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ABSTRACT

The results of effective principal leadership qualities on school improvement are often felt but very difficult to quantify. It is important to know which qualities are most important, which qualities result in the most effective leadership, which qualities are most valued by faculties, and which qualities have the greatest impact on school culture. The purpose of this study is not only to identify effective qualities, but to also understand how these qualities translate to determination and implementation of professional learning. The context of the inquiry includes the administrative staff in two middle schools within a large public school district in the United States. My study demonstrates the impact of principal effectiveness on the ability to evaluate instruction and relate such evaluation to student achievement data to determine and implement a professional learning plan for teachers.

PREFACE

My educational background extends over 23 years in the profession. Throughout these 23 years, I have served in the capacity of a teacher, coach, dean, assistant principal, principal and currently as a district administrator. During this time, I have experienced the culture of many schools from many different perspectives of service and leadership. From these varied perspectives, it was rapidly evident those schools that had a positive culture. What was not evident was what had created this positive culture. There did, however, seem to be a pattern of principals who had social skills in leading schools with a positive culture. What was not immediately clear was if a positive culture related to a successful school, or conversely, a negative culture to an unsuccessful or low-performing school. Another question that arose was whether it were possible to have a school with a negative culture and be a successful or high-preforming school.

Throughout my program evaluation, I focused on current strategies used by school administrators for determining professional learning plans, as well as recognizing the leadership qualities that had the largest impact on school improvement. I conducted the program evaluation at two middle schools in a large, public school district in the United States. I used a combination of two types of evaluation: a pre- and post-assessment to measure the ability of administrators to rate instructional effectiveness as well as two faculty surveys.

The leadership lessons learned and the experienced gained from this study have made me a more contemplative leader. From collecting the quantitative and qualitative data to analyzing the results, I was continually focused on the outcomes that would provide a clearer vision into current methods utilized to determine effective professional

learning plans. Additionally, determining what leadership qualities the two faculties felt were vital to the effectiveness of a leader, provided specific evidence to apply to future leadership development.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my daughters Adyla, and Arden, thank you for keeping me grounded and always making me laugh. To my parents, Bob and Gale, thank you for your incredible example of hard work, dedication, love, and support. To my constant companion and partner HK. Thank you for being my encourager, I could not have accomplished this without you! Now we will live in the cloud.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

A culture exists in every school. Culture can differ greatly from school to school. Therefore, understanding what impacts and affects school culture is an important factor for a principal to know. There has been extensive research investigating the impact that school culture has on student achievement (Smith, Connolly, & Pryseski, 2014). Additional research on school climate indicated that a positive climate can not only promote higher morale but also enhance staff performance and improve student achievement (Kelley, Thornton & Daugherty, 2005). For the purpose of this study, school climate was defined as the school characteristics that are affected by the leadership qualities of the principal. In this study, I researched the impact of principal leadership qualities on school culture related to school improvement.

Purpose of the Program Evaluation

In this program evaluation, I focused on current strategies used by school administrators for determining professional learning plans. An additional aspect of the study was analyzing the leadership qualities that have the largest impact on school culture towards school improvement. I conducted the program evaluation at two middle schools within the district under study in the United States.

I chose the two schools for my study based on their relative similarity to each other. This was deliberate as to ensure a similar student population in terms of size, race, and socio-economic demographics. Due to a similar student population, the instructional faculties were very close in size as well. Both were middle schools located in a rural area in the United States. Another factor that led me to choose these two schools was the fact

that each principal had been assigned to his or her respective school for at least the two previous years. This ensured that the teaching faculties had been able to serve under their principal for at least two years prior to the surveys I conducted. Finding two similar middle schools whose principals had been in place at least two years within the same school district was difficult due to the large number of administrative shifts over the previous two years.

The district administration, including the superintendent and two deputy superintendents had been in place for 1.5 years at the time of the study. This school district had an elected superintendent. It was important to note that the superintendent was elected from outside the local public school system. She had also not served as a school administrator at any level and was currently working at a local state college at the time of her election. She unseated a long-time local educator who had worked his entire career in the school district and rose through the ranks as a teacher and site-based administrator. He had served as superintendent for the previous four years. His loss in the election to a candidate who had never served as a school administrator was not expected by the school district or community at large. It is also important to note that half-way through the new superintendent's tenure the general electorate voted to move to an appointed superintendent in the future.

This was a substantial change as it was one of the last large school districts in the nation that still elected their superintendent. Prior to this change, school superintendent elections were partisan. The five-member school board was now charged with appointing the next superintendent. The move to an appointed superintendent was a controversial one that subsequently created a hostile environment between the school

board and the elected superintendent who was still in place. The vote to switch from an elected to an appointed superintendent took place in the middle of the current superintendent's four-year term. As a result, the State Attorney General had to provide a ruling as to whether the superintendent was permitted to finish her term of office. It was ruled that she would be allowed to complete her term.

School A was a middle school located in a rural area. The school served grades 6-8. The student population at the time of my study was over 1,300. There were nearly 70 instructional faculty members on staff at the time of the study. The school student population was made up of about 50% male and 50% female. The demographic breakdown of the student population was as follows: Caucasian 58 %, African American 11%, Hispanic 24%, Multiracial 4%, Asian, Native American and Native Hawaiian 1% (less than 10 students in each of the subgroups). The majority of the population was economically disadvantaged, and therefore, eligible for free or reduced lunch prices.

English language learners made up only 3% of the population, while students with disabilities made up 13%. The school grade for the 2018-2019 school year was a B. The school grade for the 2017-2018 school year was a B. The school grade for the 2016-2017 school year was a C. The principal was entering his fourth year. The remainder of the administrative staff, which included an Assistant Principal of Discipline as well as an Assistant Principal of Curriculum, had been at the school for the previous two years, 2016-2018.

School B was also a middle school located in a rural area. The school served grades 6-8. The student population at the time of the study was just under 1,300. There were over 60 instructional faculty members on staff at the time of the study. The school

was made up of about 50% male and 50% female students. The demographic breakdown of the student population was as follows: Caucasian 41 %, African American 19%, Hispanic 31%, Multiracial 4%, Asian 3%, Native American and Native Hawaiian 1% (less than 10 students in each of the subgroups). Sixty three percent of the population was economically disadvantaged, and therefore, were eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. English language learners made up only 5% of the population, while students with disabilities made up 14%.

The principal was entering her third year. She had served at the school beginning in the 2012-2013 school year as an assistant principal. She was promoted to the position of principal in July 2017. The school grade for the 2018-2019 school year was a C. The school grade for the 2017-2018 school year was a C. The school grade for the 2016-2017 school year was a C. The remainder of the administrative staff, which included an Assistant Principal of Discipline as well as an Assistant Principal of Curriculum, had been at the school for two years, 2016-2018.

The district under study has nine middle schools. Of the nine schools, there is one K-8 school. The average student population of all of the remaining middle schools at the time of the study was 1,063. This average represented a low of 479 at the K-8 school and a high of 1,138 at a traditional 6-8 school. The average percentage of those students identified as economically disadvantaged at the remaining seven schools was 71%. The student population at the remaining middle schools were made up of 50% male and 43% female. The demographic breakdown of the schools was as follows: Caucasian 48.5%, African American 19%, Hispanic 17%, Multiracial 6%, Asian 2%, Native American and Native Hawaiian .5%. English language learners made up 10% of the

population, while students with disabilities made up 14%.

The goal of my program evaluation was to determine the level to which school administrators in two middle schools in the district I chose for my study were able to evaluate effective instruction within the classrooms and the methods they employed to determine professional learning plans among teachers that addressed instructional needs.

Rationale

The culture of a school contributes to the overall success of a school. Based on this fact, building a culture or changing a culture would contribute to the success of the school. The process of evaluating culture and the impact on student achievement revolves around "routines, norms, roles, symbols, values, and beliefs" (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015, p. 28). Consequently, the leader of school, who is ultimately entrusted with the formation and monitoring of these elements of a school, would be considered the culture builder. Because of this, I chose to study the impact of principal leadership qualities on school culture towards school improvement.

Schools are graded, at least in large part, based on how students perform on state assessments. Success, at least using this gauge, is measured by student achievement and growth on these annual assessments. Therefore, understanding the elements that impact this achievement and growth can impact the success of the school. Consequently, it is essential then to determine the elements that impact school culture and student achievement. For the purposes of this study, the three elements determined to be essential to the creation of school culture were student needs, determined by state assessments, instructional needs, determined by classroom observations, and organizational culture, such as values, goals, and principles. Based on my professional

experience, the current levels of these elements are necessary to understand the needs of the principals and provide supports for them (needs assessment).

A needs assessment identifies specific evidenced-based best practices to support instruction (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014). Throughout my eight years in school administration, working in five different schools at the Elementary, Middle and High School levels, I had not witnessed a needs assessment employed to determine what structures were necessary to support school improvement. In every school in which I worked, we utilized professional learning opportunities for the instructional faculty. Miles, Rosenberg, and Green (2017) determined that measured improvements in classroom instruction and student performance, therefore school success, result when there is highly connected professional learning design. However, the chance of the professional learning actually yielding success is remote unless the professional learning is connected to student learning needs and instructional needs. Therefore, studying how principals determined what professional learning to apply within their schools and what leadership qualities most impacted its implementation became a focus of my research.

Following a needs assessment, implementing the identified professional learning was the next focus of my study. Professional learning is the process of assisting learning institutions, including educators and administrators, to improve their competence, knowledge, and skills in teaching through further training (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Professional learning is recognized as essential for educators to refine their knowledge of pedagogy and how to more effectively deliver instruction. It is also recognized as the most common way to improve teachers' level of preparedness in delivering knowledge to their students (Bayar, 2014). However, its impact is highly dependent upon how well it is

designed and aligned to student and instructional needs.

There are numerous models of professional learning. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. The goal is to maximize results while maximizing efficiency. With increased expectations on schools and school districts to produce results, time spent on professional learning must be time well spent. This requires a systematic approach (Killion & Kennedy, 2012). Killion and Kennedy describe this as the "sweet spot" of professional learning (p. 11). This is the convergence of appropriate needs, with appropriate content to meet those needs.

Simply identifying needs and then applying professional learning does not guarantee success. Delivering effective professional learning to a faculty takes an effective administrator. There appears to be no formula or pattern of what it means to be effective, although, there are specific characteristics that effective leaders possess including intelligent, self-reflective, inspirational, honest, self-aware, and good listener just to name a few (Davis, 1998).

Rating which is the most effective or the most important characteristic to possess is difficult. Much like a needs assessment for a school, a needs assessment of those aspiring to be principals, and a process to support those needs, should be essential elements of a principal preparation program. Seeing this need from my position as a district administrator and understanding principal effectiveness became the primary focus of my study.

The standard, and arguably only one measure of principal effectiveness, at least in the era of school grades, has been student achievement, measured by student assessment data. This alone does not ensure that a principal is effective. My study utilized a

principal effectiveness survey to measure fifteen areas in which to rate the principal. The focus of the survey was not to specifically determine the areas in which the principal may or may not be effective, but rather to what degree the faculty believed the principal to be effective. This fact becomes important to the degree that if a faculty believes the principal to be effective then the faculty will be more likely to believe in and follow their leadership (Kelley, Thornton & Daugherty, 2005).

Research evidence throughout my study clearly indicated that leadership, school culture, and the resulting success are related. Consequently, the principal must have a specific understanding of the vision and mission of the school based on students' learning needs and teachers' instructional needs. Principals must also understand their role in leading for that vision and mission. These two facts are not possible without the principal understanding his or her leadership style and its role in shaping the school culture. Increasing the body of knowledge in understanding which leadership qualities have the greatest impact on school culture towards school improvement may result in the selection of the most effective principals to lead schools. Studying these facts is the rationale for my research.

Goals

According to Dufor and Marzano (2011), the quality of teaching is the most important factor affecting student learning. Therefore, assessing the ability of school administrators to evaluate the teaching taking place within their schools would be an equally important factor. The primary goal of this program evaluation was to determine the level to which administrators at two middle schools in one district in the United States were able to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, including evaluating

instructional and student needs in their schools and the impact of school culture on student achievement.

According to Martin (2009) the most commonly occurring specific characteristics that effective leaders possess are intelligent, self-reflective, inspirational, honest, self-aware, and good listener. I will evaluate the leadership qualities of the principals in each of the two schools under study as well as which quality their faculty believes to be most important. I will also evaluate the effectiveness of the principal within each of the two schools. My goal is to understand existing levels of administrators in the above areas and to provide professional learning to assist in their development.

Definition of Terms

I used the following specific terms throughout my study. Their definitions are important to fully understand the components of my study.

Needs Assessment - The needs assessment process is comprehensive and focuses on the entire school. Data from a variety of sources should be collected and examined to identify priority need areas in all aspects of school operation. The focus of the needs assessment is to identify strengths of the current program, but also to identify weaknesses, obstacles and barriers in each of the dimensions (University of Washington, 2012).

MILE Assessment - Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE^{TM}) Assessment administered by the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership. Written responses were evaluated separately by two specially trained instructional leaders using a rubric that was developed and validated by researchers at the University of Washington and Vanderbilt University. The rubric was designed to measure

expertise in four areas: observing and analyzing instruction, providing feedback to teachers, orchestrating and supporting teachers' professional learning, and the ability to adopt an inquiry stance in support of teachers. Raters considered the various criteria of each area to arrive at an overall assessment of expertise for eleven areas of proficiency based on the four point "nearly a master" (4) to "novice" (1) continuum (University of Washington, 2012).

School Climate – School climate refers to the quality and character of life in a school. School climate includes the patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. (National School Climate Council, 2012).

Research Questions

Three questions guided this study:

(1) To what level are school administrators (principals and assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction?

(2) What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture?

(3) How does school culture impact student achievement?

I collected both qualitative and quantitative data to answer the research questions. I collected data from four sources, the Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE^{TM}) Assessment, the School Principal Leadership Survey, the Principal Effectiveness Survey, and students' state assessment scores in math, Algebra, science, and Civics.

I used the results from the MILE Assessment to answer the first research question. I used quantitative and qualitative data to answer the second research question utilizing the School Principal Leadership Survey and the Principal Effectiveness Survey.

Conclusion

From my position as a district administrator at the time I collected data, I observed and evaluated many principals. Each of these principals possessed different leadership qualities that resulted in different styles of leadership. I continually found myself considering the impact of these qualities and styles on the school which they led. These considerations became the foundation of my research. As a result, my program evaluation project was to determine the impact of principal leadership qualities on school culture towards school improvement within two middle schools in the district under study. To accomplish this, I explored four steps in each school. 1. Rate the effectiveness of the principal using a principal effectiveness survey. 2. Rate each administrator's ability to evaluate instruction using the MILE assessment. 3. Apply a learning walk program to grow the administrators' ability to evaluate instruction. 4. Combine identified instructional needs with student needs (needs assessment) to determine a professional learning plan.

By examining the results of each of these steps, I was able to understand, at a higher level, the overall effectiveness of the principal. With this data, and therefore a specific measure of individual abilities, I rated their effectiveness. Ultimately, I was able to identify critical factors related to school culture and its impact of student achievement towards school improvement.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

The training, preparation, and support principals receive are directly related to their effectiveness as instructional leaders. Many State Boards of Education provide little direction on the content or criteria of a principal preparation program. Therefore, the quality of the preparation and fidelity of implementation of principal preparation programs varies widely from school district to school district. As a result, many schools are led by principals who do not possess the necessary skills required to lead. Consequently, students and teachers in these schools fail to have the opportunities to benefit from the best practices of effective leadership (Alvoid & Black, 2014).

Through this review of literature, I presented and discussed literature relevant to principal qualities attributed to student achievement towards school improvement. To begin, I examined the styles and qualities of leaders. Next, I studied needs assessments and analyses of schools. Thirdly, I examined professional learning. Finally, I reviewed literature on fidelity of implementation. These four focus areas provided the framework of the literature review and provided answers to my second research question: What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture?

This project began with the premise that if students are not learning they are not being afforded powerful learning opportunities (Fink, Markholt & Michelson, 2018). The first key element was to understand exactly what powerful learning opportunities were, and how to recognize them. Having developed an understanding of this, the next element was to determine how current levels of professional learning to assist learning opportunities are utilized. Finally, I assessed the literature on effective leadership

qualities that impact school culture towards student achievement, including the effectiveness of the professional learning implemented.

Leadership Qualities

Some principals are considered to be more effective leaders than others. However, there appears to be no formula or pattern of how to accomplish the goal of becoming effective. There are though characteristics that effective leaders possess. Intelligent, self-reflective, inspirational, honest, self-aware, and good listener are character traits that make good leaders, just to name a few (Martin, 2009, p. 38).

According to a study of 99 California superintendents conducted by Davis (1998), the lack of an ability to develop interpersonal relationships was the number one reason that principals failed. In this specific study, several factors, including low student achievement, disorderly campus, resistance to change, poor administrative skills, and poor decision-making skills, were cited during the author's interview of the superintendents. Out of all of the factors, an inability to develop interpersonal relationships was by far the number one reason given by the superintendents surveyed for principals failing.

Interpersonal relationships between a faculty and their principal becomes vital when implementing a professional learning plan. No matter how detailed and targeted the methods to determine the plan are, humans will implement the plan. According to Brooks (2011) in his study of Antonio Damasio's work, "humans are at heart emotional beings, they emerge out of relationships" (p. 19). Damasio's research on the human brain resulted in the "somatic marker hypothesis" (p. 19). The key point of Damasio's theory is that emotions measure the value of something and help guide people as they make

decisions. His specific research showed that individuals who had damaged frontal lobes, the portion of the brain that is responsible for emotions, lacked the ability to make concise decisions. In other words, they could prepare themselves to make a decision and contemplate possible outcomes, but had extreme difficulty actually making a decision.

The significance of Damasio's work is recognizing that emotion plays an integral role in decision making. It assists the brain in reaching an outcome. Brooks (2011) added that reason and emotion are not separate and opposed (p. 21). Reason assists the brain in coding and sorting. Emotion assigns value to things. Reason can only make choices on the basis of those valuations. These facts connect directly with Davis's (1998) research on interpersonal relationships between principals and their faculties. The lack of an interpersonal connection with those they serve was the number one reason that principals failed according to 200 school superintendents in Davis's study.

Carpenter (2017) studied the impact that school environment has on student achievement. She specifically analyzed principal leadership skills and resulting school climate. Carpenter's research yielded a strong, significant relationship between principal leadership practice and the school climate. This study also indicated a positive correlation between school climate and teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership practices. Her overall findings showed that even though leadership behaviors and characteristics varied from one leader to the next, those behaviors and characteristics have a relationship to the overall school climate.

Leadership qualities and practices are utilized by many principals and become a part of their daily behaviors. Sergiovanni (2000) asserted that a leader's behaviors are reflected through his or her leadership style and referred to this as moral leadership.

Roland Barth (2001) added to this assertion stating that excluding the heart of leadership results in teachers following by compliance, not because teachers truly believe and trust their leader. Compliance following results out of an obligation to a directive as opposed to a true belief that the directive will produce the desired results. Barth continued by stating that there is no more pervasive characteristic of good schools than healthy teacher-principal relationships. Academic explication, or disaggregating student assessment data, is readily abundant in our profession, what we need is those who "lead from the heart" (p. 141). According to Barth (2001) it is not always the concrete qualities that effective principals possess that lead to a positive school climate and a successful school, but those less quantitative. "The best principals are those who understand how to rigorously and courageously craft school experiences such that those experiences that yield important learning for adults and students" (Barth, 2001, p. 141).

Barth (2001) added that the principal should shape the culture of a school by being a culture builder. Brooks (2011) supported this assertion by stating that people learn from people they love. He continued by stating that if the individual relationships that exist within schools are expunged when policy making occurs, the likelihood of the policy being successful is greatly reduced. In other words, when creating policy, disregarding emotion or not considering the impact on relationships jeopardizes the policy. Embracing emotions and their role in decision making strengthens the values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give schools their identity.

Needs Assessment

School administrators know that planned classroom walk-throughs can have a positive impact on student achievement (Black, 2007). However, Black also stated that

walk-throughs only impact teacher practice when they lead to conversations that improve effective instruction. Furthermore, Black's research indicated a statistical significance existed in student achievement only when the classroom walk-throughs included a plan for data gathering around an area of focus and reflecting with the instructor on the information gathered. As Lemons and Helsing (2009) found in their research of two school districts and their district-wide implementation of learning walks, a wide variation of success can result based on implementation. While both districts implemented a similar learning walk program in schools throughout the district, the results that each experienced were substantially different.

The authors contended that the major difference in success between the districts' implementation of the learning walk programs were two-fold. First, in one of the two districts, there was a rush to implement the program system-wide without a clear understand of the "complex nature of the work" (Lemons & Helsing, 2009, p. 481). Second, was the use of the program by the same district as a solution for all of the instructional and student deficiencies, or a "silver bullet" (Lemons & Helsing, 2009, p. 481). This was another example of the program itself having no power to make any substantial change. One final problem of implementation that the authors raised is that the learning walks had a singular focus around higher-order thinking. This use of a single area of focus throughout the entire school or district did not take into account individual needs within each classroom. Lemons and Helsing (2009) pointed out, a single area of focus for the entire school can turn this initiative into a compliance measure instead of one that could impact real change.

Conversely, in the second school district under study by Lemons and Helsing (2009), learning walks were instituted with a "systems perspective," not as an off-the-shelf package (p. 483). There was an understanding that improving teaching and learning is a long-term venture. District leaders recognized that learning walks were a tool to assist in the process of school improvement. They invested in the "struggle of thinking through learning walks" (p. 482). Within this district, learning walks were utilized to identify the needs of both students and teachers as opposed to a predetermined focus of the walks. The result was a design of a professional learning plan tailored to the needs identified throughout the walks (p. 483).

Based on the information researched, there is significant evidence that a learning walk plan can have a positive impact on student achievement. However, when there are deficiencies identified in the instruction taking place in classroom instruction, targeted professional learning for teachers around these deficiencies will be necessary. This connection between a classroom walk-through plan and professional learning was linked specifically by Steiny (2009).

