, strategic effort, money, and manpower has to be invested in providing a safe and orderly environment (Edmonds, 1982; Frazer, 1993; Schneider, 2002) for students and staff. Safety and security on the three school campuses were unrivaled. The demonstration of care and attention was highly visible. In the final analysis, schools may be aligned to Effective Schools Research, adopt and implement best practices, and believe students can achieve greatness, but if parents and students do

not feel safe, they will not come (Lezotte, 2009). The strong voice of security on these three campuses is heard only through interaction. It resonates, "You are safe here!" In an urban metropolis, this is a non-negotiable issue.

These three charter schools are viable and impressive. The decisions of parents to place their children in one of the three charter schools support the ideals of Edmonds (1979) and Friedman (2004) in that they provide a much needed alternative and answer to failing schools, and assists in preserving parents' rights of choice. And, like Ravitch (2010) suggests, they are formidable opponents to the public school system and may have a definite impact upon their demise. As the city of Detroit continues its plan to scale-up the charter school reform initiative, time will reveal whether or not these controversial efforts will prove to further support the variables of this study and have a pivotal role in the transformation of the city's educational system.

**Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

This study examined three faith-based charter schools in the Metropolitan Detroit area to identify similarities and differences with Effective Schools Research and each other. The findings from this study can not only be used by entrepreneurs and management companies but may support recommendations for policy as well.

1. Authorizing agents of charter schools in the Metropolitan Detroit Area should require the components of the Effective Schools Research as a standard of final authorization.

2. Existing charter schools that have not met AYP or shown consistent growth in all sub-groups should implement Effective Schools Research as a school improvement requirement.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

1. A grounded theory study of the three faith-based charter schools to determine the reasons why parents and students chose these institutions.

2. A study of parents and student perceptions of variables necessary for choosing a charter school over traditional public schools.

3. A study of the strengths and weaknesses of the three faith-based charter schools aside from the effective schools research.

4. A comparative study of a successful faith-based charter school and a successful traditional charter school to determine if major differences emerge or if there is a definitive line of distinction between them.

**Final Thoughts**

Charter schools in the Metropolitan Detroit area can be successful. More of them might experience greater success if they adopted the practices of the Effective Schools Research. Although the three faith-based charter schools in this study align to the correlates of the Effective Schools Research, being faith-based appeared to play a minute role, if any, in the characteristics of their alignment. Surprisingly, being faith-based seemed to have minimal impact upon their overall success in general, present instead was an underlying belief system that influences practice and pedagogy. This belief system may be present in other school communities. The Effective Schools research was designed with the goal of proving that schools play a significant role in student success (Edmonds, 1979). This was done without regard to school type. Therefore, the results of this study may be applicable to traditional charters schools and all other schools whether public, private, or even parochial.

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APPENDIX A

Research Questions

and Effective  Schools Research Alignment Matrix

| Research Questions | Effective Schools Research Correlates | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| **Question #1**<br><br>What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the administrative leadership of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research? | **Correlate # 1**<br><br>Strong Administrative Leadership | To Be Determined |
| **Question #2**<br><br>What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the focus on basic skills of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research? | **Correlate #2**<br><br>A<br><br>Focus<br><br>On<br><br>Basic Skills | To Be Determined |
| **Question #3**<br><br>What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the student expectations of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research? | **Correlate #3**<br><br>High<br><br>Expectations<br><br>For<br><br>Student Success | To Be Determined |
| **Question #4** | **Correlate #4** | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the monitoring of student performance of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research? | Frequent Monitoring Of Student Performance | To Be Determined |
| **Question #5** <br><br> What similarities and differences, if any, exist between the safe and orderly environment of three charter schools with sustained enrollment that were opened in the past 15 years in the Metropolitan Detroit area and effective schools research? | **Correlate #5** <br><br> Safe And Orderly Schools | To Be Determined |

APPENDIX B

Leadership Research Protocol Letter

Dear Research Participant,

You have been chosen for this dissertation study because your charter school has demonstrated consistent growth and sustained enrollment. This study is being initiated in partial fulfillment of Pepperdine University's dissertation requirements.  My dissertation chairperson and contact information is as follows:

Dr. Robert Barner,
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
(xxx) xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

I will be conducting research regarding your academy's structural components that contribute to institutional sustainability and school effectiveness.  It will require a commitment involving two meetings, one formal interview, and a facility walkthrough with you.  The interview will last from 30-60 minutes. The walkthrough will last approximately 30 minutes. I will take notes and tape record with your permission.

*I will not be excessive in demands and will be sensitive to your needs.  I will attempt to be the least disruptive as possible.*

The findings will be shared in the educational community through dissertation and required presentation formats.  I assure you of confidentiality.  Names will not be used in the manuscript and individual identities will be disguised through the coding of data.  Pseudo names will be used throughout the dissertation process.  No one will have access to identifiable transcripts, recordings, and field notes except the researcher.

Your participation is voluntary.  You have the option to answer all questions or omit answers to any given question(s).  Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researcher or community at large.  You may withdraw at any time and discontinue participation without adverse consequences.