Steiny focused on two specific factors that were identified as a result of a successful learning walk routine that was implemented in a single middle school over a three-year period. The first of the factors was that of teacher acceptance of the learning walk program. Initially, only district administrators went out as teams on learning walks. Not until teachers became members of the small walking teams did they see how learning walks could do any good for them (p. 32). Steiny stated that this acceptance created an "appetite" for professional development (p. 34). When teachers were a part of the walk process, they trusted the feedback they were given as a result of the learning walk plan

and its integration into professional learning (p. 34).

The second factor was that of an implementation of a professional learning plan connected to gaps in instructional practice witnessed in walk-throughs. In Steiny's study, teachers involved in learning walks talked about their practice and designed professional learning centered on needs identified during the walks. As a result, teachers understood the need for the professional development. When they saw instructional practices they liked during the walks, they could go directly to that teacher to get advice. Steiny pointed out that the most effective professional development is close to the classroom (p. 34).

While the need for administrators to identify effective instruction is essential toward school improvement, once the level(s) of instruction are determined, professional learning designed to assist with the needs that are determined are arguably just as essential. While there exists a large body of research on high-quality formal professional learning, there is relatively little on how to determine the individual needs of a school and apply informal, ongoing professional learning (Little, 2006). This fact will become a key aspect in my research, whereas I contend that professional learning plans, initiatives or programs are determined with very little information gathering prior to identifying them.

Professional Learning Implementation

Quality of teaching has been observed as the most important factor affecting student learning (Dufor & Marzano, 2011). After determining the needs of classroom instruction, applying professional learning would logically be the next most important factor. Professional learning is the process of assisting educators and administrators improve their competence, knowledge, and skills in teaching through further training (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Professional learning is recognized as essential in order for

educators to refine their knowledge of pedagogy and how to deliver this knowledge. It is also recognized as the most common way to improve teachers' level of preparedness in delivering knowledge to their students (Bayer, 2014). However, its impact is highly dependent upon how well it is designed and aligned to student and instructional needs.

There are a litany of ineffective professional learning within education. One of the most ineffective forms of professional learning is the use of standalone professional learning. In this form, an outside consultant or curriculum expert is brought in to provide a training on a specific topic. According to Joyce and Showers (2002), standalone training has less than a 5% chance of improving instructional practices in the classroom. If instructional practice is not improved, student growth is unlikely to occur. Furthermore, professional learning that lacks a continued plan and follow through, makes it very difficult for teachers to believe in the practice of professional learning.

In order for professional learning to most effectively impact teacher growth, it needs to be ongoing and continuous with a focus on student outcomes (DuFour, 2004). Additionally, high-quality professional learning is sustained over time and is focused on solving important problems related to teaching and learning (Sparks, 2002, p. 5). As a result, the professional learning is viewed as a systematic approach towards addressing student and instructional needs. This approach creates cohesion and clarity.

Professional learning is the most powerful way for teachers to influence student achievement in the classroom (DuFour, 2004). The goal of professional learning is to maximize results while maximizing efficiency. Increased expectations on schools to produce results means that time spent must be time well spent. In relation to professional learning, time well spent requires a systematic approach (Killion & Kennedy, 2012).

Killion and Kennedy describe this as the sweet spot of professional learning. This is the convergence of appropriate needs, with appropriate content to meet those needs. As Dufour and Marzano (2011) state, the quality of teaching has been observed as the most important factor affecting student learning. Therefore, leading professional learning to build the quality of teaching is essential for effective principals. With the sweet spot identified, the next step becomes fidelity of implementation.

Fidelity of Implementation

Fidelity of implementation refers to how well a program is executed with adherence and integrity to the program design (Carroll et al., 2007). Program design and implementation process affects how well a program will succeed (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). According to Carroll et al., there are five elements that must be in place and measured to ensure the possibility of success of a program. Those five elements are, adherence, exposure, quality of delivery, participant responsiveness, and program differentiation. Each of these elements will influence the effectiveness of the professional learning plan.

Adherence is the degree to which those responsible for implementing the program follow the program as it was designed. Therefore, the plan of the program is essential to be known and understood by all those entrusted with its implementation. Exposure refers to the interaction and understanding of the program by the intended user. Understanding the rationale as well as how it will be delivered to the staff can have a major effect on success of the program. The method of delivery can have just as large of an impact upon success as any of the other elements. It cannot be assumed that simply because the professional learning is needed that it will be successful. This element directly effects

participant responsiveness (Killion & Kennedy, 2012).

Participant responsiveness arguably is the most crucial element. If the intended user does not receive and respond to the learning, all the prior elements will have been in vain. Program differentiation refers to understanding the level to which intended users may be on the paradigm of learning. Just as in a classroom of student learners, it is essential to know where the adult learners are to tailor the learning to their needs. Considering each of these elements as a professional learning plan is being formulated will ensure greater fidelity of implementation (Killion & Kennedy, 2012).

The structure or framework of delivery of the professional learning plan must be considered. This is the way in which the services of the plan will be delivered and include length, intensity, duration, content, procedures, and activities of the program. These aspects are considered, not only in the planning of the professional learning, but clarified to the user throughout implementation. It is only through evaluating the impact of the professional learning on classroom instruction and student outcomes that a reliable measure of the fidelity of implementation can occur (Carroll et al., 2007).

Successful professional learning is an element of successful schools. Success of a professional learning plan cannot exist without fidelity of implementation. Therefore, if as a result of professional learning, classroom instruction is focused on student needs and student achievement increases, the school is successful. Regardless of the tool or measure, student achievement is always a component of principal effectiveness.

Conclusion

School culture contributes to the overall success of a school (Lamond, 2003). The school grading and standards-based reform movement assigns what a successful school

actually is. However, the chances of these movements actually yielding success is remote unless the organization whose job it is to enact these reforms, values and supports them. It is essential then that the principal builds the culture around these standards of success.

Based on the review of literature, evidence clearly indicates that leadership, school culture, and the resulting success are related (Lamond, 2003). Consequently, the principal must have a specific understanding of the vision and mission of the school based on needs. The principal also must understand his or her role in leading for that vision and mission. These two facts are not possible without the principal understanding his or her own leadership style and its role in shaping the school culture. Increasing the body of knowledge in understanding which leadership qualities have the greatest impact on school culture towards school improvement will lead to the selection of the most effective principals to lead schools. This research study attempts to satisfy this need.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This program evaluation considers the impact principal leadership qualities have on professional learning. I used a mixed-methods design and collected qualitative and quantitative data. In this section, I provide detailed descriptions of how I collected and analyzed my data.

Research Design Overview

Throughout my program evaluation I focused on current strategies used by school administrators for determining professional learning plans, as well as recognizing the leadership qualities that had the largest impact on school improvement. I conducted the program evaluation at two middle schools in a large, public school district in the Southeastern portion of the country. These two schools had similar populations with regard to enrollment, faculty, and staff. I used a combination of two types of evaluation: a pre- and post-assessment to measure the ability of administrators to rate instructional effectiveness Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise Assessment (MILE Assessment), and faculty surveys. The pre-assessment measured the administrators' ability to evaluate effective instruction within their schools (See Appendix A). Understanding the ability level of this skill is necessary for a school administration to determine areas of growth for a teacher, and therefore, professional learning. The survey given to each school's respective faculty was conducted to identify the leadership qualities (or lack thereof) of the current principal as a baseline metric for the post-assessment which would be given a year later (See Appendix B).

Participants

There were two stakeholder groups involved in this program evaluation. The first group consisted of school administrators from each of the two middle schools. The school's principal and two assistant principals took the MILE both prior to and at the conclusion of the program evaluation. The other stakeholder group consisted of the instructional faculty at each middle school. Every faculty member was invited to take part in the survey.

Data Gathering Techniques

I collected both qualitative and quantitative data to answer my research questions. I collected data sets from four sources. The Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE™) Assessment, the School Principal Leadership Survey, the Principal Effectiveness Survey, and students' State Standards Assessment scores in math, Algebra, science, and Civics.

MILE Assessment. The MILE Assessment was created by the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership. This assessment is an online tool that measures leaders' skills in observing and analyzing classroom instruction, providing feedback, and designing professional development for teacher growth. I administered the MILE Assessment to each administrator (principal and assistant principals) at both middle schools under study as a pre and post-test. I administered the pre-test prior to program implementation in March 2018. I administered the post-test to the same group following program implementation in March 2019.

The process consisted of watching a video of classroom instruction and responding in writing to the following prompts:

- What do you notice—and wonder—about teaching and learning in this classroom?
- What specific feedback would you give the teacher to help him/her take productive next steps in improving instruction? And why?
- What plan for professional development and support would you suggest for this teacher based on what you observed? That is, what does this teacher need to learn, and how would you get him/her there?

Two specially trained instructional leaders evaluated the written responses using a rubric that was developed and validated by researchers at the University of Washington and Vanderbilt University. Using the MILE Assessment results, the same two specially trained instructional leaders scored participants in each of the 11 categories on a scale of 1-4. The categories were: Lesson Purpose, Student Engagement, Curriculum & Pedagogy, Assessment for Student Learning, Classroom Environment and Culture, Evidence-Based Feedback, Evidence-Based Professional Development, Quality of Professional Development, Content of Professional Development, and Inquiry Stance. The results from each category provided an overall average based on individual scores all 11 categories as well.

Participants typed responses into a Word, Google docs or another text-based editor and then copied and pasted into the website essay fields. This provided extra protection for responses in case of any technology issue that may have occurred and also allowed for the respondent to retrieve responses at a later date if needed. The assessment included specific directions for the respondents to answer the questions, as thoroughly and specifically as possible. Raters scored the assessments based solely on what was written and pasted into the website. There was no time or word limit provided. Raters did not consider spelling or grammar when determining the score. Two highly trained raters

from the University of Washington and Vanderbilt University Assessment scored the responses. I e-mailed the results as well as delivered a hard copy to each of the respondents.

Principal Effectiveness Survey. In addition to the MILE Assessment, I developed a principal effectiveness survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine the level to which the faculty and staff at each school under study believed their principal to be effective. I provided the Principal Effectiveness Survey to collect quantitative data to answer the second research question. I administered The Principal Effectiveness Survey to 70 participants from School A and 57 participants from School B. Each participant provided a response of either a "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5."

I administered the survey to each faculty member at both middle schools. I delivered these surveys face to face at a faculty meeting. I explained the reason and justification for the survey at this faculty meeting. I received informed consent to participate prior to any respondent taking the survey. Respondents returned surveys without any names on them to ensure anonymity. I calculated the total number of surveys completed by each school's faculty to ascertain the response rate of each school.

School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey. In addition, to the principal effectiveness survey, I administered a second survey to both faculties at each middle school under study. I utilized the Principal Leadership Quality Survey to identify the leadership qualities that each faculty member felt was most vital for effective leadership. The participants ranked the five qualities on the survey. For each quality, the participants provided either a "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5" with "1" being the most important and 5 being the least important.

I obtained informed consent to participate from each respondent prior to any respondent taking the survey. Respondents returned the surveys without any names on them to ensure anonymity. I calculated the total number of surveys completed by each school's faculty to ascertain the response rate of each school.

Data Analysis Techniques

I analyzed both the qualitative and quantitative data to answer my research questions. I analyzed data sets from four sources. Those sources included The Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE™) Assessment, the School Principal Leadership Survey, the Principal Effectiveness Survey, and students' State Standards Assessment scores in math, Algebra, science, and Civics.

MILE Assessment. The rubric is designed to measure expertise in four areas: observing and analyzing instruction, providing feedback to teachers, orchestrating and supporting teachers' professional learning, and the ability to adopt an inquiry stance in support of teachers. Two specially trained instructional leaders from The University of Washington and Vanderbilt University evaluated the MILE assessment written responses using a rubric. Raters considered the various criteria of each area to arrive at an overall assessment of expertise for eleven areas of proficiency based on the four point "nearly a master" (4) to "novice" (1) continuum.

I analyzed the data the MILE provided to determine the degree to which the participants of the study were able to identify effective instruction. Using the data provided by the MILE Assessment, I sought to understand the degree to which each administrator was currently able to effectively rate classroom instruction and develop professional learning plans in areas of weakness based on their observations. This data

provided a baseline data set from which to gauge each administrator's ability to determine instructional effectiveness in 11 specific categories prior to program implementation. I used the results from the MILE Assessment to answer the first research question.

Ethical Considerations

The foremost ethical consideration for this program evaluation was to protect the anonymity of each participant. I gave each participant an informed consent form conveying the purpose and usage of the data collection. Another important ethical consideration was the accurate reporting of results regarding both quantitative and qualitative data. The school district contracted with the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership (CLA) to administer and the MILE Assessment, and then for the school district to utilize the data for the purpose of improving classroom instruction. Two of the considerations involved using the MILE Assessment were ensuring that the CLAs intellectual property rights were not violated and that the school district proprietary rights to the data collected were respected.

Additionally, data collected from the faculty surveys belong to the school district. As a result, I requested permission from the school district to utilize data gathered from the faculty surveys. A third ethical consideration involved in this program evaluation was to ensure objectivity. Within my position as Area Director of Schools, I supervised one of the two schools involved in the study. Given this fact, it was essential that I remained unbiased in the evaluation of the overall program.

The benefits of the program focused on developing the school administrator's ability to identify effective instruction and subsequently provide professional learning as

well as identify effective leadership qualities. Applying the information ascertained in this study provided invaluable resources towards developing future effective leaders. When the leader's ability to effectively identify and subsequently provide professional learning towards increasing teacher effectiveness increased, Tier I instruction within the school will improve. Harm to participants, including administrators, was non-existent as the surveys were anonymous and were only taken if the faculty member so chose.

Limitations

There were several limitations of this program evaluation that I believe affected its outcome. First was the small sample size of only two schools within a district of 52 schools. The second was the limited number of teachers who chose to take the surveys. A third limitation was the limited timeframe of one year involved in the program evaluation. A longer time to implement the program could have added more validity to the data provided.

Conclusion

It was with great enthusiasm that I administered this program evaluation. From collecting the quantitative and qualitative data to analyzing the results, I was continually focused on the outcomes that would provide a clearer vision into current methods utilized to determine effective professional learning plans. Additionally, determining what leadership qualities the two faculties felt were vital to the effectiveness of a leader, provided specific evidence to apply to future leadership development.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The purpose of this program evaluation was to determine the level to which administrators at two middle schools in one district in the United States were able to evaluate effective instruction within the classroom and the impact of school culture on student achievement. Three questions guided this study: (1) To what level are school administrators (principals & assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction?; (2) What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture?; and (3) Does school culture impact student achievement? Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to answer the research questions. Data were collected from four sources, the Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE™) Assessment, the School Principal Leadership Survey, the Principal Effectiveness Survey, and students' State Standards Assessment scores in math, Algebra, science, and Civics.

The results from the MILE Assessment were used to answer the first research question. To answer the second research question, quantitative and qualitative data were collected using the School Principal Leadership Survey and the Principal Effectiveness Survey. To answer the third research question, the 2017 to 2019 proficiency percentages in math, Algebra, science, and Civics were measured for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders from Schools A and B. In Section Four I present the results and findings that I used to answer the three research questions that guided my study. The findings that resulted from my program evaluation provided answers to my research questions in regard to the effects of principal leadership qualities on professional learning implementation leading to school improvement. I surveyed each middle school faculty that participated in my program evaluation to determine the relative effectiveness to the

principal as well as what leadership quality each faculty member believed to be the most important.

Findings

In the subsections below, I discussed the findings of the qualitative and quantitative data collected as part of the evaluation portion of the project. Below the presentation of these data, I provided answers to each of my research questions. I began with the data compiled from the MILE assessment. Of the six administrators who took the first administration of the MILE assessment, only four took the second administration. This was due to the fact that one assistant principal at each of the two middle schools under study did not finish the year at their respective schools. The following tables reflect the responses of administrators who took both MILE Assessments.

MILE Assessments

To answer Research Question 1: To what level are school administrators (principal & assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction; the Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE™) Assessment created by the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership was administered to each administrator from the two middle schools (two principals and four assistant principals). Six, or 100% of the administrators at the two schools participated in the MILE assessment. The assessment process consisted of administrators watching a video of classroom instruction and responding in writing to the following prompts: 1. What do you notice and wonder about teaching and learning in this classroom. 2. What specific feedback would you give the teacher to help him/her take productive next steps in

improving instruction and why? 3. What plan for professional development and support would you suggest for this teacher based on what you observed? That is, what does this teacher need to learn, and how would you get him/her there. Six, or 100% of administrators at the two schools under study participated in the MILE assessment. One, or 20% of the respondents were African Americans. Zero or 0 % of the respondents were Hispanic. Five or 80% of the respondents were Caucasian. The respondents' average years of experience in education was twelve years. The respondents' average number of years in their current positions was three. The highest level of education of the respondents was a Doctorate.

Once the administrators submitted their MILE assessments, then two specially trained instructional leaders from The University of Washington and Vanderbilt University evaluated the written responses using their rubric. The rubric was designed to measure expertise in four areas: observing and analyzing instruction, providing feedback to teachers, orchestrating and supporting teachers' professional learning, and the ability to adopt an inquiry stance in support of teachers. Raters considered the various criteria of each area to arrive at an overall assessment of expertise for eleven areas of proficiency based on a four-point continuum. The four points of the continuum were novice, emerging, developing, and nearly a master.

Raters analyzed the writing of the six respondents to determine the degree to which the participants of the study were able to identify effective instruction. The six respondents completed the MILE assessment both before and after the learning walk program implementation. The respondents received either a "1," "2," "3," or "4" for each category. A score of "1" indicated that the respondent was a "novice." Responses

at this level were characterized by some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. A score of "2" indicated that the respondent was "emerging." Emerging indicated that the respondents' ideas in response lack focus, reference to only a few teacher/student actions from the video to support ideas, use of jargon of practice not linked to evidence in the video, ideas lack contextualization and connectedness. Responses typically include a moderate amount of information. A score of a "3" indicated that the respondent was "developing." Developing was characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations (making connections among student learning, experiences, research, and standards). Responses typically provide extended information. A score of "4" indicated that the respondent was "nearly a master." Being nearly a master indicated that the respondents' answers demonstrated by situated knowledge, focus, careful and targeted use of detail from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support ideas, explanation of the use of observations to guide recommendations for feedback/PD, demonstration of content expertise or strategies for addressing content (University of Washington, 2012).

The purpose of the observation and analysis dimension was to provide participants with an opportunity to provide data about the teacher in five areas: (1) How and how well the teacher clearly communicated the lesson's purpose. This included attending to whether the teacher was focused on valued academic learning target(s); whether the learning targets were aligned with grade level standards;

whether the students understood the purpose; (2) How well the teacher helped all students to engage in intellectually challenging work, to take ownership of their own learning, and to help them to communicate effectively using the discourse and thinking strategies of the relevant discipline; (3) How well the teacher aligned tasks and materials to learning targets and lesson purpose, focused on conceptual understanding and disciplinary skills, utilized discipline specific pedagogy, scaffolder tasks, differentiated for students, and gradually built independence; (4) How well the teacher built assessment into the lesson, used formative strategies to assess and support students' learning, used assessment to adjust instruction as appropriate, and engaged students in assessing their own learning and progress toward learning targets; and (5) How well the classroom physical set-up, systems, routines, and interactions were designed to ensure equitable involvement of all students, created a positive learning culture, communicated expectations, and supported students' learning of content and behavioral standards.

Evaluators used the feedback dimension to rate each instructional leader's ability to frame supportive, positive and evidence-based feedback for the teacher in three specific areas: (1) Explicit and logical links to specific observations and inputs from the teacher; (2) Relates to pedagogical choices, actions of teacher and students; and (3) Relates to areas of practice that the teacher might reasonably be expected to understand and act upon in the near future.

The professional development dimension rated the respondent on the ability to plan evidence-based professional development for the teacher he or she observed. They were rated in three areas within this dimension: (1) Using teacher practice and student

learning evidence from observation as basis for planning professional development and/or as part of professional development itself for this and possibly other teachers (e.g., as an artifact that could prompt discussion and/or presuming comparable observations in other classrooms); (2) Visualizing "high-quality" professional development strategies (e.g., job-embedded, school-based, collaborative, ongoing, focused on classroom practice, differentiated to accommodate varied staff learning needs); and (3) Acknowledging and accommodating relevant features of the local school and district context.

The final dimension on which the respondents were rated was that of cross-cutting skills. Cross-cutting skills apply to all sub-dimensions of observation and analysis and proficiency areas for feedback and professional development. The cross-cutting skill dimension rated the observer's ability to raise questions and note uncertainties across all questions about possible interpretations of visible behavior, events and conditions in the classroom. Additionally, they were rated on questions that were posed to themselves and questions posed to the teacher or others to gather information about the instruction.

Classroom Environment and Culture

The following paragraphs detail the findings of the results from the MILE assessment in the dimension of classroom environment and culture. Response findings include initial and final responses. A comparative analysis of both initial and final responses is included.

Initial Responses. The evaluators' first analysis of the participants' responses related to Classroom Environment and Culture and indicated that two of the six or 33.3% of the respondents received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." One

respondent or 16.6% received a "2" and was categorized as "emerging." One respondent or 16.6% received s "3" and was categorized as "developing." Therefore, prior to program implementation, concerning Classroom Environment and Culture, the majority of the participants had some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, and use of few details from the video to support ideas. Table 1 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as they relate to Classroom Environment and Culture prior to program implementation.

Table 1

Classroom Environment and Culture (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	2	50%
2	1	25%
3	1	25%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the final responses indicated that after program implementation, three or 75% of the respondents received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing" as it related to Classroom Environment and Culture. One respondent or 25% received a score of "2" and was categorized as "emerging." Therefore, after program implementation, as it relates to Classroom Environment and

Culture, the majority of the respondents' responses indicated that they made use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas and to make sense of observations. Table 2 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided for the participants' responses as it relates to Classroom Environment and Culture after program implementation.

Table 2

Classroom Environment and Culture (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	3	75%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates as it relates to Classroom Environment and Culture, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%, (-2/-50%). One participant or 25% was identified as "emerging" prior to program implementation. The same number, one or 25% remained "emerging" after program implementation. The participants who were identified as "developing" increased from one or 25% to three or 75% (+2/+50%). The participants who were identified as "nearly a master" did not changed and remained at zero and 0%. Table 3 displays a comparison of the initial and final frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluator for the

participants' responses as it relates to Classroom Environment and Culture before and after program implementation.

Table 3

Classroom Environment and Culture (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	2/50%	0/0%	-2/-50%
2	1/25%	1/25%	0%
3	1/25%	3/75%	+2/+50%
4	0/0%	0/0%	0%

Context of Professional Development

Initial Responses. For Context of Professional Development, an analysis of the initial responses indicated that three of the four or 75% of the respondents received a score of "1" and were categorized as "novice." One respondent or 25% received a "2" and was categorized as "emerging." None of the respondents received a score of a "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the participants' responses indicated that as it related to the Context of Professional Development, they had some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. Table 4 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to the Context of Professional Development prior to program implementation.

Table 4

Context for Professional Development (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	3	75%
2	1	25%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the participants' final responses indicated that after program implementation, two or 50% of the respondents received a score of "2" and were categorized as "emerging." The other two respondents or 50% received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing." Therefore, after program implementation, as it relates to Context for Professional Development, equal numbers and percentages of the respondent's responses indicated that they made use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas and to make sense of observations. Table 5 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to the Context of Professional Development after program implementation.

Table 5

Context of Professional Development (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	2	50%
3	2	50%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment relating to Context of Professional Development indicated that the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from three or 75% to zero or 0%, (-75%). One participant or 25% was identified as "emerging" prior to program implementation and increased to two or 50% after program implementation. The participants who were identified as "developing" increased from zero to two or 50% (+50). The participants who were identified as "nearly a master" remained at zero and 0%. Table 6 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to Context of Professional Development before and after program implementation.

Table 6

Context of Professional Development (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	3/75%	0/0%	-3/-75%
2	1/25%	2/50%	+1/+25%
3	0/0%	2/50%	+2/+50%
4	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Initial Responses. For Curriculum and Pedagogy, an analysis of the participants' initial responses indicated that two of the four or 50% of the respondents received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." Two of the respondents or 50% received a "2" and were categorized as "emerging." None of the respondents received a score of a "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' responses indicated they had some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. Table 7 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators as it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy prior to program implementation.

Table 7

Curriculum and Pedagogy (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	2	50%
2	2	50%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the final responses indicated that after program implementation, all four of respondents received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing." No respondents received a score of "1," "2," or "4." Therefore, after program implementation, as it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy, equal numbers and percentages of the respondent's responses indicated that they made use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas and to make sense of observations. Table 8 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to the Curriculum and Pedagogy after program implementation.

Table 8

Classroom Environment and Culture

(N-4)-Final Responses Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	4	100%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment, as it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy, indicated that the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%, (-50%). The participants who were identified as "emerging" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%, (-50%). The participants who were identified as "developing" increased from zero or 0% to four 100% (+100). The participants who were identified as "nearly a master" did not changed and remained at zero and 0%. Table 9 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy before and after program implementation.

Table 9

Curriculum and Pedagogy (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	2/50%	0/0%	-2/-50%
2	2/50%	0/0%	-2/-50%
3	0/0%	4/100%	+4/+100%
4	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%

Evidence-Based Feedback

Initial Responses. For Evidence-Based Feedback, an analysis of the participants' initial responses indicated that two of the four or 50% received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." Two of the respondents or 50% received a "2" and were categorized as "emerging." None of the respondents received a score of "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' had some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas and lacked focus, reference to only a few teacher/student actions from the video to support ideas, use of jargon of practice not linked to evidence in the video, ideas lack contextualization and connectedness. Table 10 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to Evidence-Based Feedback prior to program implementation.

Table 10

Evidence-Based Feedback (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	2	50%
2	2	50%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the final responses indicated that after program implementation, two of the four of respondents received a score of "2" and were categorized as 'emerging." There were three of the four respondents who earned a "3" and were categorized as "developing." No respondents received a score of 1, 2, or 4. Therefore, after program implementation, as it relates to Evidence-Based Feedback, the majority of the respondents were developing and provided details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations (making connections among student learning, experiences, research, and standards). Responses typically provide extended information. Table 11 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to the Evidence-Based Feedback after program implementation.

Table 11

Evidence-Based Feedback (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	3	75%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates, as it relates to Evidence-Based Feedback, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%, (-50%). The participants who were identified as "emerging" decreased from two or 50% to one or 25%, (-50%). The participants who were identified as "developing" increased from zero or 0% to three or 75% (+75%). The participants who were identified as "nearly a master" did not changed and remained at zero and 0%. Table 12 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Evidence-Based Feedback before and after program implementation.

Table 12

Evidence-Based Feedback (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	2/50%	0/0%	-2/-50%
2	2/50%	1/25%	-1/-25%
3	0/0%	3/75%	+3/+75%
4	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%

Evidence-Based Professional Development

Initial Responses. For Evidence-Based Professional Development, an analysis of the initial responses indicated that three of the four or 75% of the respondents received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." One of the respondents or 25% received a "2" and was categorized as "emerging." None of the respondents received a score of "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' responses indicated that as it related to Evidence-Based Professional Development, they had some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections, and directives, judgement, exclusively focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. Table 13 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Evidence-Based Professional Development prior to program implementation.

Table 13

Evidence-Based Professional Development (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	3	75%
2	1	25%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the responses related to Evidence-Based Professional Development indicated that after program implementation, all four of respondents received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing." No respondents received a score of 1, 2, or 4. Therefore, after program implementation, as it related to Evidence-Based Professional Development, equal numbers and percentages of the respondents' responses indicated that they used details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations Table 15 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Evidence -Based Professional Development after program implementation.

Table 14

Evidence-Based Professional Development (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	4	100%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates, as it relates to Evidence-Based Professional Development, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from three or 75% to zero or 0%, (-75%). The participants who were identified as "emerging" decreased from one or 25% to zero or 0%, (-25%). The participants who were identified as "developing" and as "nearly a master" did not changed and remained at zero and 0%. Table 15 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Evidence-Based Professional Development before and after program implementation.

Table 15

Evidence-Based Feedback (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	3/75%	0/0%	-3/-75%
2	1/25%	0/0%	-1/-25%
3	0/0%	4/100%	+4/+100%
4	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%

Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements

Initial Responses. For Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements, an analysis of the participants' initial responses indicated that one received a score of "1" and was categorized as being "novice." Two of the respondents or 50% received a "2" and was categorized as "emerging." One or 25% of the respondents received a score of "3" and was categorized as being "developing." None of the respondents received a score of "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' responses, two or 50%, indicated that as it related to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements, they ideas in response lack focus, reference to only a few teacher/student actions from the video to support ideas, use of jargon of practice not linked to evidence in the video, ideas lack contextualization and connectedness. Table 16 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluators for the participants' responses as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements prior to program implementation.

Table 16

Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	1	25%
2	2	50%
3	1	25%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the responses indicated that after program implementation, no respondents received a score of "1." One respondent received a score of "2" and was categorized as "emerging." One respondent received a score of "3" and was categorized as "developing." Two respondents received a score of "4" and were categorized as being a "nearly a master." Therefore, after program implementation, as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements the majority, two or 50% of the respondents' answers demonstrated by situated knowledge, focus, careful and targeted use of detail from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support ideas, explanation of the use of observations to guide recommendations for feedback/PD, demonstration of content expertise or strategies for addressing content. Table 17 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements after program implementation.

Table 17

Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	1	25%
4	2	50%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from one or 25% to zero or 0%, (-0%). The participants who were identified as "emerging" decreased from two or 50% to one or 25%, (-25%). The participants who were identified as "developing" remained the same, one or 25%. The number of participants, whose responses were categorized as being "nearly a master" increased from zero or 0% to two or 50%. Table 19 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements before and after program implementation.

Table 18

Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	1/25%	0/0%	-1/-25%
2	2/50%	1/25%	-1/-25%
3	1/25%	1/25%	-
4	0/0%	2/50%	+2/+50%

Inquiry Stance Initial Responses. For Inquiry Stance, an analysis of the initial responses related to Inquiry Stance indicated that two of the respondents or 50% received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." One of the respondents or 25% received a "2" and was categorized as "emerging." One or 25% of the respondents received a score of "3" and was categorized as being "developing." None of the respondents received a score of "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' responses, two or 50% , indicated that as it related to Inquiry Stance, their responses were characterized by some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. Table 19 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Inquiry Stance prior to program implementation.

Table 19

Inquiry Stance (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	2	50%
2	1	25%
3	1	25%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. The final analysis of the responses indicated that after program implementation, no respondents received a score of "1" as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements. One respondent received a score of "2" and was categorized as "emerging." Two respondents or 50% received a score of "3" and was categorized as "developing." One respondent received a score of "4" and were categorized as being a "nearly a master." Therefore, after program implementation, the majority, two or 50% of the respondents' answers were characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations. Table 20 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Inquiry Stance after program implementation.

Table 20

Inquiry Stance (N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	1	25%
4	2	50%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates, as it relates to Inquiry Stance, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%, (-0%). The participants who were identified as "emerging" decreased from one or 25% to zero or 0%, (-25%). The participants who were identified as "developing" increased from one or 25% to two or 50%. The number of participants, whose responses were categorized as being "nearly a master" increased from zero or 0% to one or 25%. Table 21 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Inquiry Stance before and after program implementation.

Table 21

Inquiry Stance (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	2/50%	0/0%	-2/-50%
2	1/25%	1/25%	-0%
3	1/25%	2/50%	+1/25%
4	0/0%	1/25%	+1/+25%

Quality of Professional Development

Initial Responses. For Quality of Professional Development, an analysis of the initial responses indicated that one of the respondents received a score of "1" and was categorized as being "novice." Three or 75% of the respondents received a "2" and were categorized as "emerging." For the initial responses, none of the respondents received a score of "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, the majority of the respondents' responses, three or 75%, indicated that as it related to Quality of Professional Development, they the respondents' ideas in response lacked focus, reference to only a few teacher/student actions from the video to support ideas, use of jargon of practice not linked to evidence in the video, ideas lack contextualization and connectedness. Table 22 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Quality of Professional Development.

Table 22

Quality of Professional Development (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	1	25%
2	3	75%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the final responses relating to the Quality of Professional Development indicated that after program implementation, no respondents received a score of "1." One respondent received a score of "2" and was categorized as "emerging." Three or 75% of the respondents received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing." No respondents received a score of "4." Therefore, after program implementation, the majority, three or 75% of the respondents' answers characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations (making connections among student learning, experiences, research, standards). Table 23 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Quality of Professional Development after program implementation.

Table 23

Quality of Professional Development-(N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	3	75%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates, as it relates to Quality of Professional Development, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from one or 25% to zero or 0%, (-0%). The participants who received a "3" and who were identified as "emerging" decreased from three or 75% to one or 25%, (-25%). The participants who received a "3" and who were identified as "developing" increased from 0 or 0% to three or 75%. The number of participants, whose responses were categorized as being "nearly a master" remained steady at zero or 0%. Table 24 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Quality of Professional Development before and after program implementation.

Table 24

Quality of Professional Development (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	1/25%	0/0%	-1/-25%
2	3/75%	1/25%	-2/-50%
3	0/0%	3/75%	+3/75%
4	0/0%	2/50%	+2/+50%

Student Engagement

Initial Responses. For Student Engagement, the first analysis of the responses indicated that two or 50% of the respondents received a score of "1" and were categorized as being "novice." Two or 50% of the respondents received a "2" and were categorized as "emerging." For the initial responses, none of the respondents received a score of "3" or "4." Therefore, prior to program implementation, equal numbers and percentages of the respondents' responses on the MILE relating to Student Engagement were characterized by some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas and were characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observation. Table 25 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Student Engagement.

Table 25

Student Engagement (N-4)-Initial Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	2	50%
2	2	50%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

Final Responses. An analysis of the participants' initial responses related to Student Engagement indicated that after program implementation, no respondents received a score of "1." One respondent received a score of "2" and was categorized as "emerging." Three or 75% of the respondents received a score of "3" and were categorized as "developing." No respondents received a score of "4." Therefore, after program implementation, the majority, three or 75% of the respondents' answers characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, ability to make sense of observations. Table 26 displays the frequencies and percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Student Engagement after program implementation.

Table 26

Student Engagement -(N-4)-Final Responses

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	0	0%
2	1	25%
3	3	75%
4	0	0%
Total:	4	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of initial and final data from the MILE Assessment indicates as it relates to Student Engagement, the participants who were identified as "novice" decreased from two or 50% to zero or 0%. The participants who received a two and who were categorized as "emerging" decreased from two or 50% to one or 25%. The participants who received a "3" and who were identified as "developing" increased from zero or 0% to three or 75% to three or 75%. The number of participants, whose responses were categorized as being "nearly a master" remained steady at zero or 0%. Table 27 displays a comparison of the frequencies and the percentages of the scores provided by the evaluations for the participants' responses as it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements before and after program implementation.

Table 27

Student Engagement (N-4)-Comparison

Scores	Initial	Final	Differences
1	2/50%	1/25%	-1/-25%
2	2/50%	1/25%	-1/-25%
3	0/0%	3/75%	+3/75%
4	0/0%	0/0%	-0%

Findings

Quantitative data was collected from the MILE Assessment to answer the first research question: (1) To what level are school administrators (principal & assistant principal) able to identify effective instruction? The data was collected from two principals and four assistant principals both prior and after program implementation. An analysis of the data indicated, overall, the administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment. An analysis of the data collected from the MILE Assessment indicated several major findings:

Finding 1: As it relates to Classroom Environment and Culture, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are emerging.

Finding 2: As it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy, Evidence-Based Professional Development, to Inquiry Stance, and the Quality of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are developing.

Finding 3: As it relates to Context of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are emerging and developing.

Finding 4: As it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are nearly masters.

Surveys

I administered two surveys to faculty members at both middle schools. A School Principal Leadership Quality Survey and a Principal Effectiveness survey. I delivered these surveys face to face at a faculty meeting. I explained the reason and justification for the surveys at this faculty meeting. Respondents returned surveys without any names on them to ensure anonymity. I calculated the total number of surveys completed by each school's faculty to ascertain the response rate of each school.

School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey

For the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey, the participants ranked five qualities that a school principal should possess. Participants were ranking only the qualities that they believed a principal should possess, not the qualities that their principal possessed. The first quality, an effective listener, refers to the principal's focused attention, accepting of thoughts/ideas, probing, summarizing, and follow-through. The second quality, integrity, refers to a principal's honesty, trustworthiness, honor, and their being true to purpose. Communication, the third quality, refers to spoken and written transfer of information through proper grammar, spelling, structure and clarity of purpose. Collaborative decision making refers to how a principal includes stakeholders from a variety of sources in decision making. The fifth quality, self-awareness refers to a principal being humble, balanced, non-combative, and self-assured.

For each quality, the participants provided either a "1," "2," "3," "4" or "5" with "1" being the most important and 5 being the least important. Specifically, a score of "1" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "very important." A response of "2" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as "important." A response of "3" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "fairly important." A response of "4" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "slightly important." A response of "5" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "not important."

An Effective Listener

At School A, the majority of the participants indicated that it is "important" for a principal to be an effective listener. Ten or 14.28% of the 70 participants indicated that it is "very important" for a principal to be an effective listener. Twenty-four or 34.28% indicated that being an effective listener is "important." There were 21 or 30% of the participants who indicated that being an effective listener is "fairly important." Nine or 12.85% of the participants indicated that being an effective listener is "slightly important." Six or 8.57% of the participants indicated that a principal being an effective listener is "not important." Table 28 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses that the participants at School A provided as it relates to the importance of a principal being an effective leader.

Table 28

An Effective Listener-School A (N-70)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	10	14.28%
2	24	34.28%
3	21	30%
4	9	12.85%
5	6	8.57%
Total:	70	100%

At School B, the majority of the 57 participants indicated that being an effective listener for a principal is "important." Ten or 17.54% of the participants indicated that it is "very important" for a principal to be an effective listener. Twenty-one or 36.84% indicated that being an effective listener is "important." There were 18 or 31.57% of the participants who indicated that being an effective listener is "fairly important." Six or 10.52% of the participants indicated that being an effective listener is "slightly important." Two or 3.50% of the participants indicated that a principal being an effective listener is "not important." Table 29 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School B as it relates to the importance of a principal being an effective leader.

Table 29

An Effective Listener-School B (N-57)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	10	17.54%
2	21	36.84%
3	18	31.57%
4	6	10.52%
5	2	3.50%
Total:	57	100%

A Comparative Analysis. A comparison of the responses from the participants at both School A and School B indicated that middle school faculty indicated that being an effective listener is an "important" quality that a principal should possess. When comparing the percentages, 2.56% percent more participants from School B indicated that being an effective listener is an important quality of a principal. Table 30 displays the differences in the frequencies of responses provided by Schools A and B.

Table 30

An Effective Listener-Comparison (N-127)

Scores	School A	School B	Difference
1	14.28%	17.54%	-3.26
2	34.28%	36.84%	-2.56
3	30%	31.57%	-1.57
4	12.85%	10.52%	-2.33
5	8.57%	3.50%	-5.07
Total:	100%	100%	

Integrity

At School A, the majority of the participants indicated that it is "very important" that a principal has. Specifically, 41 or 58.57% of the 70 participants at School A indicated that a principal's integrity is "very important." Fourteen or 20% indicated that a principal having integrity is "important." There were six or 8.57% of the participant indicated that a principal having integrity is "fairly important." Three or 4.28% of the participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "slightly important." Six or 8.57% of the participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "not important." Table 31 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School A as it relates to the importance of a principal possessing integrity.

Table 31

Integrity-School A (N-70)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	41	58.57%
2	14	20%
3	6	8.57%
4	3	4.28%
5	6	8.57%
Total:	70	100%

At School B, the majority of the 57 participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "very important." Forty-one or 71.92% of the participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "very important." Eight or 14.03% indicated that a principal's integrity is "important." There were three or 5.26% of the participants who indicated that a principal's integrity "fairly important." Another three or 5.26% of the participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "slightly important." Two or 3.50% of the participants indicated that a principal's integrity is "not important." Table 35 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses from participants at School B due to the fact that it relates to the importance of a principal's integrity.

Table 32

Integrity- School B (N-57)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	41	71.92%
2	8	14.03%
3	3	5.26%
4	3	5.26%
5	2	3.50%
Total:	57	100%

A Comparative Analysis. The responses from participants from both School A and School B indicated that a principal's integrity is "very important." While equal numbers (41) rated the quality as "very important," higher percentages of the participants from School B (71.92%) than from School A (58.75%) indicated that integrity is "very important." Table 33 displays the differences in the frequencies of responses provided by participants from Schools A and B relating to a principal's integrity.

Table 33

Integrity-Comparison (N=127)

Scores	School A	School B	Difference in Percentages
1	58.57%	71.92%	-13.35
2	20%	14.03%	-5.97
3	8.57%	5.26%	-3.31
4	4.28%	5.26%	-.98
5	8.57%	3.50%	-5.07
Total:	100%	100%	

Effective Communication

At School A, the majority of the participants indicated that it is equally "fairly important" and "slightly important" for a principal to provide effective communication. Twenty-one or 30% of the 70 participants indicated that a principal being an effective communicator is "fairly important." Another 21 or 30% of the 70 participants indicated that effective communication from a principal is "slightly important." Five or 7.14% indicated that a principal's effective communication is "very important." There were 17 or 24.28% of the participant who indicated that a principal's effective communication is "important." Six or 8.57% of the participants indicated that effective communication is "not important." Table 34 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School A as they relate to the importance of a principal's ability to provide communication.

Table 34

Effective Communication-School A (N-70)

Scores	Frequencies:	Percentages
1	5	7.14%
2	17	24.28%
3	21	30%
4	21	30%
5	6	8.57%
Total:	70	100%

At School B, the majority of the 57 participants indicated that effective communication by a principal is not important. Six or 10.52% of the participants indicated that effective communication is "very important." Ten or 17.54% indicated effective communication by a principal is "important." There were eight or 14.03% of the participant indicated that effective communication is "fairly important." Fourteen or 24.56% of the participants indicated that effective communication is "slightly important." Nineteen or 33.33% of the participants indicated that effective communication is "not important." Table 35 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School B as they relate to the importance of a principal being able to effectively communicate.

Table 35

Effective Communication-School B (N-57)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	6	10.52%
2	10	17.54%
3	8	14.03%
4	14	24.56%
5	19	33.33%
Total:	57	100%

A Comparative Analysis. School A participants indicated that a principal being able to communicate effectively is equally "fairly important" and "slightly important." Participants from School B indicated that a principal being an effective communicator was "not important." Table 36 displays the differences in the frequencies of responses provided by Schools A and B as they relate to the importance of a principal being an effective communicator.

Table 36

Effective Communication-School B (N-127)

Scores	School A	School B	Difference in
1	7.14%	10.52%	-3.38
2	24.28%	17.54%	-6.74
3	30%	14.03%	-15.97
4	30%	24.56%	-5.44
5	8.57%	33.33%	-24.76
Total:	100%	100%	

Collaborative Decision-Making

At School A, the majority of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." Eight or 11.42% of the 70 participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "very important." Five or 7.14% of the 70 participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is important." Thirteen or 18.57% indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "fairly important." There were 26 or 37.14% of the participant indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." Eighteen or 25.71% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "not important." Table 37 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School A as they relate to a principal being an effective communicator.

Table 37

Collaborative Decision-Making (N-70)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	8	11.42%
2	5	7.14%
3	13	18.57%
4	26	37.14%
5	18	25.71%
Total:	70	100%

At School B, the majority of the 57 participants, indicated that that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making was "fairly important." Seven or 12.28% of the participants indicated that it is "very important" for a principal to foster collaborative decision-making. Three or 5.26% indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "important." There were eighteen or 31.57% of the participant indicated that effective communication is "fairly important." Fourteen or 24.56% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." Fifteen or 26.31% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "not important." Table 38 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School B as they relate to the importance of a principal being able to a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making.

Table 38

Collaborative Decision-Making-School B (N-57)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	7	12.28%
2	3	5.26%
3	18	31.57%
4	14	24.56%
5	15	26.31%
Total:	57	100%

A Comparative Analysis. The responses from participants at School A indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." In comparison, participants from School B indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborate decision-making is "fairly important." Table 39 displays the differences in the frequencies of responses provided by Schools A and B as it relates to the importance of principals' ability to foster collaborate decision-making.