Original documents and recordings of interviews will not be shared with others.  They will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home and stored for five years, after which time they will be shredded and discarded.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

In Educational Service,


Tambrelyn D. Quick, Doctoral Candidate
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

The purpose of this interview is to discuss and explore your perceptions regarding the structural components (correlates) of effective schools as they relate to your academy. During this interview, I would like you to think about the specific practices implemented at your school that helped it to remain viable in an atmosphere where countless others were failing.

**Correlate 1: Strong Administrative Leadership**

1. What is your level of education and/or professional background? What led you to this institution or inspired you to found it?

2. How long have you been at this institution and in what capacity? What 3 adjectives describe your leadership?

3. When you consider your professional history, cite 2 personal and professional characteristics and beliefs that inspire people to follow you?

4. How are decisions made within the institution and those that affect the community? What roles, if any, do ethics play and is there a perceived correlation between ethics and your success as an institution?

5. As leader of a faith-based or character centered institution, what are 1 or 2 fundamental or foundational principles that seek to guide your day to day behaviors toward staff, student, other administrators, and the community?

**Correlate 2: A Focus on Basic Skills**

1. What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of reading and the language arts at the elementary level?

2.  What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of reading and the language arts at the secondary level?

3.  When considering "next level" preparedness, briefly describe a secondary focus verses an elementary focus at your academy.

4.  What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of mathematic concepts at the elementary level?

5.  How does your mathematics program align to general college entry requirements for freshman mathematics?  Explain

**Correlate 3: High Expectation for Student Success**

1.  On a scale of 1-10, where would you place your communicated expectations for student outcomes and teacher accountability?  Explain.

2.  Are the expectations of teachers clearly articulated to students?  What evidences might you provide or cite to support your response?

3.  Does student achievement meet your institution's articulated expectations?  If so, to what do you attribute your success?  If not, what interventions have you implemented to address student needs?

4.  Have you created a *climate* of high expectations for all students in your learning environment?  If so, how was it achieved?  Are expectations different for elementary verses secondary students?   If so, how and why?

5.  What barriers, if any, might keep students and teachers from meeting and exceeding the academy's expectations for all students?

**Correlate 4: Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance**

    1. What performance indicators do teachers use on a regular basis? How are they analyzed and what is the prescribed use?

    2. Describe the frequency, outcomes, and effects of state testing and its implications for academic planning and student preparation.

    3. Outline your grading system for both elementary and secondary students. How important are grades as an indicator for student success?

**Correlate 5: Safe and Orderly Schools**

    1. In an urban metropolis where school safety is a non-negotiable issue, how do you maintain a safe and orderly environment for all students and staff?

    2. What degree of importance do you place upon the aesthetic appearance of the learning facilities (low, average, or high)? Explain.

    3. To what degree are the following apparent in your learning environment – relationship, responsibility, collaboration (Low, average, or high)? What evidence might you cite to support your response?

APPENDIX D

Relationship between Interview Questions

and Literature Review

| Correlate: Theme | Interview Question | Literature |
|---|---|---|
| Correlate 1: Strong Administrative Leadership | What is your level of education or professional background?  What led you to this institution or inspired you to found it? | Chell (1995) |
| | How long have you been at this institution and in what capacity?  What 3 adjectives describe your leadership? | Edmonds (1979), Lashway (2003), MacNeill et al. (2003) |
| | When you consider your professional history, cite 2 personal and professional characteristics and beliefs that inspire people to follow you? | Kaucher (2010) |
| | How are decisions made within the institution and those that affect the community?  What roles, if any, do ethics play and is there a perceived correlation between ethics and your success as an institution? | Kaucher (2010), Lashway (2003), Louis et al. (2010), Reitzug (2008), Shaw (2008) |
| | As leader of a faith-based or character centered institution, what are 1 or 2 fundamental or foundational principles that seek to guide your day to day behaviors toward staff, student, other administrators, and the community? | Burkett (1998), Monroe (2003), Sergiovanni (2007) |

| Correlate 2: A Focus on Basic Skills | What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of reading and the language arts at the elementary level? | Dobler (2009), Griffith (2010), Kaniuka (2010), McCray et al. (2001), Shelton (2010) |
|---|---|---|
| | What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of reading and the language arts at the secondary level? | Biancarosa & Snow (2006) |
| | When considering next-level preparedness, briefly describe a secondary focus verses an elementary focus at your academy. | Alfassi (2004), Ediger (2005), Edmonds (1979), Fisher (2009), Graham & Perin (2007), Lazar (2006), Lezotte & Snyder (1997) |
| | What provisions does your institution make for the mastery of mathematic concepts at the elementary level? | Baroody & Benson (2001), Durik & Eccles (2006), Kline (2000) |
| | How does your mathematics program align to general college entry requirements for freshman mathematics? Explain. | Cerrito (1996), Giuliano & Sullivan (2007), Perreault (2006), Shelton & Brown (2010) Springer et al. (2007) |
| Correlate 3: High Expectations for Student Success | On a scale of 1-10, where would you place your communicated expectations for student outcomes and teacher accountability? | Lezotte (2001), Ozturk & Debelak (2005) |
| | Are the expectations of teachers clearly articulated to students? What evidences might you provide or cite to support your response? | Lumsden (1997) |