Table 39

Collaborative Decision-Making-School B (N-127)

Scores	School A	School B	Difference in Percentages
1	11.42%	12.28%	-.86
2	7.14%	5.26%	-1.88
3	18.57%	31.57%	-13
4	37.14%	24.56%	-12.58
5	25.71%	26.31%	-.06
Total:	100%	100%	

Self-Awareness

The majority of the participants from School A indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important." Five or 7.14 % of the 70 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "very important." Ten or 14.28% of the 70 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "important." Nine or 12.85% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "fairly important." Eleven or 15.71 % of the 70 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "slightly important." Thirty-five or 50% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important." Table 40 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School A as they relate to a principal exhibition of self-awareness.

Table 40

Self-Awareness-School A (N-70)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	5	7.14 %
2	10	14.28%
3	9	12.85%
4	11	15.71 %
5	35	50%
Total:	70	100%

The majority of the participants from School B indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important." Five or 8.77% of the 57 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "very important." Eleven or 19.29% of the 57 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "important." Nine or 15.78% of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "fairly important." Eleven or 19.29% of the 57 participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "slightly important." Fifteen or 21.42 % of the participants indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important." Table 41 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses for participants at School B as it relates a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness.

Table 41

Self-Awareness-School B (N-57)

Scores	Frequencies	Percentages
1	5	8.77%
2	11	19.29%
3	9	15.78%
4	11	19.29%
5	15	21.42%
Total:	70	

A Comparative Analysis. The responses from participants at School A and School B both indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important." However, while 50% of the participants from School A indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important," 21.42 % of the participants from School A indicated that a principal's ability to exhibit self-awareness is "not important," a difference of -28.59. Table 42 displays the differences in the frequencies of responses provided by Schools A and B as they relate to the importance of principals' ability to exhibit self-awareness.

Table 42

Self-Awareness-Comparison (N-127)

Scores	School A	School B	Difference in Percentages
1	7.14 %	8.77%	-1.63
2	14.28%	19.29%	-5.01
3	12.85%	15.78%	-2.93
4	15.71 %	19.29%	-3.58
5	50%	21.42 %	-28.59
Total:	100%	100%	

Findings

Overall, an analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey indicated that faculty from School A and School B indicated that a principal's ability to be an effective listener is important. Faculty from both schools also indicated that it is very important for a principal to demonstrate integrity. Similarly, the faculty from both schools agreed that a principal's exhibition of self-awareness is "not important." The participants differed about the importance of principals being effective communicators. For example, while faculty from School A indicated that it is both "fairly important" and "slightly important for a principal to be an effective communicator, faculty from School B indicated that it is "not important" for a principal to be an effective communicator. Another difference in the responses was related to a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making. Faculty from School A indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." In comparison, faculty from School B, indicated that that a principal's

ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "fairly important." An analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey yielded the following findings:

Finding 1: Faculty from Schools A and B view a principal's demonstration of integrity as very important.

Finding 2: Faculty from Schools A and B view a principal's ability to be an effective listener as important.

Principal Effectiveness Survey

The second survey that I conducted at both middle schools was a principal effectiveness survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine the level to which each school faculty believed their principal to be effective. This fact becomes important when considering whether a faculty believes the actions taken by the principal can be trusted and are worthy of their attention and time. Furthermore, this fact is essential when professional learning is both chosen and then implemented (Superville, 2015).

The Principal Effectiveness Survey was also used to collect quantitative data to answer the second research question. The Principal Effectiveness Survey was administered to 70 participants from School A and 57 participants from School B. The purpose of the survey was for the participants from the two middle schools to evaluate the effectiveness of their respective principal. Each participant provided a response of either a "1," "2," "3," "4" or "5." A score of "1" indicated that the participant "strongly agreed" with the statement. A response of "2" indicated that the participant "agreed" with the statement. A response of "3" indicated that the participant was "neither agreed nor disagreed" about the statement. A response of "4" indicated that the participant

"disagreed" with the statement." A response of "5" indicated that the participant "strongly disagreed" with the statement. This section presents the frequencies and percentages for the participant's responses on the Principal Effectiveness Survey.

Statement 1: The purpose of the first statement was for each participant to determine the degree to which their principal is interested and responds to their needs. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the first statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is interested in and responsive to their needs. Table 43 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the first statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the first statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" that their principal is interested in and responsive to their needs. Table 44 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the first statement. Table 45 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B.

Table 43

Statement 1: My principal is interested in and responsive to my needs. School A(N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	25	33%
Agree	20	27%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	17%
Disagree	4	6%
Strongly Disagree	9	13%
Total:	70	96%

Table 44

Statement 1: My principal is interested in and responsive to my needs. School B(N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	14	25%
Agree	15	26%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	21%
Disagree	11	19%
Strongly Disagree	5	9%
Total:	57	100%

Table 45

Statement 1: My principal is interested in and responsive to my needs. Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	25/33%	14/25%	-11/8%
Agree	20/27%	15/ 26%	-5/1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12/17%	12/ 21%	0/-13%
Strongly Disagree	9/13%	5/9%	-4/-4%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 2: The purpose of the second statement was for participants to report the degree to which they believe they can communicate freely and can say what they really think and feel to their respective principal. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the first statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that they can communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their principal. Table 46 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the second statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the second statement. An analysis of the data for the second statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B believe they can communicate freely and can say what they really think and feel to their respective principal. Table 47 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the second statement. Table 48 displays the

differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B.

Table 46

Statement 2: I can communicate freely and say what I am really thinking and feeling to my principal. -School A (N= 70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	27	39%
Agree	17	24%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	10%
Disagree	12	17%
Strongly Disagree	5	7%
Total:	70	100%

Table 47

Statement 2: I can communicate freely and say what I am really thinking and feeling to my principal. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	14	25%
Agree	15	26%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	7%
Disagree	12	21%
Strongly Disagree	12	21%
Total:	57	100%

Table 48

Statement 2: I can communicate freely and say what I am really thinking and feeling to my principal. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	27/39%	14/25%	
Agree	17/24%	15/26%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7/10%	4/7%	
Disagree	12/17%	12/21%	
Strongly Disagree	5/7%	12/21%	
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 3: The purpose of the third statement was for participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the third statement. An analysis of the data for the third statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building. Table 49 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the third statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the third statement. An analysis of the data for the second statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" that their principal is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building. Table 50 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the second statement. Table 51 displays the differences

in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the third statement.

Table 49

Statement 3: My principal has established him/herself as the building leader. Clearly there is a sense of leadership in the building. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	27	39%
Agree	17	24%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	10%
Disagree	12	17%
Strongly Disagree	5	7%
Total:	70	100%

Table 50

Statement 3: My principal has established him/herself as the building leader. Clearly there is a sense of leadership in the building. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	14	25%
Agree	15	26%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	7%
Disagree	12	21%
Strongly Disagree	12	21%
Total:	57	100%

Table 51

Statement 3: My principal has established him/herself as the building leader. Clearly there is a sense of leadership in the building. Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	27/39%	14/25%	-13/-14%
Agree	17/24%	15/26%	-2/-2%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7/10%	4/7%	-3/-3%
Disagree	12/17%	12/21%	-/-4%
Strongly Disagree	5/7%	12/21%	-7/-14%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 4: The purpose of the fourth statement was for participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is goal oriented and communicates the district and school goals effectively to the staff. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who provided a response to the fourth statement. An analysis of the data for the fourth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff. Table 52 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the fourth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the fourth statement. An analysis of the data for the fourth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff. Table 53 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for

the fourth statement. Table 54 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the fourth statement.

Table 52

Statement 4: My principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	41	59%
Agree	15	21%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	3%
Disagree	9	0%
Strongly Disagree	10	14%
Total:	70	100%

Table 53

Statement 4: My principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	24	42%
Agree	16	28%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	21%
Disagree	2	4%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
Total:	57	100%

Table 54

Statement 4: My principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	41/59%	24/42%	-17/-17%
Agree	15/21%	16/28%	-1/-7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2/ 3%	12/21%	-10/-18%
Disagree	9/0%	2/4%	-7/-3%
Strongly Disagree	10/14%	3/5%	-7/-9%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 5: The purpose of the fifth statement was for participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the fifth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school. Table 55 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the fifth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the fourth statement. An analysis of the data for the fourth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school. Table 56 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for

the fifth statement. Table 57 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the fifth statement.

Table 55

Statement 5: My principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school. - School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	35	33%
Agree	21	30%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	4%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	9	0%
Total:	70	100%

Table 56

Statement 5: My principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school.- School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	25	44%
Agree	14	25%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	18%
Disagree	6	11%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%
Total:	57	100%

Table 57

Statement 5: My principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school.- Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	35/33%	25/44%	-1/-10%
Agree	21/30%	14/25%	-7/-5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3/4%	10/18%	-7/-14%
Disagree	0/0%	6/11%	-6/-11%
Strongly Disagree	9/0%	2/4%	-7/-5%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 6: The purpose of the sixth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the sixth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. Table 58 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the fifth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the sixth statement. An analysis of the data for the sixth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. Table 59 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the sixth statement. Table 60 displays the differences in

the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the sixth statement.

Table 58

Statement 6: My principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	23	33%
Agree	21	30%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	19%
Disagree	5	7%
Strongly Disagree	6	9%
Total:	70	100%

Table 59

Statement 6: My principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	22	39%
Agree	17	30%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9	16%
Disagree	6	11%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
Total:	57	100%

Table 60

Statement 6: My principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	23/33%	22/39%	-1/-6%
Agree	21/30%	17/30%	-4/-
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13/19%	9/16%	-4/-3%
Disagree	5/7%	6/11%	-1/-4%
Strongly Disagree	6/9%	3/5%	-3/-4%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 7: The purpose of the seventh statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the sixth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal their principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions. Table 61 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the seventh statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the seventh statement. An analysis of the data for the sixth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" that their principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions. Table 62 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the seventh

statement. Table 63 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the sixth statement.

Table 61

Statement 6: My principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	29	41%
Agree	13	19%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	16%
Disagree	6	9%
Strongly Disagree	9	13%
Total:	70	100%

Table 62

Statement 6: My principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	18	32%
Agree	19	33%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	18%
Disagree	7	12%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
Total:	57	100%

Table 63

Statement 6: My principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	29/41%	18/32%	-11/-9%
Agree	13/19%	19/33%	-6/- 14%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11/16%	10/18%	-1/-2%
Disagree	6/9%	7/12%	-1/-3%
Strongly Disagree	9/13%	3/5%	-6/-8%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 8: The purpose of the eighth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal communicates effectively with the school community. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the sixth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal communicates effectively with the school community. Table 64 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the eighth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the seventh statement. An analysis of the data for the sixth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" that their principal communicates effectively with the school community. Table 65 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the eighth statement. Table 66

displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the eighth statement.

Table 64

Statement 8: My principal communicates effectively with the school community. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	19	27%
Agree	16	23%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	14%
Disagree	7	7%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
Total:	70	100%

Table 65

Statement 8: Statement 8: My principal communicates effectively with the school community. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	15	28%
Agree	23	40%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	17%
Disagree	7	13%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%
Total:	57	100%

Table 66

8: My principal communicates effectively with the school community. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	19/27%	15/28%	-4/-1%
Agree	16/23%	23/40%	-7/-17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10/14%	12/17%	-2/-3%
Disagree	7/7%	7/13%	0/-6%
Strongly Disagree	3/4%	1/2%	-2/-2%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 9: The purpose of the ninth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A, who responded to the ninth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members. Table 67 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the eighth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the seventh statement. An analysis of the data for the sixth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" that their principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members. Table 68 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the ninth statement. Table 69

displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the ninth statement.

Table 67

Statement 9: My principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members.
-School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	26	37%
Agree	9	13%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	14%
Disagree	4	6%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%
Total:	70	100%

Table 68

Statement 9: My principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members.
-School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	8	15%
Agree	20	32%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	19%
Disagree	9	17%
Strongly Disagree	9	17%
Total:	57	100%

Table 69

Statement 9: My principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members. Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	26/37%	8/15%	-18/-22%
Agree	9/13%	20/32%	-11/-17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10/14%	11/19%	-1/-5%
Disagree	4/6%	9/17%	-5/-11%
Strongly Disagree	4/6%	9/17%	-5/-11%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 10: The purpose of the tenth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the tenth statement. An analysis of the data for the first statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. Table 70 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the eighth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the tenth statement. An analysis of the data for the tenth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B "Agreed" their principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff

members. Table 71 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the ninth statement. Table 72 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the ninth statement.

Table 70

Statement 10: My principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	21	30%
Agree	13	19%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9	13%
Disagree	5	7%
Strongly Disagree	5	7%
Total:	70	100%

Table 71

Statement 10: My principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	15	23%
Agree	17	33%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	25%
Disagree	10	15%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%
Total:	57	100%

Table 72

Statement 10: My principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	21/30%	15/23%	-6/-7%
Agree	13/19%	17/33%	-4/-14%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9/13%	13/25%	-4/-12%
Disagree	5/7%	10/15%	-5/-8%
Strongly Disagree	5/7%	2/4%	-3/-3%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 11: The purpose of the ninth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is an effective leader. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the ninth statement. An analysis of the data for the eleventh statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal believe their principal is an effective leader. Table 73 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the eleventh statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the eleventh statement. An analysis of the data for the eleventh statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is believe their principal is an effective leader. Table 74 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the ninth statement. Table 75 displays the

differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the eleventh statement.

Table 73

Statement 11: My principal is an effective leader. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	26	37%
Agree	13	19%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	6	9%
Disagree	3	4%
Strongly Disagree	5	7%
Total:	70	100%

Table 74

Statement 11: My principal is an effective leader. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	18	35%
Agree	13	25%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	13%
Disagree	10	15%
Strongly Disagree	6	12%
Total:	57	100%

Table 75

Statement 11: My principal is an effective leader. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	26/37%	18/35%	-8/-2%
Agree	13/19%	13/25%	0/-6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	6/9%	10/13%	-4/-4%
Disagree	3/4%	10/15%	-7/-11%
Strongly Disagree	5/7%	6/12%	-31/-5%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 12: The purpose of the twelfth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is an instructional leader. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the twelfth statement. An analysis of the data for the twelfth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is an instructional leader. Table 76 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the twelfth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the twelfth statement. An analysis of the data for the eleventh statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal an instructional leader. Table 77 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the twelfth statement. Table 78 displays the differences in the frequencies and

percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the twelfth statement.

Table 76

Statement 12: My principal is an instructional leader. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	17	24%
Agree	11	16%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15	21%
Disagree	7	10%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
Total:	70	100%

Table 77

Statement 12: My principal is an instructional leader. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	16	31%
Agree	15	21%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	17	27%
Disagree	5	13%
Strongly Disagree	4	8%
Total:	57	100%

Table 78

Statement 12: My principal is an instructional leader. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	17/24%	16/31%	-1/-7%
Agree	11/16%	15/21%	-4/-5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15/21%	17/27%	-2/-6%
Disagree	7/10%	5/13%	-2/-3%
Strongly Disagree	3/4%	4/8%	-1/-4%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 13: The purpose of the thirteenth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the thirteenth statement. An analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the faculty from. Table 79 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the twelfth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the twelfth statement. An analysis of the data for the eleventh statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented. Table 80 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the twelfth statement. Table 81 displays the differences in the frequencies and

percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the twelfth statement.

Table 79

Statement 13: My principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	17	24%
Agree	11	16%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15	21%
Disagree	7	10%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
Total:	70	100%

Table 80

Statement 13: My principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	16	31%
Agree	15	21%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	17	27%
Disagree	5	13%
Strongly Disagree	4	8%
Total:	57	100%

Table 81

Statement 13: My principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	17/24%	16/31%	-1/-7%
Agree	11/16%	15/21%	-4/-5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15/21%	17/27%	-2/-6%
Disagree	7/10%	5/13%	-2/-3%
Strongly Disagree	3/4%	4/8%	-1/-4%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 14: The purpose of the fourteenth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the fourteenth statement. An analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted. Table 82 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the fourteenth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the fourteenth statement. An analysis of the data for the fourteenth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Strongly Agreed" that their principal confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted. Table 83 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the fourteenth

statement. Table 84 displays the differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the fourteenth statement.

Table 82

Statement 14: My principal confronts problems with honesty. I can trust my principal. School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	23	33%
Agree	9	13%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	14%
Disagree	4	6%
Strongly Disagree	7	10%
Total:	70	100%

Table 83

Statement 14: My principal confronts problems with honesty. I can trust my principal. School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	15	28%
Agree	15	21%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	19%
Disagree	11	21%
Strongly Disagree	6	11%
Total:	57	100%

Table 84

Statement 12: Statement 14: My principal confronts problems with honesty. I can trust my principal. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	23/33%	15/28%	-8/-7%
Agree	9/13%	15/21%	-6/-5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10/14%	10/19%	0/-5%
Disagree	4/6%	11/21%	-7/-15%
Strongly Disagree	7/10%	6/11%	-1/-1%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Statement 15: The purpose of the fifteenth statement was for the participants to report the degree to which they believe their principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. There were 70 or 100% of the participants from School A who responded to the fifteenth statement. An analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the faculty from School A "Strongly Agreed" that their principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. Table 85 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School A for the fifteenth statement. One hundred percent (100%) of the 57 participants from School B responded to the fifteenth statement. An analysis of the data for the fifteenth statement indicated that the majority of the faculty from School B also "Neither Agreed nor Disagreed that their principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. Table 86 displays the frequencies and percentages of the responses provided by the faculty from School B for the fifteenth statement. Table 87 displays the

differences in the frequencies and percentages provided by the faculty from School A and School B for the fifteenth statement.

Table 85

Statement 15: My principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. -School A (N=70)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	26	37%
Agree	8	11%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	14%
Disagree	5	7%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%
Total:	70	100%

Table 86

Statement 15: My principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. -School B (N=57)

Responses	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly Agree	15	24%
Agree	15	25%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	29%
Disagree	8	16%
Strongly Disagree	3	6%
Total:	57	100%

Table 87

Statement 15: My principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. -Comparison (N=127)

Responses	School A Frequencies/Percentages	School B Frequencies/Percentages	Differences
Strongly Agree	26/37%	15/24%	-11/-13%
Agree	8/11%	15/25%	-7/-14%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10/14%	16/29%	-6/-15%
Disagree	5/7%	8/16%	-3/-9%
Strongly Disagree	4/6%	3/6%	-1/-%
Total:	70/100%	57/100%	

Summary of Findings of Principal Effectiveness Survey

Quantitative data was collected from the Principal Effectiveness Survey to collect data for the second research question: (2) What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture? There were 70 faculty members from School A and 57 faculty members from School B who completed the analysis of the Principal Effectiveness Survey. An analysis of the data from the Principal Effectiveness Survey indicates that the faculty from School A strongly agreed that their principal is an effective leader. The faculty's overall responses indicated that the majority strongly agree that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building; (4) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (5) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; and (6) promotes a culture of

ongoing professional development in the school. Faculty from School A also indicated that their principal : (7) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (8) communicates effectively with the school community; (9) demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members; (10) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members; and (11) is an effective leader; (12) is an instructional leader; (13) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides support to meet the challenges presented; (14) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (14) is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them.

In comparison, the faculty from School B strongly agreed with the majority of the statements present in the Principal Effectiveness Survey but agreed with others. Specifically, faculty from School B strongly believed that their principals: (1) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (2) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; (3) promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school; (4) is an effective leader; (5) is an instructional leader; (6) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented; (7) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (8) s open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. Faculty from School B agreed that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) has established him/herself as the building leader; (4) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (5) communicates effectively with the school community; (6)

demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members; and (7) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. An analysis of the data collected from the instrument yielded the following two findings:

Finding 1: Faculty from School A strongly agree that the principal of their middle school is an effective leader.

Finding 2: Faculty from School B strongly agree that the principal of their middle school is an effective leader.

Context. I chose the two schools for the study based on their relative similarity to each other. This was deliberate as to ensure a similar student population in terms of size and racial and socio-economic demographics. Due to a similar student population, the instructional faculties were very close in size as well. Both are middle schools located in a rural area. Another factor that led me to choose these two schools was the fact that each principal had been assigned to their respective school for at least the two previous years. This ensured that the teaching faculties had been able to serve under their principal for at least two years prior to the surveys being conducted. Finding two similar middle schools whose principals had been in place at least two years within this particular school district was difficult due to the large number of administrative shifts that had occurred over the previous two years.

The current district administration had been in place for 1.5 years at the time of the study. This particular school district had an elected superintendent. It is important to note that the current superintendent was elected from 'outside' the system. She had not served as a school administrator at any level and was currently working at a local state

college at the time of her election. She unseated a long-time local educator who had worked his entire career in the school district and rose through the ranks as a teacher and site-based administrator. He had served as superintendent for the previous four years. It is also important to note that half-way through the new superintendent's tenure that the community voted to move to an appointed superintendent.

This was a substantial change as the district under study was one of the last 'large' school districts in the nation that still elected a superintendent. Prior to the vote to appoint the superintendent, the election was a partisan election. The five-member school board would now be charged with appointing the next superintendent. The move to an appointed superintendent was a controversial one that subsequently created a rather hostile environment between the school board and the current superintendent. As the vote to switch from an elected to an appointed superintendent took place at the mid-point of the current superintendent's term, the state Attorney General provided a ruling as to whether the current superintendent would be permitted to finish her term in office. It was ruled that she could complete her term.

School A was a middle school located in a rural area. The school serves grades 6-8. The student population at the time of the survey was 1,324. There were 68 instructional faculty members on staff at the time of the research. The school population was made up of 52% male and 48% female. The demographic breakdown of the school was as follows: Caucasian 58.2 %, African American 11.6%, Hispanic 24.9%, Multiracial 4.2%, Asian, Native American and Native Hawaiian totaled 1.1%. (Asian, Native American and Native Hawaiian totaled less than 10 students in each of the subgroups). Sixty four percent of the population was economically disadvantaged and

therefore eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. English language learners made up 3.5% of the population, while students with disabilities made up 13%. The school grade for the 2018-2019 school year was a B. The school grade for the 2017-2018 was a B. The school grade for the 2016-2017 school year was a C. The principal was entering his third year. The remainder of the administrative staff, which included an Assistant Principal of Discipline as well as an Assistant Principal of Curriculum, had been at the school for the previous two years.

School B was also a middle school located in a rural portion of the Southeastern United States. The school serves grades 6-8. The current student population at the time of the survey was 1,324. There are 64 instructional faculty members on staff at the time of the research. The school population is made up of 53.6% male and 46.4% female. The demographic breakdown of the school was: Caucasian 41.7%, African American 19.3%, Hispanic 30.9%, Multiracial 4.3%, Asian 2.8%, Native American and Native Hawaiian 1% (less than 10 students in each of the subgroups). Sixty three percent of the population is economically disadvantaged and therefore are eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. English language learners make up only 4.8% of the population, while students with disabilities make up 13.8%. The current school grade for the 2018-2019 school year as well as the two previous years was a C. The school grade for the 2017-2018 was a B. The school grade for the 2016-2017 school year was a C.

The current principal is entering her third year. She had previously served at the school beginning in the 2012-2013 school year as an assistant principal. She was elevated to the position of Principal in July 2017. The remainder of the administrative

staff, which includes an Assistant Principal of Discipline as well as an Assistant Principal of Curriculum, have been at the school for two years.

Culture. Culture is defined as the "shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality relationships within and beyond the school" (Wagner et al., 2006, p.102). Reeves (2009) described organizational culture, as "the way things get done around here" (p. 37). In other words, while an organizational chart might demonstrate how things should get done, culture is the reality: it is the patterns, shared assumptions, and interpretations that shape behavior within an organization (Wagner et al., 2006).

As mentioned in the context section, a specific factor that led me to choose these two schools was that each principal had been assigned to their respective school for at least the two previous years. This ensured that the principal had an opportunity to impact the culture of the school. Finding two similar middle schools whose principals had been in place at least two years within this particular school district was difficult due to the large number of administrative shifts that had occurred over the previous two years.

Findings from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey indicated that the faculty from both schools ultimately believed that it is most important for principals to demonstrate integrity. Data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey indicated that faculty from School A and School B believed that a principal's ability to be an effective listener is important. Similarly, the faculty from both schools agreed that a principal's exhibition of self-awareness is "not important." The participants differed in their responses about the importance of principals being effective communicators.

For example, while faculty from School A indicated that it is both "fairly important" and "slightly important for a principal to be an effective communicator, faculty from School B indicated that it is "not important" for a principal to be an effective communicator. Another difference between school faculties in their responses was related to a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making. Faculty from School A indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." In comparison, faculty from School B, indicated that that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "fairly important."

The second survey I conducted at both middle schools was the Principal Effectiveness Survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine the level to which each school faculty believed their principal to be effective. This perception becomes important when considering whether a faculty believes the actions taken by the principal can be trusted and are worthy of their attention and time. It determines whether a culture of trust exists between the principal and the faculty. This fact is essential when professional learning is both chosen and then implemented (Superville, 2015).

Data collected from the Principal Effectiveness Survey indicated that the faculty from School A strongly agreed that their principal was an effective leader. The faculty's overall responses indicated that the majority strongly agreed that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building; (4) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (5) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; and (6) promotes a culture of ongoing

professional development in the school. Faculty from School A also agreed that their principal: (7) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (8) communicates effectively with the school community; (9) demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members; (10) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members; and (11) is an effective leader; (12) is an instructional leader; (13) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides support to meet the challenges presented; (14) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (14) is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them.

In comparison, the faculty from School B strongly agreed with the majority of the statements present in the Principal Effectiveness Survey. Specifically, faculty from School B strongly agreed that their principal: (1) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (2) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; (3) promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school; (4) is an effective leader; (5) is an instructional leader; (6) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented; (7) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (8) s open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. Faculty from School B agreed that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) has established him/herself as the building leader; (4) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (5) communicates effectively with the school community; (6) demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff

members; and (7) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members.

The most significant outcome of the Principal Effectiveness Survey was that the faculties from both School A and B strongly agreed that the principal of their middle school was an effective leader. This factor is important in fostering collaborative relationships with staff. In turn, collaborative relationships are an element in positive school culture (Kilinc, 2014).

Conditions. Conditions are defined "as the external architecture surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources" (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 101). Differences in conditions between schools can vary greatly. Differences in conditions within schools will impact student learning (Wagner et al., 2006). I gave specific thought to choosing two schools that had as many similarities in conditions as possible. Removing as many likely variables to conditions as possible would help to determine what factors contribute to principal effectiveness.

The first factor I considered when choosing two schools was that they were of the same grade levels. As instruction can look very different between levels (elementary, middle and high), choosing two schools that were at the same level would ensure the instruction and standards being taught were as similar as possible. As I compared the ability level of the administrators to evaluate instruction, ensuring that instruction was as similar as possible between schools was important.

The next factor considered when choosing two schools was a similar student enrollment. This element of the condition of a school is important because the number of resources are determined based on student enrollment. Within the district under study,

school budget is allocated based in large part on student enrollment. Understanding that resources provided by school budgets can impact schools, ensuring that school funding was as similar between the schools under study was an important factor. As in most schools, teacher allocation was based on student enrollment. Choosing two schools with similar student enrollment would ensure that both schools under study had a similar number of teachers, and therefore, a similar number of teachers for each principal to manage.

A third factor impacted by student enrollment is school budget. Based on state requirements, each school's instructional budget was calculated on the number of full-time students enrolled. As a result of this fact, choosing two schools with similar student enrollment to ensure equality was important. District leaders provided core resources for teachers, such as textbooks and accompanying materials to each school at no cost to the instructional budget of individual schools. Schools leaders purchased supporting materials or other supplementary curriculum using monies from the schools' instructional budget.

Another element of conditions was the structure of the instructional day and teacher planning. Each school in the study operated on a six-period day. This schedule allowed for teacher planning only at the beginning and the conclusion of the student day. The district under study required, by contract, that all schools allowed for 4.75 hours of teacher planning each week. In terms of calculating towards this total, teacher planning, as specified in the teacher contract, is defined as a "block of time free from other obligations that is necessary to the effective execution of their professional responsibilities" (Citation withheld to protect confidentiality). Collaborative planning

with groups of teachers was included in this definition. This was another reason that these two schools were selected for the study. Based on contracted work hours and the student day, each school provided for five hours and 40 minutes of teacher planning each week. Faculty meetings were subtracted from this total.

Competencies. Wagner et al. (2006) defined this arena of change as the "repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning" (p. 99). Whereas the instructional day is an element of conditions, teacher planning and how it is utilized by the teacher, is an element of competencies. Barth continued, “Academic explication, or disaggregating student assessment data, is readily abundant in our profession, what we need is those who lead from the heart” (p. 141). These facts are essential as they relate to my Principal Effectiveness Survey, in that, considering whether a faculty believes the actions taken by the principal can be trusted determines their perception of whether the principal is worthy of their attention and time.

Professional learning time was not calculated towards teacher planning time. One hour and five minutes per week was the only eligible amount of time for professional learning at each of the two schools under study. Consequently, professional learning during the teacher workday had to be considered to be worthwhile and effective. Therefore, a belief that the principal was effective and would choose, plan, and implement effective and worthwhile professional learning was essential (Superville, 2015).

Interpretation

The results of my data collection using the MILE assessments, program implementation, and surveys, resulted in specific data on the current ability of two

principals in two middle schools within the district under study to lead a school. The findings revealed both positive outcomes and areas of need. I was able to extract valuable information on the principals from the faculty surveys on principal effectiveness and leadership qualities. I was also able to determine specific craft knowledge of each principal from the MILE assessments.

Raters analyzed responses from the MILE Assessments to determine the degree to which the participants of the study were able to identify effective instruction. Results from the first administration of the MILE assessment, prior to program implementation, indicated that the majority of the participants responses showed misconceptions of teacher practice. Their responses displayed generalities and judgement. Additionally, their responses focused more on teacher behaviors than student behaviors, and they focused on superficial details not related to the instruction. Their answers utilized few details of instruction to support ideas.

After learning walk program implementation, the majority of the respondents used details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support ideas in their responses. They also displayed an ability to make sense of observations, based on the rubric. An overall analysis of the data indicated the administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment.

My analysis of the data indicated that the administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment. An analysis of the data collected from the MILE Assessment after program implementation, indicated several major findings: As it relates to Classroom

Environment and Culture, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B were emerging. As it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy, Evidence-Based Professional Development, to Inquiry Stance, and the Quality of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B were developing. As it relates to Context of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B were emerging and developing, respectively. As it relates to Feedback Based on Growth and Realizable Improvements, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B were nearly masters.

My interpretation of the data provided by the MILE assessment, including the first administration, program implementation, and second administration is as follows: The first administration, prior to program implementation, showed that the majority (66%) of administrators who took part in the study were at the emerging level (2 of 4 levels) of identifying effective instruction. The remaining two administrators (33%) were at the developing level (3 of 4 levels). No administrators scored were at the nearly a master level. After program implementation, the majority of administrators (66%) scored at the developing level, and two scored at nearly a master (level 4). These data indicate that the learning walk program to develop identification of effective instruction was successful.

The results from the Principal Leadership Quality Survey ranked five qualities that a school principal should possess (Martin, 2009). Participants ranked only the qualities that they believed a principal should possess, not the qualities that their principal actually possessed. Overall, an analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey indicated that faculty from School A and School B believed

that a principal's ability to be an effective listener is important. Faculty from both schools also indicated that it is very important for a principal to demonstrate integrity. Similarly, the faculty from both schools agreed that a principal's exhibition of self-awareness is "not important." The participants differed about the importance of principals being effective communicators. For example, while faculty from School A indicated that it is both "fairly important" and "slightly important for a principal to be an effective communicator, faculty from School B indicated that it is "not important" for a principal to be an effective communicator.

Another difference in the responses was related to a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making. Faculty from School A indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." In comparison, faculty from School B, indicated that that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "fairly important." An analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey yielded the following overall findings: Faculty from Schools A and B viewed a principal's demonstration of integrity as very important. Faculty from Schools A and B viewed a principal's ability to be an effective listener as important.

The results from the Principal Effectiveness Survey ranked the level to which each school faculty believed their principal to be effective. I collected quantitative data from the Principal Effectiveness Survey related to the second research question: (2) What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture? An analysis of the data from the Principal Effectiveness Survey indicated that the faculty from School A strongly agreed that their principal was an effective leader.

In comparison, the faculty from School B strongly agreed with the majority of the statements present in the Principal Effectiveness Survey and believed their principal to be effective. An analysis of the data collected from the instrument yielded the following two findings: faculty from School A strongly agreed that the principal of their middle school was an effective leader. Faculty from School B strongly agreed that the principal of their middle school was an effective leader.

My interpretation of the data provided by the Principal Effectiveness Survey, was as follows: The belief by a faculty that their principal is effective is essential. The belief that a principal is effective becomes important when considering whether a faculty believes the actions taken by the principal can be trusted and are worthy of their attention and time. Without this understanding or belief, it will be difficult for a principal to lead effectively. It also becomes essential when professional learning is both chosen and then implemented (Superville, 2015).

Judgments

The purpose of this study was to determine the level to which administrators at two middle schools in one district in the United States were able to evaluate effective instruction within the classroom and the impact of school culture on student achievement. Three questions guided this study: (1) To what level are school administrators (principals and assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction?; (2) What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture?; and (3) How does school culture impact student achievement? Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to answer the research questions. Data were collected from four sources, the MILE

Assessment, the School Principal Leadership Survey, the Principal Effectiveness Survey, and students' State Standards Assessment scores in math, Algebra, science, and Civics.

Research Question 1 was: To what level are school administrators (principal & assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction? To answer this question, I administered the MILE Assessment to each administrator (two principals and four assistant principals). The administrators responded to the following prompts in writing after viewing a video of instruction: 1. What do you notice and wonder about teaching and learning in this classroom. 2. What specific feedback would you give the teacher to help him/her take productive next steps in improving instruction and why? 3. What plan for professional development and support would you suggest for this teacher based on what you observed? That is, what does this teacher need to learn, and how would you get him/her there. The rubric was designed to measure expertise in four areas: observing and analyzing instruction, providing feedback to teachers, orchestrating and supporting teachers' professional learning, and the ability to adopt an inquiry stance in support of teachers. Two specially trained instructional leaders analyzed the writing of the six respondents to determine the degree to which the participants of the study were able to identify effective instruction.

Quantitative data collected from the MILE Assessment answered the first research question: (1) To what level are school administrators (principal and assistant principals) able to identify effective instruction? An analysis of the data indicated, overall, the administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment. An analysis of the data collected from the MILE Assessment indicated several major findings: As it relates to Classroom

Environment and Culture, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are emerging. As it relates to Curriculum and Pedagogy, Evidence-Based Professional Development, to Inquiry Stance, and the Quality of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are developing. As it relates to Context of Professional Development, the principals and assistant principals at School A and School B are emerging and developing. My quantitative data analysis found administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment.

The second research question was: What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture? To answer this question, I collected quantitative and qualitative data using the School Principal Leadership Quality Survey. For the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey, the participants ranked five qualities that a school principal should possess. Participants ranked only the qualities that they believed a principal should possess, not the qualities that their principal possessed. The first quality, an effective listener, refers to the principal's focused attention, accepting of thoughts/ideas, probing, summarizing, and follow-through. The second quality, integrity, refers to a principal's honesty, trustworthiness, honor, and their being true to purpose. Communication, the third quality, refers to spoken and written transfer of information through proper grammar, spelling, structure and clarity of purpose. Collaborative decision making refers to how a principal includes stakeholders from a variety of sources in decision making. The fifth quality, self-awareness refers to a principal being humble, balanced, non-combative, and self-assured.

For each quality, the participants provided either a "1," "2," "3," "4" or "5" with "1" being the most important and 5 being the least important. Specifically, a score of "1" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "very important." A response of "2" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as "important." A response of "3" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "fairly important." A response of "4" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "slightly important." A response of "5" indicated that the participant viewed the quality as being "not important."

Overall, an analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey indicated that faculty from School A and School B indicated that a principal's ability to be an effective listener is important. Faculty from both schools also indicated that it is very important for a principal to demonstrate integrity. Similarly, the faculty from both schools agreed that a principal's exhibition of self-awareness is "not important." The participants differed about the importance of principals being effective communicators. For example, while faculty from School A indicated that it is both "fairly important" and "slightly important for a principal to be an effective communicator, faculty from School B indicated that it is "not important" for a principal to be an effective communicator. Another difference in the responses was related to a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making. Faculty from School A indicated that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "slightly important." In comparison, faculty from School B, indicated that that a principal's ability to foster collaborative decision-making is "fairly important." An analysis of the data from the School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey yielded the following findings: Administrators from Schools A and B view a principal's demonstration of integrity as

very important. Administrators from Schools A and B view a principal's ability to be an effective listener as important.

The Principal Effectiveness Survey was also used to collect quantitative data to answer the second research question: What leadership qualities have the largest impact on school culture? The purpose of the survey was for the participants from the two middle schools to evaluate the effectiveness of their respective principal. Each participant provided a response of either a "1," "2," "3," "4" or "5." A score of "1" indicated that the participant "strongly agreed" with the statement. A response of "2" indicated that the participant "agreed" with the statement. A response of "3" indicated that the participant was "neither agreed nor disagreed" about the statement. A response of "4" indicated that the participant "disagreed" with the statement." A response of "5" indicated that the participant "strongly disagreed" with the statement.

An analysis of the data from the Principal Effectiveness Survey indicates that the faculty from School A strongly agreed that their principal is an effective leader. The faculty's overall responses indicated that the majority strongly agree that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) is established as the building leader and has a sense of leadership in the building; (4) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (5) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; and (6) promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school. Faculty from School A also indicated that their principal : (7) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (8) communicates effectively with the school community; (9)

demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members; (10) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members; and (11) is an effective leader; (12) is an instructional leader; (13) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides support to meet the challenges presented; (14) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (14) is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them.

In comparison, the faculty from School B strongly agreed with the majority of the statements present in the Principal Effectiveness Survey but agreed with others. Specifically, faculty from School B strongly believed that their principals: (1) is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff; (2) maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school; (3) promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school; (4) is an effective leader; (5) is an instructional leader; (6) challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented; (7) confronts problems with honesty and can be trusted; and (8) s open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them. Faculty from School B agreed that their principal: (1) is interested in and responsive to their needs; (2) welcomes them to communicate freely and say what they really think and feel to their respective principal; (3) has established him/herself as the building leader; (4) maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions; (5) communicates effectively with the school community; (6) demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members; and (7) is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members. An analysis of the data collected from the instrument yielded the

following two findings. My qualitative data analysis found the faculties from both Schools A and B strongly agreed that the principal of their school was an effective leader.

The third research question was: How does school culture impact student achievement? To answer this question, I analyzed a combination of results from both the principal effectiveness surveys as proficiency percentages on state assessments. The faculties from both Schools A and B strongly agreed that the principal of their middle school was an effective leader. Proficiency data on state assessments in the school year 2018-19 in both Schools A and B resulted in a school grade of B. The results of these two data points were not definitive in providing an answer to my third research question.

Recommendations

As a description of what should be done (desired changes) from the results of the findings of the study, I have identified areas of strength as well as areas of growth related to Principal effectiveness. Dufor and Marzano (2011) state that the quality of teaching is the most important factor affecting student learning. Therefore, an ability of the principal to be able to identify and assess the quality of teaching occurring in the school is an essential skill. My recommendations will center on these areas.

My first recommendation will be the adoption of a needs assessment protocol by the district. A needs assessment identifies specific evidenced-based best practices to support instruction (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014). Throughout my eight years in school administration, working in five different schools at the Elementary, Middle and High School levels, I had not witnessed a needs assessment employed to determine what structures were necessary to support school improvement. Miles, Rosenberg, and Green (2017) determined that measured improvements in classroom

instruction and student performance, therefore school success, result when there is highly connected professional learning design. However, the chance of the professional learning actually yielding success is remote unless the professional learning is connected to student learning needs and instructional needs.

My second recommendation is to adopt an assessment tool to assess the ability of school administration to evaluate instruction. According to Dufour and Marzano (2011) the quality of teaching is the most important factor affecting student learning. If this is true, then assessing the ability of school administration to evaluate the teaching taking place within their schools would be an equally important factor. Therefore, a research-based tool, such as the MILE assessment, to determine the levels of expertise of current administrations to evaluate instruction within this district should exist. An adoption of such a tool would enable district leaders to rate their administrators and apply professional learning where necessary.

My third and final recommendation is a district adoption of a principal effectiveness survey. There appears to be no single specific measure of what it means to be an effective principal. Although, there are specific characteristics that effective leaders possess. Some of those characteristics include intelligent, self-reflective, inspirational, honest, self-aware, and a good listener (Davis, 1998). However, rating the most effective or the most important of these characteristics is difficult. The focus of the survey will not be to specifically determine the areas in which the principal may or may not be effective, but rather to what degree the faculty believed the principal to be effective. This fact becomes important to the degree that if a faculty believes the

principal to be effective then they will be more likely to believe in and follow the principal's leadership (Kelley, Thornton & Daugherty, 2005).

Conclusion

Carpenter's (2017) research yielded a strong, significant relationship between principal leadership practice and school climate. Qualities and practices are utilized by principals and become a part of their daily behaviors. Roland Barth (2001) added to this assertion stating that excluding the heart of leadership leads to teachers following by compliance, not by belief in a principal's leadership. Academic explication, or disaggregating student assessment data, is readily abundant in our profession, and what we now need is those who "lead from the heart" (Barth, 2001, p. 141). According to Barth, it is not always the concrete qualities that effective principals possess that lead to a positive school climate and a successful school, but those less quantitative. This is the basis of my research.

CHAPTER FIVE

To-Be Framework

Professional learning is an integral aspect of any successful organization. Arguably nowhere is this truer than in educational settings. There are constantly new and adapting research, strategies, and methods emerging. There is also a constant pressure and urgency to ensure that classrooms, schools, and school districts are aware of the newest research, methods, and strategies to ensure that students are receiving the most effective instruction available. As Kotter (2011) stated, "Establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation" (p. 3). Consequently, three questions emerged to be able to satisfy the sense of urgency: 1. How are the needs of individual classrooms and schools determined? 2. Does the faculty of a school believe their principal to be effective? 3. Will the implementation of the determined professional learning lead to more effective instruction and, therefore, school improvement?

Once the needs of instruction within a classroom or throughout a school are determined, it then becomes necessary to ascertain what professional learning will be the most effective at satisfying these needs. This is when the craft of delivering professional learning becomes essential. For example, simply understanding what professional learning needs are required to increase the effectiveness of instruction in the classroom does not ensure the success of the professional learning being implemented.

This fact brought me to the core of my study which was determining the effectiveness of the principal within two middle schools. This factor became essential to my study, and therefore, program evaluation due to the assumption that if a teaching faculty did not view their principal as "effective," then delivering professional learning

might not be effective. If the professional learning being implemented was not effective, then instruction would not improve, and therefore school improvement would not occur. The interconnectedness of each piece of these factors had an impact on school improvement. A careful consideration of the 4Cs, context, culture, conditions, and competencies will outline my work in envisioning school improvement (Wagner et al., 2006).

Envisioning the Success To-Be

The goal of my "TO BE" model (Appendix E) was to create the ideal state within schools in which administrators had the ability to determine professional learning of faculty needs using student assessment data, and then deliver the professional learning in the most effective manner. To accomplish the ideal state, the following factors must exist within all schools: 1. Lesson planning will begin where student need currently resides and grow from there. 2. Professional learning will begin where teacher need currently resides and grow from that point. 3. Administrators will have effective leadership qualities, the trust and respect of their faculties, and the ability to determine and lead professional learning. If each of these factors exists, then a positive school culture will almost certainly result. The following "To-Be" vision will describe the context, conditions, competencies, and culture necessary for a positive school culture to exist within a school setting.