| | Does student achievement meet your institution's articulated expectations?  If so, to what do you attribute your success?  If not, what interventions have you implemented to address student needs? | Diamond et al. (2004), Rosenthal & Jacobson (1992), Yatvin (2009) |
|---|---|---|
| | Have you created a climate of high expectations for all students in your learning environment?   If so, how was it achieved? Are expectations different for elementary versus secondary students?  If so, how and why? | Parsley & Corcoran (2003), SIRC (2009) |
| | What barriers, if any, might keep students and teachers from meeting and exceeding the academy's expectations for all students? | Rosenthal & Jacobson (1992) |
| Correlate 4: Frequent Monitoring of Student Performance | What performance indicators do teachers use on a regular basis?  How are they analyzed and what is the prescribed use? | Black & Williams (1998), Edmonds (1979), Marzano (2003), Reeves (2003, 2004), Sadler (1989), Stiggins (2008) |
| | Describe the frequency, outcomes, and effects of state testing and its implications for academic planning and student preparation. | Black & Williams (1998), Brandt (1982), Stiggins (2008) |
| | Outline your grading system for both elementary and secondary students.  How important are grades as an indicator for student success? | Kohn (1994), Marzano (2003), Stiggins (2008) |

| Correlate 5: A Safe and Orderly Environment | In an urban metropolis where school safety is a non-negotiable issue, how do you maintain a safe and orderly environment for all students and staff? | Burke & Sass (2008), Edmonds (1979), Lezotte (2009), Schneider (2002), Sudlow (2003) |
|---|---|---|
| | What degree of importance do you place upon the aesthetic appearance of the learning facilities (low, average, or high)?  Explain. | Frazier (1993), Schneider (2002) |
| | To what degree are the following apparent in your learning environment: relationship, responsibility, collaboration (low, average, or high)?  What evidence might you cite to support your response? | Brookover & Lezotte (1979), Daggett (2005), Devi & Mani (2010), Engel et al. (2010), Lezotte (2009), Sudlow (2003) |

APPENDIX E

Telephone Protocol for Participant Recruitment

Good Morning/Afternoon,

     May I speak with Mr./Mrs._____(Principal/Leader's Name) please?

Good morning/Afternoon Mr./Mrs._____. My name is Tambrelyn Quick and I am a native Detroiter. I live and work here in the Detroit area. I am currently a graduate student at Pepperdine University and as partial fulfillment of my doctoral requirements; I am organizing my dissertation research project to be completed here in Michigan. My project involves interviewing leaders of successful faith-based/character-centered charter schools in the Metropolitan Detroit area to identify what makes the schools successful while so many others are failing. I would be honored if you and your school would participate in the study. Your identity would be confidential and you may elect not to participate at any time after your initial agreement. If you agree to participate, a letter outlining the details, in writing, will be given to you and reviewed together. Additionally, all information shared and any agreed upon audio taping will be kept in a locked file for 5 years and then destroyed. You will have additional opportunities to decide if and how you will continue. Would you be willing to participate? Thank you so much for your time. Have a blessed day!

APPENDIX F

Informed Consent for Research Participation

Participant: _____

Researcher:    Tambrelyn Quick

Project Title:   Faith-Based Charter School Success at Education Ground Zero

1. I, _____, agree to participate in the dissertation research study conducted by doctoral student Tambrelyn Quick, from the Educational Leadership and Policy Program at Pepperdine University. I understand that I may contact Ms. Quick's supervisor Dr. Robert Barner at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx if I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

2. The overall purpose of this research is to discuss and explore my perceptions regarding the structural components (correlates) of effective schools as they relate to this academy. I have been asked to participate in this study because the academy I represent has been successful at sustaining enrollment and remaining viable in a community where most schools have not.

3. I understand that my participation will involve two meetings (initial and concluding), one formal 30-60 minute interview that will be recorded (with permission only), and one 30 minute facility walkthrough interview.

4. 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 any activity or portion thereof at any time. I may also elect not to answer a given question(s). I further understand that the researcher may find it necessary to end my participation in this study.

5. I understand that the findings will be shared in the educational community through dissertation and requires presentation formats. I am assured of confidentiality. Pseudo names will be used in the manuscript and individual identities will be disguised through the coding of data. No one will have access to transcripts, recordings, and field notes except Tambrelyn Quick.

6. I understand that all original documents and recordings of interviews will not be shared with others. They will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home and stored for five years, after which time they will be shredded and discarded.

7. I understand that I will not receive any compensation, financial or otherwise, for participating in this study.

8.  I understand to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project.  All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I have received a copy of this informed consent form which I have read and understand.

    If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact Pepperdine University Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) at (310) 568-5753 or at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

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 answered all questions, I hereby cosign this form and accept this person's written consent.

_____
Researcher's Signature                                            Date