Context. Context is referred to by Wagner (2006) as the larger organizational systems within which we work. The context is that of which conditions, competencies, and culture are vital to the success of the school and include external influences that impact the school. Therefore, in an effort to describe the change that should be implemented for the ideal state to be realized, there must be an understanding of what success of a school is. For the purpose of this study, the following will be a working understanding of "success." 1. Administrator(s) (Principal) that is understood to be effective by the faculty and staff. 2. A professional learning plan that is tied directly to instructional and student needs. 3. Increasing annual performance scores on state assessments in core content areas.

Findings from the surveys administered at school A and B indicated that the faculty from both schools strongly agreed that the principal of their middle school is an effective leader. This factor is significant in that many faculties feel that they do not exercise much control when it comes to choosing the administrator that will lead their school. Understanding this lack of control, and then coming to the realization that their leader is, in fact, effective, no doubt will have a calming effect and create a sense of faith in their leadership. A tool to rate effectiveness of the principal and a plan to address deficiencies if identified, will increase the number of effective leaders in schools.

Faith and trust in leadership opens communication between faculty and administrators. The result is a receptiveness by the faculty to accept information and direction from the principal. When this exists, an assessment of instructional and student needs by the administration, led by the principal, is trusted by the faculty to be an accurate assessment. This then gives a specific focus and direction for professional

learning tied directly to instructional and student needs. When these needs are assessed accurately, and professional learning is designed specific to these needs the result is increased student learning.

Culture. According to Wagner (2006), Culture is the evidence of shared beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership and the quality of relationships within and beyond the school, where a group of people share an understanding, come to an agreement, and internalize these beliefs. (Wagner, 2006, p. 102). The ideal culture, as described by the "TO-BE" model, is one where the climate and culture have a shared vision of a school focused on school improvement. As introduced by Wagner (2015) in one of his Seven Survival Skills, collaboration across networks and leading by influence is essential to the success of schools. For a faculty and staff to be willing to collaborate and follow the leadership of the principal, they must believe them to be "effective." Without this belief, a teaching faculty will likely be resistant to trust the leadership and guidance of the administration.

Once the culture of trust between administrators and the faculty has been established, a focus towards school improvement based on designing professional learning around student and faculty needs can result. The shared belief that the principal is an effective leader and has the trust of the faculty is essential towards school improvement. Instructional needs of the individual classroom or trends across the whole school must be determined by frequent classroom visits. Therefore, the ability of the administration to identify effective instruction and the trust in the feedback given on these visits becomes indispensable. However, identifying instructional needs and then

determining the appropriate professional learning to support these needs are only the beginning. An internalization and an acceptance of these needs by the faculty will be (Wagner et al., 2006).

The district adoption of a specific needs assessment protocol will strengthen cultural competency. A needs assessment identifies specific evidenced-based best practices to support instruction (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014). I believe the adoption of a needs assessment protocol will create a shared vision of a school focused on school improvement. A shared vision of school improvement will create a culture in which teachers and administrators understand their daily actions and how they connect to the mission of school improvement. Cultural competency, or the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures, will also be strengthened with the district adoption of an assessment tool to assess the ability of school administration to evaluate instruction. According to Dufor and Marzano (2011) the quality of teaching is the most important factor affecting student learning.

The final piece of culture that must exist is the successful development and implementation of a professional learning plan. Each of the above factors must exist to determine what the appropriate professional learning of a school is. However, the delivery and implementation of the plan arguably becomes as essential as any of the other pieces. Therefore, the belief that the principal is an effective leader and can successfully deliver professional learning must exist and occur.

Conditions. Conditions are those external architectures surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources that impact the school (Wagner et al., 2006). Conditions that exist from school to school within a school district can have a major impact on many factors that affect student achievement. Some of the most impactful conditions are, facility, instructional budget, teacher-to-student ratio, student contact minutes, available instructional resources, and teacher planning time. Understanding and having a firm grasp of the conditions of the school provides the leader with the opportunity to identify the needs of the organization when proposing an area of change (Wagner et al., 2006).

The ideal conditions related to my study that must exist are;

- A facility that is in proper working order and maintained appropriately and equally regardless of size or operating budget of the school.
- An instructional budget that is appropriate to the student population, courses, and resulting curriculum needs.
- Teacher to student ratio numbers in accordance with state and district guidelines.
- Adherence to required state and district daily student contact minutes without barriers.
- Equally distributed and availability to curriculum resources to all schools of adopted texts and other instructional materials.
- Equal individual and cooperative teacher planning time during the contract day without barriers or interruptions.

In the district under study, maintenance and repairs, including daily cleaning,

HVAC, painting and other required upkeep and monitoring of these items is provided by the district office. Understanding that resources provided by school budgets can impact schools, ensuring that school funding is distributed equitably is an important factor of condition. Within the district under study, each school's instructional budget is allocated based on student enrollment. Class size, in core academic areas, is mandated by a state-wide class size amendment requirement. This ensures that teachers throughout the school district all teach equitable student populations. In addition, the amount of teacher to student contact time (instructional minutes) should be maximized during the student day for optimal learning to occur. To accomplish this a requirement of instructional minutes during each school day should exist. This requirement is 300 minutes in this particular school district.

Core resources for teachers, such as textbooks and accompanying materials are paid for and provided to each school by the district office. Instructional dollars, allocated to the schools, are not utilized to purchase these items. Finally, providing the maximum amount of uninterrupted teacher planning is essential. District approval of each school's proposed student schedule and teacher workday will ensure this occurs. Ideally, these will be in increments of at least 45 minutes and no less than five hours per week. Collaborative planning with groups of teachers is included in this definition. Faculty

meetings, parent conferences or other required meetings cannot count toward this total.

Competencies. Wagner et al. (2006) define this arena of change as the "repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning" (p. 99). By understanding the competencies within a school, the principal has the opportunity to identify how the administration, the instructional staff, and the support staff, influence overall student learning. Exploring the extent to which professional learning impacts school improvement within the school will give the principal the necessary knowledge to both assess instructional practices as well as the skills and knowledge required to increase student learning.

The competencies necessary for the principal to achieve the ideal state would be:

- Be rated as effective administrator prior to being assigned as principal to a school (Take the principal effectiveness survey at the current site prior to being moved or assigned to a school as principal).
- Be trained in identifying effective instruction (Take the MILE assessment to determine current level of an administrator's ability to identify effective instruction).
- Be trained in using the MILE to assess instruction and provide targeted feedback for teacher growth towards determining professional learning needs of a school.

Providing the principal effectiveness survey neither ensures an effective principal nor offers the tools necessary to create one. However, knowing the current effectiveness of the leader as rated by the survey will provide a beginning point to build the effectiveness of the leader. Likewise, administering the MILE assessment and then training administrators on identifying effective instruction does not ensure a perfect assessment of

instruction. However, assessing instructional needs and utilizing student assessment data to determine the most appropriate professional learning for the school will lead to school improvement.

Additionally, in my vision for the future, teachers will believe in and trust their principal. This is an essential element of a successful school. When a faculty understands their principal to be effective, they believe their actions can be trusted and are worthy of their attention and time. This fact is essential when professional learning is both chosen and implemented (Superville, 2015). Therefore, a belief that the principal is effective and will choose, plan, and implement effective and worthwhile professional learning is essential (Superville, 2015). This will build a culture of trust between the principal and the faculty. Roland Barth (2001) stated that there is no more pervasive characteristic of good schools than healthy teacher-principal relationships. Barth continued by stating, "The best principals are those who understand how to rigorously and courageously craft school experiences such that those experiences yield important learning for adults and students" (Barth, 2001, p. 141).

District leaders, specifically area directors, will strengthen cultural competency with a plan to support potential and current principals. This plan will begin by implementing an approved principal preparation program. Creating a preparation program that includes completing a leadership portfolio, demonstrating competencies on principal leadership standards, as well as completing job embedded training to evaluate instruction will better prepare potential principals for the job. With a larger pool of qualified and effective principals, schools and the district will benefit. Additionally, creating and managing an effective principal preparation program will better equip

district staff to evaluate principals if the evaluation tool is aligned with the principal preparation program goals. According to Daresh & Lynch (2011) staff should be included in the design of policies that directly affect them.

The redesign of the principal preparation program will include district staff and current principals throughout the district. Inasmuch as the breakdown in not following policies and procedures negatively impacted staff and community relationships, a redesign would seek to rebuild those relationships. Furthermore, with these redesigns, a move towards cultural proficiency will be realized.

Conclusion

Determining the effectiveness of the principal, understanding the level to which he or she is able to assess instruction, and the ability to determine and apply professional learning will lead to school improvement. There are, no doubt, differing levels of principal effectiveness. However, if a faculty simply trusts and believes the leader to be effective and has the teachers' and the students' best interest in mind, they are more likely to follow their leader. It is necessary to equip principals with effectiveness skills for both leadership in assessing student needs as well as teacher needs to be able to determine and lead professional learning towards school improvement.

CHAPTER SIX

Strategies and Actions

The main focus areas that need to be addressed to confront adaptive change and to make systemic and specific modifications to impact the effects of principal leadership qualities on professional learning implementation towards school improvement arose from the use of Wagner et al. (2006). Utilizing Wagner's "As-Is" analysis and moving to the vision of "To-Be" analysis enabled me to determine the four main areas of focus. Each of these areas of focus stems from the context, culture, conditions and competencies of the school. Wagner further defined competencies as "the repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning" (p. 99). By understanding the competencies within a school, the principal has the opportunity to identify what skills and knowledge of the instructional staff, the support staff, and administration influence overall student learning. Respectively, each area plays a role in the change required to impact instruction and ultimately student learning towards school and eventually district-wide improvement.

Strategies and Actions

The strategies and actions necessary to successfully implement adaptive change and for the ideal state to be realized center on four primary areas. The first area is to understand and determine the effectiveness of the principal. As Kilinc (2014) stated, effective leadership is one of the most important factors in school improvement and student learning. The next area is the ability of the principal to effectively rate instruction and then to combine determined needs with student assessment data. A school leader's ability to identify effective instruction is essential toward school improvement (Fink, Markholt & Michelson, 2018). The third area of focus is to determine the professional

learning needs of the school. The final focus will be that of professional learning implementation.

Focus Area: Principal Effectiveness. The area of principal effectiveness is the primary focus of my study. The standard and arguably only measure of principal effectiveness, at least in the era of school grades, has been student achievement, measured by student assessment data. However, this does not provide a complete measure of a principal's effectiveness. My study utilized a principal effectiveness survey to measure fifteen areas in which to rate the principal. The focus of the survey was not to specifically determine the areas in which the principal may or may not be effective, but rather to what degree the faculty believed the principal to be effective. This fact becomes important for the simple reason that if a faculty believes the principal to be effective then they will be more likely to believe in and follow their leadership.

The following will assess the effectiveness of the change plan as it relates to principal effectiveness. As discussed in the policy recommendation, revision of the state board approved Principal Preparation Program will ensure effective principals will be recommended to the position. Revision of the plan will include a leadership portfolio, which will demonstrate competence of the principal leadership standards. Once each of the required elements of the portfolio is complete and certified by the superintendent, the local School Board can then recommend effective principal candidates to be certified to the state Department of Education.

Focus Area: Ability to Evaluate Instruction. If the quality of teaching in the classroom has the largest impact on student achievement, then second only to hiring the most effective teacher would be both supporting that teacher as well as being able to

observe and analyze his or her instruction. If students are not being afforded powerful learning opportunities, then learning will not take place. To ensure that learning opportunities take place within classrooms, the practice of teaching must be open for analysis and critique, and therefore, become public. Improving practice in a culture that is public requires reciprocal accountability. Reciprocal accountability refers to leaders having an equal responsibility to understand and follow expectations they have created (University of Washington, 2012). Additionally, reciprocal accountability not only requires a specific kind of leadership, but a trust by a faculty in their principal's leadership and that it is worthy to be followed. It is vital at this point to further understand that leaders cannot lead what they do not know. This is the essential juncture where principal effectiveness and the ability to effectively analyze and critique instructional practice are inexorably linked. Understanding this, administering the MILE assessment to those who will evaluate instruction becomes an invaluable tool in measuring this ability.

The administration of the MILE assessment established a foundational level of ability by the principal to evaluate and analyze instruction. From this point, growing the skills for observation and analysis follows a specific process. The process begins with describing the teaching and learning that is occurring in the classroom specifically through noticings. Noticings are factional, non-judgmental accounts of the physical observations that take place during the instructional observation by administration (University of Washington, 2012). Noticings are aligned to the instructional framework that is currently utilized for teacher evaluation within the school system so as to use common language already in place. It is equally as essential that observations by

principals and assistant principals are not subjective and remain grounded in factual, non-judgmental noticings that are grounded in the instructional framework. Noticings are continual throughout the observation and are the basis for questions and feedback given to the teacher after the observation.

From these noticings and observations, the observer will craft authentic questions about the direction for the lesson and/or decision-making by the teacher. Armed with this information, a principal will be able to identify effectively what teachers are currently able to do and what they are on the verge of being able to do in order to identify instructional needs. This process by the principal must be repeated over and over to develop the capacity to more effectively build the skills necessary to observe, analyze, and give feedback towards learning opportunities. Once these skills are practiced, a bank of knowledge of the instructional anatomy of the school will develop from the observations by the administration. The principal's ability to analyze instruction can once again be assessed by district leaders administering the MILE a second time.

Another element of the revision of the state board approved Principal Preparation Program discussed in the policy recommendation is a job embedded training and assessment program. This program includes a learning walk program designed to build potential principals' ability to evaluate instruction. Successful completion of this program will ensure that principal candidates will have the ability to effective rate instruction. This will further ensure that more effective candidates are recommended to the position.

Focus Area: Determining Professional Learning Needs of the School. The instructional anatomy of a school consists of both the level of instruction within its

classrooms as well as the common language for high-quality instruction that exists (Fink, 2017). There are two crucial elements in leading for instructional improvement. The first crucial element is for the principal to know how to effectively determine the instructional anatomy and the needs of the school. The second crucial element will be the student assessment data, including state and local assessments. The combination of these two elements will provide the most concise lens from which to determine the professional learning needs of the school.

The following will assess the effectiveness of the change plan as it relates to an ability to determining professional learning needs of a school. Once a principal candidate has successfully completed the learning walk program as an element of the Level II Principal Preparation Program, they will be able to evaluate instruction effectively. The accurate evaluation of instruction combined with student assessment data will provide a specific understanding of the needs of the school. This understanding will provide the necessary information to create a professional learning plan for the school. The ability to assess instruction occurring within classrooms in a school, disaggregating student assessment data, and combining these elements to determine the most effective professional learning to apply towards school improvement (needs assessment) is a necessity of a school leader (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014).

Focus Area: Professional Learning Implementation. Determining the instructional and student needs of a school does not guarantee the successful implementation of a professional learning plan. Likewise, simply identifying the necessary or appropriate professional learning needed does not guarantee that professional learning will be successful. The principal will need to accurately identify

both of these elements to determine the necessary professional learning for a school. Once this has occurred, the principal will implement a professional learning plan utilizing the three areas for school improvement.

First, identification of the instructional anatomy and the student needs of a school are vital to begin to understand what professional learning may be necessary to apply. This identification must come through the principal's ability to evaluate the instruction taking place in the classrooms as well as disaggregated student assessment data. The combination of these two components by the principal will determine the instructional anatomy of the school and thus the most accurate lens from which to view professional learning needs of the school.

Next, a specific and cogent plan to implement the professional learning that is gleaned from the proper identification is essential. Arguably, as essential as the identification of the needs of the school is the development of this plan and how it will be implemented. The staff will understand the plan, including how it was determined, and the staff will take ownership of the professional learning plan. An understanding of the plan, including how it was determined, as well ownership or buy in by the staff is an element of successful implementation. The principal will recognize the importance of ownership and understanding the concrete reasons as to how the needs were determined. This demonstrates transparency and facilitates receptiveness by the staff towards the professional learning.

An additional element in ownership, and therefore, successful implementation of the professional learning plan is faculty participation in its formation. The principal will develop a team of teacher leaders to design, plan, and implement the professional

learning plan. Moreover, the principal will articulate to the team tasked with the design, planning, and implementation how the instructional anatomy of the school and its needs were determined. It is important to understand that the only measure of successful implementation of a professional learning plan will be its comparison against the same measures used to determine it. In this case, the instructional and student needs of the school. Therefore, the process of evaluating instruction and disaggregating student assessment data become a cyclical process that never ends.

This factor further strengthens the need for instructional leadership that is effective. This is to say that a faculty must believe their administrator to be effective at his or her job to have the willingness to follow his or her leadership. Grounding a professional learning plan in the exact needs of both classroom instruction and student learning will be unsuccessful in its implementation if the principal of the school is not believed to be effective by its faculty and staff.

The following will assess the effectiveness of the change plan as it relates to professional learning implementation. Professional learning is recognized as the most common way to improve teachers' level of preparedness in delivering knowledge to their students (Bayer, 2014). However, its impact is highly dependent upon how well it is designed and implemented. Once the professional learning plan is implemented, faculty observations, with a specific focus on that learning, will take place at established intervals throughout the year. Targeted feedback from the observations will be delivered to the teachers. As the feedback is applied to instruction, follow up observations and evaluations will be recorded in the local school district's established instructional observation rubric. Annual scores on the instructional evaluation rubric combined with

student assessment data will determine the effectiveness of the principal's professional learning implementation.

Community Partnership Effectiveness. Two specific partnerships developed as a result of my program implementation and policy recommendation. The first was with the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership (CEL). The partnership between the school district under study and CEL was specifically for the use of the MILE assessment and the learning walk program. The use of the MILE assessment provided a researched based tool to assess the ability to evaluate instruction. The resulting program implementation of learning walks developed the ability of participants to assess and provide feedback to instruction. The second partnership was with Buckman and Associates, LLC. This partnership was a collaboration with district administrative staff and resulted in the policy recommendation of a revision to the Level II Principal Preparation Program.

Conclusion

For effective change, specific strategies and corresponding actions must be prescribed with precision if the change is to be successful. However, determining what specific instructional leadership and corresponding instructional improvement strategies to apply becomes the dilemma for all school leaders. To attempt to solve this dilemma, the four main areas of focus to successfully implement adaptive change towards school improvement are: 1. Principal effectiveness. 2. Evaluation of the instructional anatomy of the school. 3. Determining professional learning needs of the school. 4. Professional learning implementation. District leaders will focus on building capacity in these four

areas in both current and future principals, and that focus will support school improvement across the local school district.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Implications and Policy Recommendations

Effective school leadership is one of the most important factors in school improvement and student learning (Kilinc, 2014). Every state details the essential elements of effective leadership in their adopted principal leadership standards. However, these are simply standards. The implementation and application of these standards into practice is the act of leadership. For this, there is no specific formula or template. Therefore, the creation of a formula to follow should be a priority of school districts. Understanding this, the first step is to have a plan to first evaluate and assess the individual leadership skills that exist and then a plan to build upon these skills.

Quality of teaching has been observed as the most important factor affecting student learning (Dufor & Marzano, 2011). Therefore, an ability of the principal to be able to identify and assess the quality of teaching occurring in the school is an essential skill. As a result of the findings of my study, I have identified that a method to assess the current level of this ability by both principals and assistant principals is necessary. Furthermore, this assessment tool should be a part of a principal preparation program.

There are several understood skills necessary towards effective leadership and school improvement. Every state details these skills in their adopted principal leadership standards (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). Every state's principal leadership standards address student achievement and instructional leadership in some capacity (NPBEA, 2015). However, based on my research and experience with principal evaluation within the district under study, a specific method to measure these standards, or more importantly, how to build the capacity of the principal does not exist.

Every school district is required to apply these standards to a principal preparation program (Citation withheld to protect confidentiality). However, developing an effective leader goes way beyond listing standards to be followed in a principal preparation program. The ability to assess instruction occurring within classrooms in a school, disaggregating student assessment data, and combining these elements to determine the most effective professional learning to apply towards school improvement (needs assessment) is a necessity of a school leader (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014). The addition and tracking of these skills into a principal preparation program is equally as necessary.

Policy Statement

The policy for recommendation is for the School Board, in conjunction with district leaders, to collaborate, revisit, and revise the state board approved Principal Preparation Program. In order to comply with existing Board Policy, "School Administration: Responsibilities of Principals," prospective principal candidates must successfully satisfy the requirements of the Principal Preparation Program in order to be recommended for principal eligibility. This includes completing a leadership portfolio, which demonstrates competencies on the principal leadership standards as well as a job embedded training and assessment program to evaluate instruction and then combine with student assessment data and create a professional learning program. Once each of the required elements of the portfolio is complete and certified by the superintendent, the local School Board can then recommend principal certification to the state Department of Education. It is only then that the School Board Policy is adequately followed and implemented as defined in the Principal Preparation Program.

I am recommending a revision to the current local school board policy, which has ambiguous and potentially conflicting language, as the current policy requires principals to follow local school board policies, yet also states to follow the Superintendent's directives. The conflict arises as in the past, principal candidates did not always satisfy the requirements of the principal portfolio, but yet were still recommended to the position of principal. These two policies contradict each other. I propose a revision to the existing board policy to include specific verbiage to explicitly refer to a satisfaction of a State Board of Education Principal Preparation Program and the School Board approved job description.

The rationale supporting my suggested policy recommendation is based on my research that indicated a vast gap exists between the current principal preparation program within the district under study, and actual implementation. These gaps are detailed in the research outcomes in Chapter Four, and a plan for change in Chapter Five. A bridge to connect effective principal practices and job embedded training to build the capacity of these practices is essential to ensure future leaders are prepared to assume the role of principal. This should occur before the local school district leaders recommend principal certification to the state board of education.

Analysis of Needs

The policy recommendation above is driven by several factors indicated by the findings within this study. The following subsections will explain in more detail the analysis of needs within this study of the effects of principal leadership qualities on school culture towards school improvement. I took an in-depth look at the educational, economic, social, political, legal, moral, and ethical needs related to the topic of principal

leadership qualities and their impact on professional learning identification and implementation. These topics give an individual perspective from six distinct disciplinary areas to more fully understand possible implications of my policy recommendation involved.

Educational analysis. Professional learning is essential to improving teacher performance and increasing student achievement. DeMonte (2013) commented, "In many ways, professional development is the link between the design and implementation of education reforms and the ultimate success of reform efforts in schools" (p. 1). However, for professional learning to have a positive impact on student learning, the professional learning must be targeted towards instructional and student needs. Data from my study indicated that prior to program implementation the six administrators from the two middle schools under study had only a "novice" level of ability to identify effective instruction in the five elements assessed (University of Washington, 2012).

> Novice responses, or noticings, are characterized by some misconceptions, including generalities, frequent corrections and directives. Novice responses also include judgmental valuations that are not quantifiable. Novice responses focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors. Additionally, novice responses focus on superficial details, and the use of only a few facts from the observation to support ideas. It is essential that these noticings are non-judgemental, factual and aligned to the instructional framework that is currently utilized for teacher evaluation within the school system so as to use common language already in place (University of Washington, 2012).

Economic analysis. In analyzing the economic implications of this policy, there will be little to no change in impact on the district. Due to the fact that proposed revisions to the state adopted plan will include job embedded tasks that occur during the current duty day, and in the normal scope of work, additional funding would be not be necessary. Furthermore, the revisions to the existing plan would utilize existing district administrative personnel (area directors), already assigned to specific schools. Additionally, utilizing current principals to train potential candidates as they facilitate scheduled learning walks already in place would not incur additional specific monetary cost. However, time spent on these activities would be in place of other activities by principals. The only adjustment would be 'learning walks' hosted at district school sites. This would not add any costs to the program.

Social analysis. Incorporating an initiative that positively impacts and ultimately improves student achievement will have a positive societal impact (Black, 2007). The community expects an assurance that their students are receiving the best education possible. They want an assurance that their students will be prepared for not only the next grade but ultimately the work force. Societal pressures and demand for continued school improvement and an adaptation to how to adequately prepare students for the future have mandated that school districts be proactive.

Building a relationship between student and teacher, teacher and leader, as well as school and society, is essential to foster a positive school climate. When teachers promote a positive learning environment, student achievement is more likely to increase (Kaplan & Owings, 2015). An essential element towards a positive school climate is for teachers to feel connected and safe in their professional relationships and environment.

Frances Fowler (2013) referred to this professional relationship as a "fraternity" (p. 98). Fowler further stated that educators who feel this connection display more confidence with their leadership.

Preparing the next school leaders to adequately meet the needs of a school will foster a positive school climate. My policy recommendation will meet these needs by adequately preparing school principals to meet these needs. Revising the state board approved Principal Preparation Program will result in adequately prepared school leaders, more confident and effective teachers, as well as greater student achievement.

Political analysis. Assessing the policy recommendation from a political viewpoint will reveal the following direct impact. The superintendent set aside the current state board approved Level II Principal Preparation Program between December 2016 and July 2018. During this period, principals who were in progress on the two year program ceased progress and did not continue in the Principal Preparation Program until after they were seated as principals. This practice violated the state board of education approved plan. Furthermore, the act of seating a principal without successful completion of the Level II principal preparation program not only violates state statute but also the current school board approved job description requiring principal certification on the candidate's certificate.

The disregard for both the state plan and district job description not only violated these policies but halted the professional preparation and growth of the school leaders during this period. District and school leaders knew that these practices were not being followed. These violations were also in direct contravention of the state principal leadership standard of professional and ethical behavior. The principal leadership

standards guide both school and district leaders and are set in place by the state board of education.

Drago-Severson et al. (2013) stated that political policies for schools are developed through a "reciprocal exchange of ideas and expertise between researchers, lawmakers, and practitioners" (p. 241). When these policies, procedures, job descriptions, and statutes are set aside, the reciprocity is severed. The result is political violations that reach well beyond student achievement and school improvement. They damage trust.

Legal analysis. School principals and district leaders have been designated administrative privileges and decision-making authority from the superintendent. Frances Fowler (2013) asserted that legal authority is an exercise of power, limitations are present and should be considered when following educational policy (Fowler, 2013). Understanding this, the analysis as it relates to my policy recommendation of revising and implementing a principal preparation program is a legal requirement of the state. In addition, other legal implications exist.

Hiring candidates who did not complete the Principal Preparation Program as principals would be hiring unqualified leaders in two separate ways. First, those who began working on the Level II Principal Preparation Program did not complete the program prior to being seated as a principal. Non-completion of the program would mean they did not satisfy the required trainings, and therefore, were not fully educated to assume the job responsibilities of a school principal. Second is the fact that completion of the program would allow them to be state certified to add 'school principal' to their certificate. This would then have satisfied the district job description to be eligible to be

a principal.

Another legal implication that emerged was the lack of knowledge of job description requirements of principals by the local school board. The principals that were seated during this period were recommended by the superintendent and then approved by the school board. This meant that the school board members were either unaware of the district job description requirements or state board approved principal preparation program or simply ignored them. At best, this represents a lack of knowledge of a critical element of their job. Trust should be the foundation of a school district's culture. A lack of trust in upholding statute or policies will undoubtedly fracture this trust.

Moral and ethical analysis. The moral and ethical issues associated with the problem are detailed in the previous two sections of political and legal analysis. Legal limitations must be considered when exercising power and when recommending educational policy (Fowler 2013). State principal leadership standards of professional ethical behavior are clear in this situation. These standards specifically detail the requirement to stay "focused on the vision of the school and school district" while "reacting constructively to barriers" (Citation withheld to protect the anonymity of the district under study). Setting aside the requirements of both the state board approved principal preparation program as well as ignoring the district's job description of principal was a clear violation of ethical behavior.

My policy recommendation will uphold the moral and ethical expectations of the local and state boards of education as well as the community. Revising and following a state school board approved principal preparation program will further the professional preparation and growth of the school leaders in the local school district. Successful

completion of the revised State Board of Education Level II Principal Preparation Program will allow the superintendent and the local school board to appropriately recommend these candidates to be state certified as principals. Satisfying these requirements will fulfill the current job description of principal and allow the local school board to ethically approve the candidate's recommendation to the position of principal by the superintendent.

Implications for Staff and Community Relationships

Advocating for a revision of a policy that ensures state statute as well as district policies are followed will have positive implications for staff and community relationships. Not following the state board approved principal preparation program during this period resulted in candidates receiving jobs for which they were unqualified. This also potentially meant that qualified candidates were passed over for these positions. This fact alone will create a lack of trust by staff in both the district administration and school board. Conversely, revising the policy and following its guidelines will rebuild the trust lost between the superintendent and the local school board.

Daresh & Lynch (2011) contended that staff should be included in the design of policies that directly affect them. The redesign of the Principal Preparation Program will include district staff and current principals throughout the district. Redesigning and following the guidelines of the principal preparation program will begin to rebuild impacted staff and community relationships. Furthermore, a redesign will ensure that all eligible candidates would have equitable opportunities to apply and be hired.

Another implication on community relationships was the fact that both the school board and superintendent are elected positions. In casting their votes for these positions,

a level of trust is extended to these individuals by the community. There is an expectation by the electorate that the elected representative will uphold current policies of the school board. Not being equipped or qualified to fulfill the job responsibilities after being elected to the position is in itself a disappointment to the voter. However, setting aside, or not being aware of, state or district statute or policy is a violation of a trust that will be all but impossible to repair.

Application of my policy recommendation will have a positive impact in several areas. First, following the revised state board approved principal preparation program will ensure qualified candidates will be recommended as principal candidates. Second, it will also repair the trust lost between current and future principals and the superintendent. Lastly, it will repair the trust between the local school board and the superintendent.

Conclusion

According to the adopted state leadership standards, school leaders are required to base decisions on "facts and data" while demonstrating "professional and ethical behaviors." The recommended policy change, if implemented with fidelity, will accomplish precisely that. First, it will ensure that leaders are trained to make factual and data driven decisions for their schools. Second, it will facilitate a much-needed integration between a school needs assessment, teacher evaluation, coaching, and professional learning. Lastly, when monitored appropriately by both district administration and school board, it will ensure that the standards of professional and ethical behaviors approved by the state are followed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

The theme discussed throughout my dissertation is one that is ultimately the focus of any question, problem, or program implementation surrounding education. Effective school leadership is one of the most important factors in school improvement and student learning (Kilinc, 2014). Therefore, the question is not if school improvement is continually necessary, but how to go about achieving it. Every state details the essential elements of effective leadership in their adopted principal leadership standards. However, these are simply standards.

The implementation and application of these standards into practice is the act of leadership. For this, there is no specific formula or template. Therefore, the creation of a formula to follow with the ultimate goal of school improvement, should be a priority of school districts. There are many factors that impact student performance. They vary from school to school and from school district to school district. Applying a plan that has been effective in one situation does not guarantee success in another.

Every school has leaders. Determining what leadership qualities are effective and then attempting to replicate them would be an appropriate place to begin to ensure principal effectiveness. After that, understanding the needs of a school, both instructionally and based on student assessment, is essential to understand what professional learning should be applied to attempt to improve. Once this has been determined, an effective plan to implement professional learning and the leadership qualities necessary to implement the plan must exist for school improvement to occur.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine what impact principal leadership qualities have on school culture towards school improvement and how current methods of professional learning were determined and implemented. This overarching research question was answered through four specific actions and included the program implementation in two middle schools. In the first action, I rated the effectiveness of the principal of each school. Second, I rated the ability of each administrator within the school to determine the level of instruction occurring in classrooms within their schools. The third action required the principal to combine student assessment data with instructional needs which determined the instructional anatomy of his or her school. The fourth was the utilization of the two previous elements which provided the most accurate information and determined what professional learning was most effective towards school improvement.

Program implementation began with the administration of MILE assessment of each administrator in each middle school to determine the level to which they could rate instruction in five specific areas. The next focus of program implementation was to apply learning walks in classrooms throughout each middle school and observe around a specific student problem of learning and teacher area of focus. Each administrator took part in five learning walks following the same format in each. Each of the five learning walks included three classrooms to observe. At the conclusion of each learning walk, targeted feedback based on 'noticings' during the observations were provided to the observed teacher to apply to future planning. Follow-up observations were scheduled after professional learning was applied. This process continued as needed. A second

MILE assessment was administered to each principal and assistant principal in both schools under study at the conclusion of the five learning walks. The second administration determined what, if any, improvements in the evaluation of instruction had occurred in the same five areas.

After program implementation, not only did a more precise understanding of the level and needs of instruction occur within each school, but also an ability to determine them was built. Since the birth of statewide assessment and school grading there has been a way to assess and rate student learning. A vehicle or program to better understand and accurately rate classroom instruction was implemented. Employing such a program to determine instructional needs within a school and combining it with concrete student assessment data will reveal the instructional anatomy of the school. The instructional anatomy of the school provides the most precise lens from which to determine what professional learning should be applied to these needs.

The primary goal of this program evaluation was to determine the level to which administrators at two middle schools in one district were able to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, including evaluating instructional and student needs in their schools and the impact of school culture on student achievement. I collected quantitative data from the MILE Assessment to answer the first research question: (1) To what level are school administrators (principal and assistant principal) able to identify effective instruction? My analysis of the data indicated the administrators who participated in the study increased in their ability to identify effective instruction as deemed by the MILE Assessment. These results addressed the primary goal of the study.

My organizational change plan, or the “TO BE” model, was to create the ideal

state within schools in which administrators had the ability to determine professional learning based on faculty and student needs. My program evaluation indicated a need to develop the ability of principals and assistant principals to identify effective instruction. I addressed this need by instituting a program for the principals to increase their ability to identify effective instruction.

My policy recommendation was for the local school board, in conjunction with district leaders, to collaborate, revisit, and revise the local implementation of the state board approved Principal Preparation Program. An element of the revised Principal Preparation Program was to increase the ability of principals to identify effective instruction. My program evaluation indicated a need to develop the ability of principals to identify effective instruction. My organizational change plan, or the "TO BE" model, was to create the ideal state within schools in which administrators had the ability to determine professional learning based on faculty and student needs. In order for potential principals to be able to meet the requirements of the Principal Preparation Program, a program for the principals to increase their ability to identify effective instruction must exist. By implementing a learning walk program to increase this ability, I addressed the issues raised in my program evaluation and organizational change plan.

In order to comply with existing local School Board Policy, "School Administration: Responsibilities of Principals," prospective principal candidates must successfully satisfy the requirements of the Principal Preparation Program in order to be recommended for principal eligibility. This included completing a leadership portfolio, which demonstrated competencies on the principal leadership standards, as well as a job embedded training and assessment program to build the ability of principal candidates to

evaluate instruction. Once each of the required elements of the portfolio is complete and certified by the superintendent, the local School Board can then recommend principal certification to the state Department of Education. It is only then that the local School Board Policy is adequately followed and implemented as defined in the Principal Preparation Program.

I am recommending a revision to the current local School Board policy, which has ambiguous and potentially conflicting language, as the policy refers for principals to follow local school board policies yet also states to follow the Superintendent's directives. These two policies contradict each other. I propose a revision to the existing board policy to include specific verbiage to explicitly refer to a satisfaction of a State Board of Education Principal Preparation Program and the School Board approved job description.

The rationale supporting my suggested policy recommendation is based on my research that indicated a vast gap exists between the current principal preparation program within the district under study, and actual implementation. These gaps were detailed in the research outcomes in Chapter Four, and a plan for change in Chapter Five. A bridge to connect effective principal practices and job embedded training to build the capacity of these practices is essential to ensure future leaders are prepared to assume the role of principal. This should occur before the local school district recommends principal certification to the state board of education.

Leadership Lessons

The initial leadership lesson I focused on recognizing was which leadership qualities were most recognized by a faculty and staff of a school to be essential for their principal to possess through the school principal leadership quality survey. This experience allowed me to reflect on my leadership skills and potential impacts of those actions as I lead. Specifically, the lesson that became most evident through this process was in considering leadership qualities and how they were perceived and/or received by a faculty. This understanding caused me to be much more deliberate and reflective of my own actions as I made leadership decisions.

The next leadership lesson surrounded instructional evaluation. In understanding the importance of teacher evaluation and how it impacts both teacher and school improvement, evaluating both accurately, and according to the current rubrics in place within a district, have never been more impactful. However, as I measured the ability of administrators to evaluate instruction and then plan and apply professional learning, I witnessed how this process was disconnected from the act of observing and rating teachers according to the established rubric within this school district. Through this study I saw the importance of connecting the teacher evaluation process to coaching and professional learning.

The final leadership lesson which emerged throughout this study was the validity and impact of a principal preparation program. Much like the evaluation process of a teacher, if a principal preparation program does not provide the ability to conduct an evaluation of leadership and more importantly how to apply coaching to grow the necessary skills, it is rendered useless (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014).

Furthermore, when a State Board of Education Approved plan is not followed, it provides further complication and misunderstanding of how to appropriately prepare or certify principals. In understanding this, I considered the importance of creating an effective principal preparation program to both assess the current ability of administrators as well as to provide professional learning to grow the required skills.

Conclusion

In her research, Kilinc (2014), stated that effective school leadership (Principal and Assistant Principals) are one of the most important factors in school improvement and student learning. State Department of Education leaders outlined their definition of effective leadership in their adopted principal leadership standards. However, these are simply standards. The implementation and application of these standards into practice is the act and craft of leadership. Specified individual actions to accomplish these standards do not exist. According to Davis, (1998) the one element of effective leadership that was consistent with effective principals was social skill and social awareness. However, social skills cannot be the only qualities present to lead a successful school. The ability to assess the needs of the school and apply professional learning, both to the students and the faculty is essential (Gambrell, Mallow, Marinak, & Mazzoni, 2014). The difficulty is that frequently when these are applied, social awareness vanishes. Based on a triangulation of the data I collected in this study along with Davis (1998) and Gambrell et al. (2014), the formula that did emerge throughout this study was to create the most effective school leadership, the principal must combine social skill with practical skill.

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Appendices

Appendix A

MILE Assessment

Assessment Instructions

This assessment is an online tool that measures leaders' skills in observing and analyzing classroom instruction, providing feedback, and designing professional development for teacher growth.

There is a set window of time you have to take this assessment. This information should have been provided to you by your Organization. Your assessment must be completed within this window.

When completing the assessment we recommend finding a quiet place where you will not be disturbed for 60-90 minutes. During the assessment you will be asked to view a 15-20 minute video of classroom instruction and answer three questions:

- What did you notice—and wonder—about teaching and learning in this classroom?
- What specific feedback would you give the teacher to help him/her take productive next steps in improving instruction? And why?
- What plan for professional development and support would you suggest for this teacher based on what you observed? That is, what does this teacher need to learn, and how would you get him/her there?

Write and save your responses in Word, Google docs or another text editor and copy and paste the responses into the website essay fields. This will provide extra protection for your responses in case of any technology issues and will also allow for you to retrieve your responses at a later date if needed.

When responding to the questions, be as thorough and specific as possible as the assessment scores will be based on only what you have written. There is no time or word limit. Spelling and grammar are not considered when determining the score.

Your assessment responses will be scored by two highly trained raters and the results will be given to your Organization.

If you have any issues with the assessment, please contact [redacted]uw.edu or call [redacted] or [redacted] between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm (Pacific Time). Please allow up to 24 hours for a response.

Individual Report: "*MILE Participant*"

Introduction:

These results are from your participation in the Measures of Instructional Leadership Expertise (MILE^{TM}) Assessment administered by the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership.

Assessment Process:

The process consisted of watching a video of classroom instruction and responding in writing to the following prompts:

- What do you notice—and wonder—about teaching and learning in this classroom?
- What specific feedback would you give the teacher to help him/her take productive next steps in improving instruction? And why?
- What plan for professional development and support would you suggest for this teacher based on what you observed? That is, what does this teacher need to learn, and how would you get him/her there?

How were responses scored?

Once submitted, the written response was evaluated separately by two specially trained instructional leaders using a rubric that was developed and validated by researchers at the University of Washington and Vanderbilt University. The rubric is designed to measure expertise in four areas: observing and analyzing instruction, providing feedback to teachers, orchestrating and supporting teachers' professional learning, and the ability to adopt an inquiry stance in support of teachers. Raters considered the various criteria of each area to arrive at an overall assessment of expertise for eleven areas of proficiency based on the four point "nearly a master" (4) to "novice" (1) continuum.

Performance Level Descriptors:

1.Novice: Responses at this level are characterized by some misconceptions, generalities, frequent corrections and directives, judgement, exclusive focus on teacher behaviors and not student behaviors, focus on superficial details, use of few details from the video to support ideas. Responses present less information.

2. Emerging: Ideas in response lack focus, reference to only a few teacher/student actions from the video to support ideas, use of jargon of practice not linked to evidence in the video, ideas lack contextualization and connectedness. Responses typically include a moderate amount of information.

3. Developing: Response is characterized by the use of details from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support some ideas, abilty to make sense of observations (making connections among student learning, experiences, research, and standards). Responses typically provide extended information.

4. Nearly a master: Responses demonstrated by situated knowledge, focus, careful and targeted use of detail from teacher/student behaviors and interactions to support ideas, explanation of the use of observations to guide recommendations for feedback/PD, demonstration of content expertise or strategies for addressing content. Responses typically provide elaborate information.

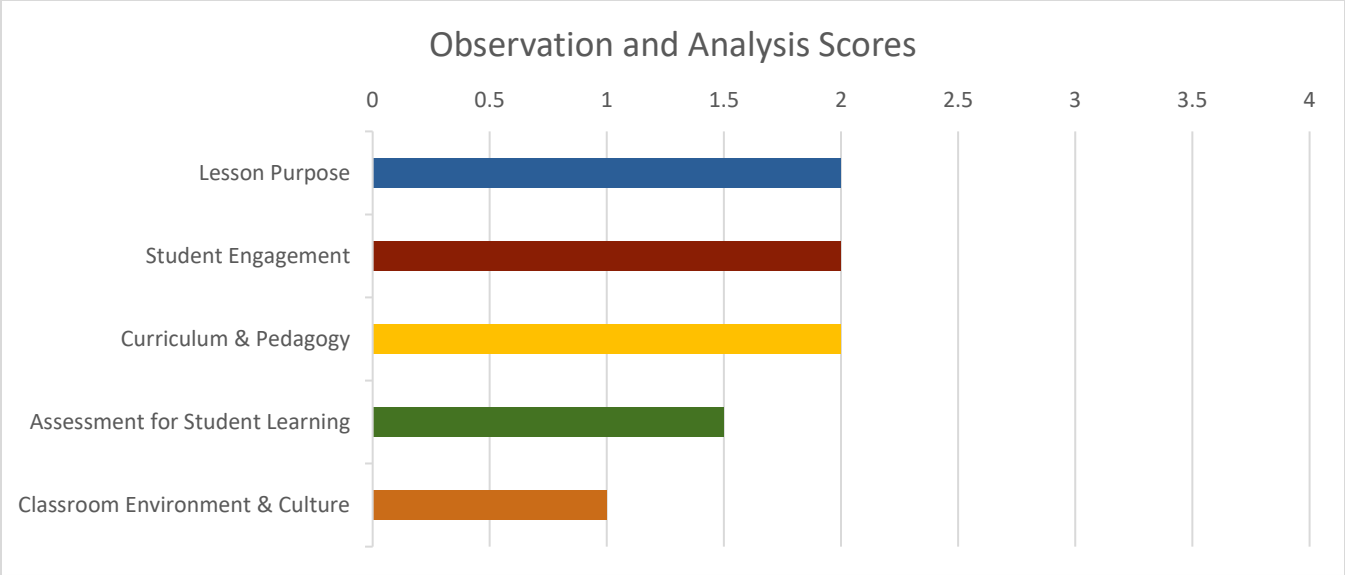
Dimension: Observation and Analysis

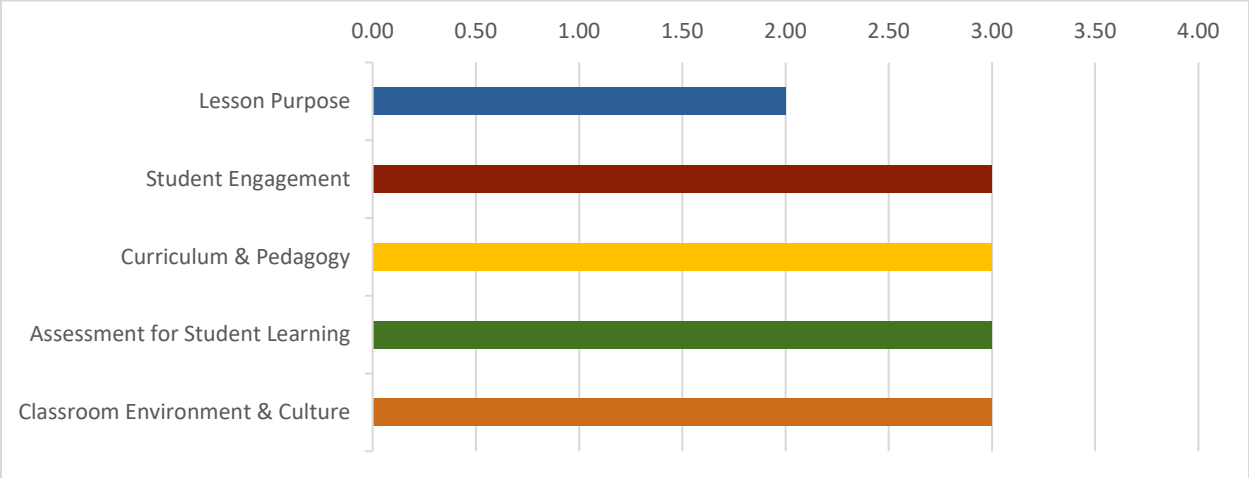
Noticing (and wondering about) what is taking place in the lesson.

An instructional leader analyzes and provides evidence to support claims about how, and how well:

- The teacher clearly communicates the lesson's purpose, attending to whether the teacher is focused on valued academic learning target(s), whether the learning targets are aligned with grade level standards, and whether students understand the purpose.
- The teacher helps all students to engage in intellectually challenging work, to take ownership of their own learning, to build on what they know and who they are in equitable ways, and to help them to communicate effectively using the discourse and thinking strategies of the relevant discipline.
- The teacher aligns tasks and materials to learning targets and lesson purpose, focuses on conceptual understanding and disciplinary skills, utilizes discipline-specific pedagogy, scaffolds tasks, differentiates for students, and gradually builds independence for students.
- The teacher builds assessment into the lesson, uses formative strategies to assess and support students' learning, uses assessment to adjust instruction as appropriate, and engages students in assessing their own learning and progress toward learning targets.
- The classroom physical set-up, systems, routines, and interactions are designed to ensure equitable involvement of all students, create a positive learning culture, communicate expectations, and support students' learning of content and behavioral standards.

Observation and Analysis Scores



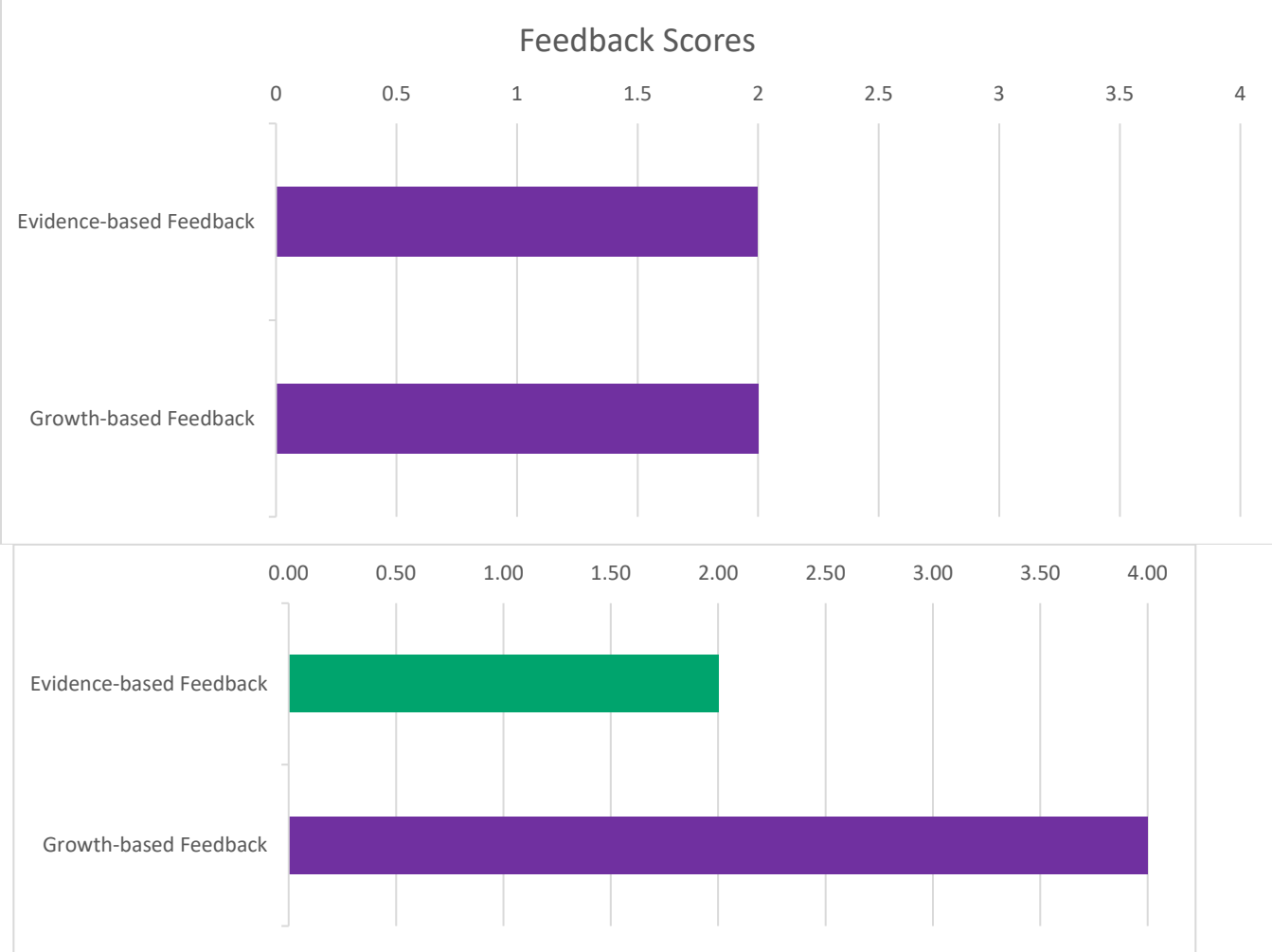


Dimension: Feedback

An instructional leader frames supportive, positive and evidence-based feedback for the teacher, drawing on what was observed that:

- Has explicit and logical links to specific observations and inputs from the teacher.
- Relates to pedagogical choices, actions of teacher and students.
- Relates to areas of practice that the teacher might reasonably be expected to understand and act upon in the near term.

Feedback Scores



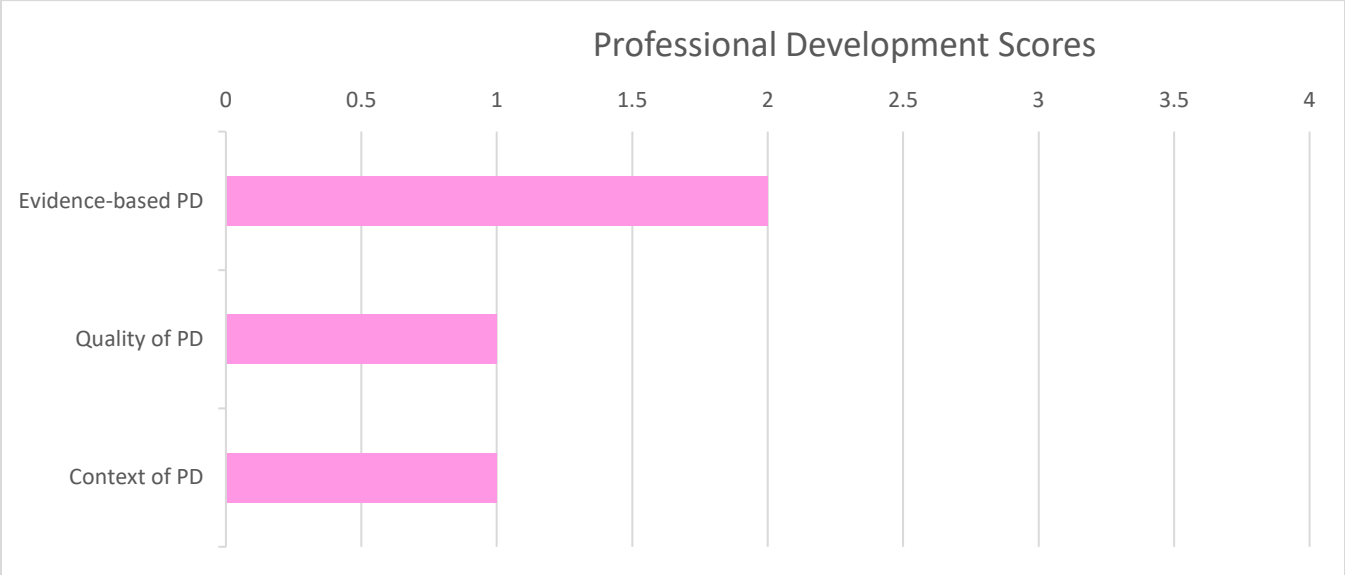
Dimension: Professional Development

An instructional leader plans evidence-based professional development for this teacher (and possibly others) informed by what was observed that:

- Uses teacher practice and student learning evidence from observation as basis for planning professional development and/or as part of professional development itself (e.g., as an artifact that could prompt discussion) for this and possibly other teachers (e.g., presuming comparable observations in other classrooms).

- Visualizes “high-quality” professional development strategies (e.g., job-embedded, school-based, collaborative, ongoing, focused on classroom practice, differentiated to accommodate varied staff learning needs).
- Acknowledges and accommodates relevant features of the local school and district context.

Professional Development Scores



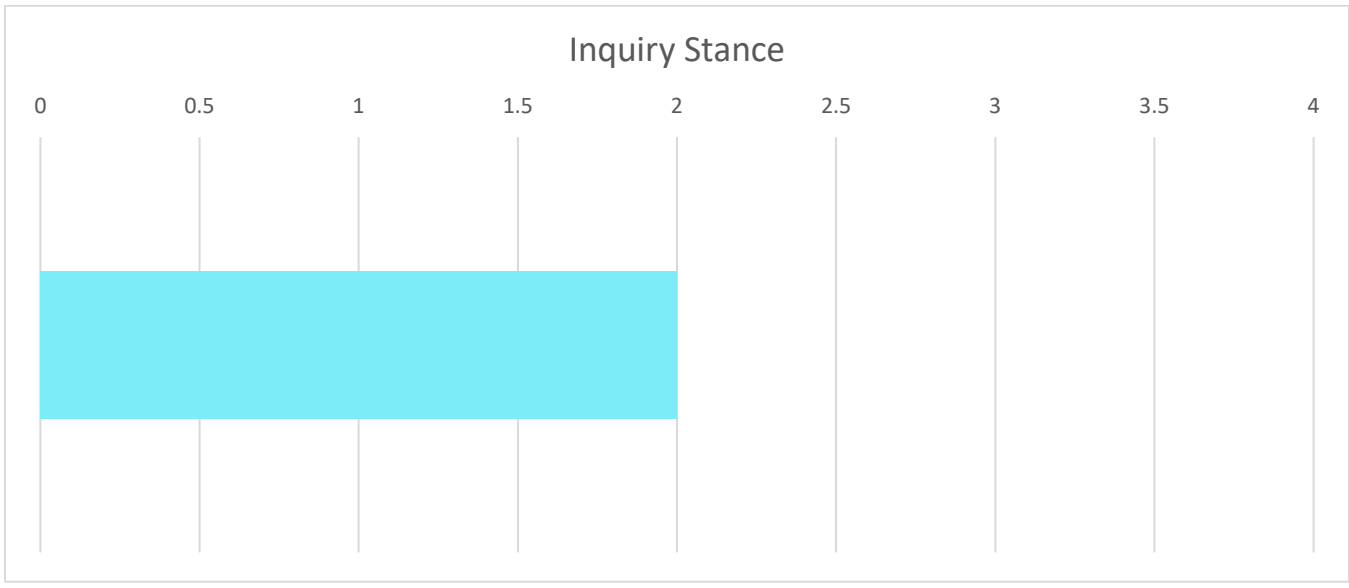
Dimension: Cross-Cutting Skill

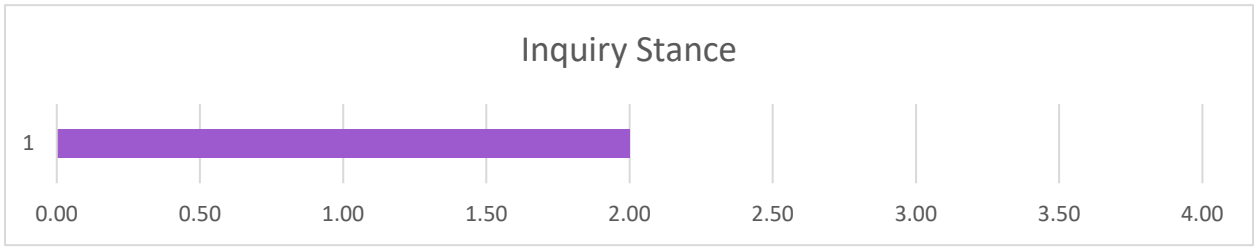
Cross-cutting skill applies to all area subdimensions of Observation and Analysis and proficiency areas for Feedback and Professional Development.

An instructional leader:

- Raises questions and notes uncertainties across all questions about possible interpretations of visible behavior, events, and conditions in the classroom, poses questions to him/herself, and imagines questions to put to the teacher or others to gather more information.

Cross Cutting Skill

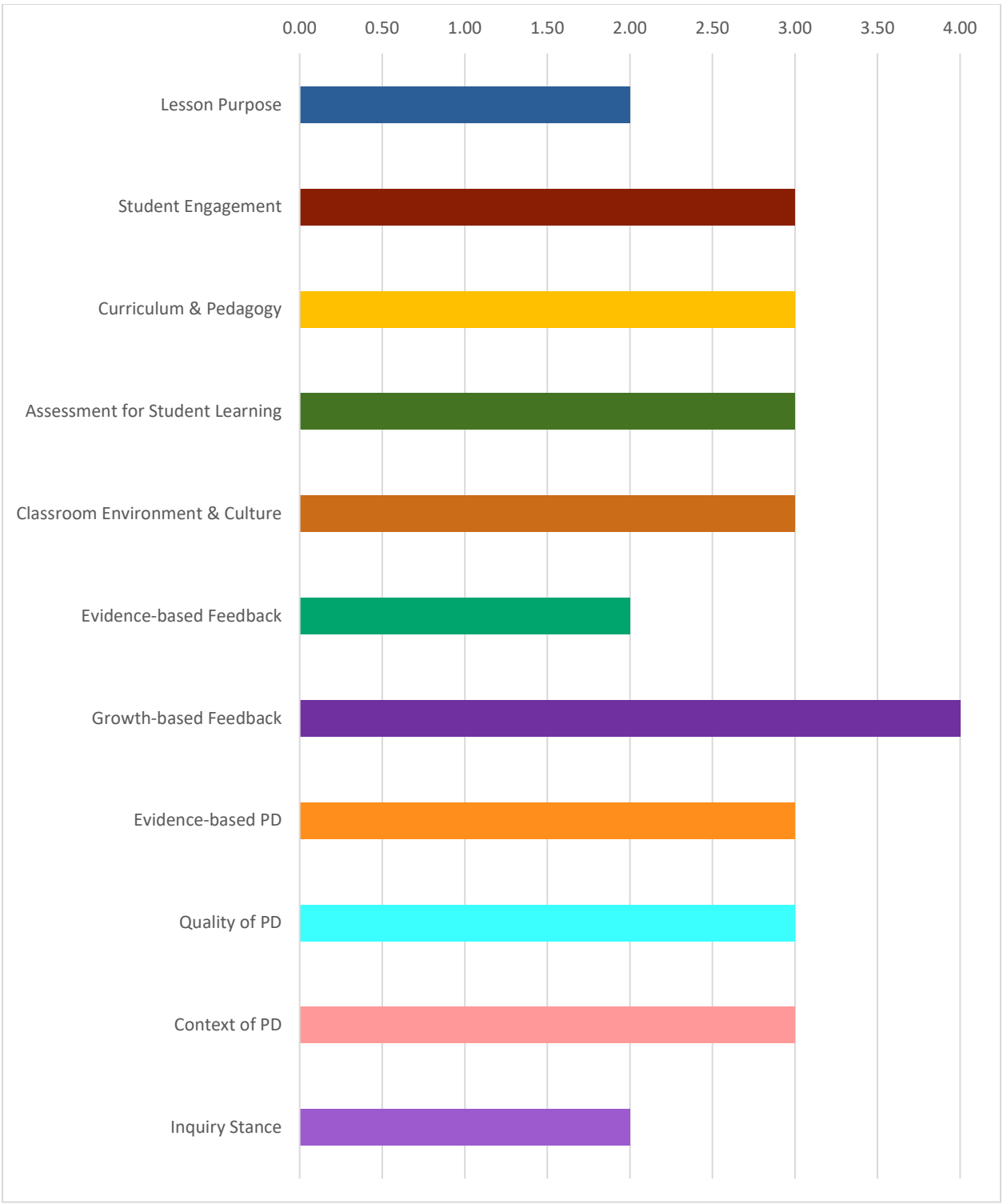




Your Results:

The following chart represents your overall performance levels.

Scores by Subdimensions and Proficiency Areas


0.00
0.50
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3.00
3.50
4.00
Lesson Purpose
Student Engagement
Curriculum & Pedagogy
Assessment for Student Learning
Classroom Environment & Culture
Evidence-based Feedback
Growth-based Feedback
Evidence-based PD
Quality of PD
Context of PD
Inquiry Stance

Appendix B

Principal Effectiveness Survey

This survey seeks general information about the effectiveness of your building principal.

1. My principal is interested in and responsive to my needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

2. I can communicate freely and say what I am really thinking and feeling to my principal.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

3. My principal has established him/herself as the building leader. Clearly there is a sense of leadership in the building.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

4. My principal is goal oriented and communicates district and school goals effectively to the staff.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

5. My principal maintains clear and common focus on goals for the school.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

6. My principal promotes a culture of ongoing professional development in the school.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

7. My principal maintains a focus on student needs when discussing issues and making decisions.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

8. My principal communicates effectively with the school community.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

9. My principal demonstrates caring for colleagues and staff members.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

10. My principal is a good problem solver and is able to mediate, synthesize, and filter issues that come from parents, students, and staff members.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

11. My principal is an effective leader.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

12. I see my principal as an instructional leader.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

13. My principal challenges staff members to improve teaching and learning and provides supports to meet the challenges presented.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

14. My principal confronts problems with honesty. I can trust my principal.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

15. My principal is open to new ideas that improve the school no matter who suggests them.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	**Strongly disagree**

Appendix C

School Principal Leadership Qualities Survey

In rank order, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important, what of the following are the five (5) **most important** qualities a school principal must possess? Please enter 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the blank by the quality.

Important: These are not necessarily qualities that your current principal possesses. It is simply your opinion of which is most important to you.

_____ **Effective listener**: Focused attention, accepting of thoughts/ideas, probing, summarizing, follow-through

_____ **Integrity**: honest, trustworthy, honorable, true to purpose

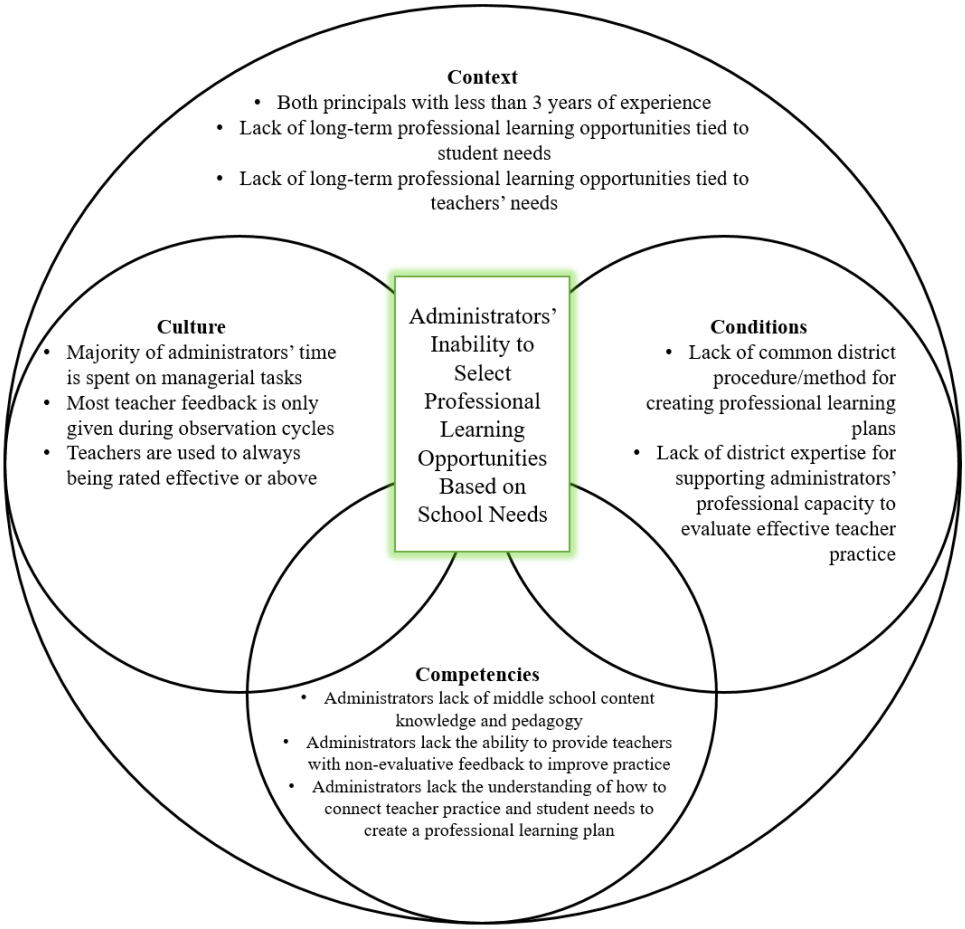
_____ Communication: Spoken and Written – Speaks and writes with proper grammar, spelling, structure and clarity of purpose

_____ **Collaborative decision making**: Including stakeholders from a variety of sources in decision making

_____ **Self-Aware**: humble, balanced, non-combative, self-assured

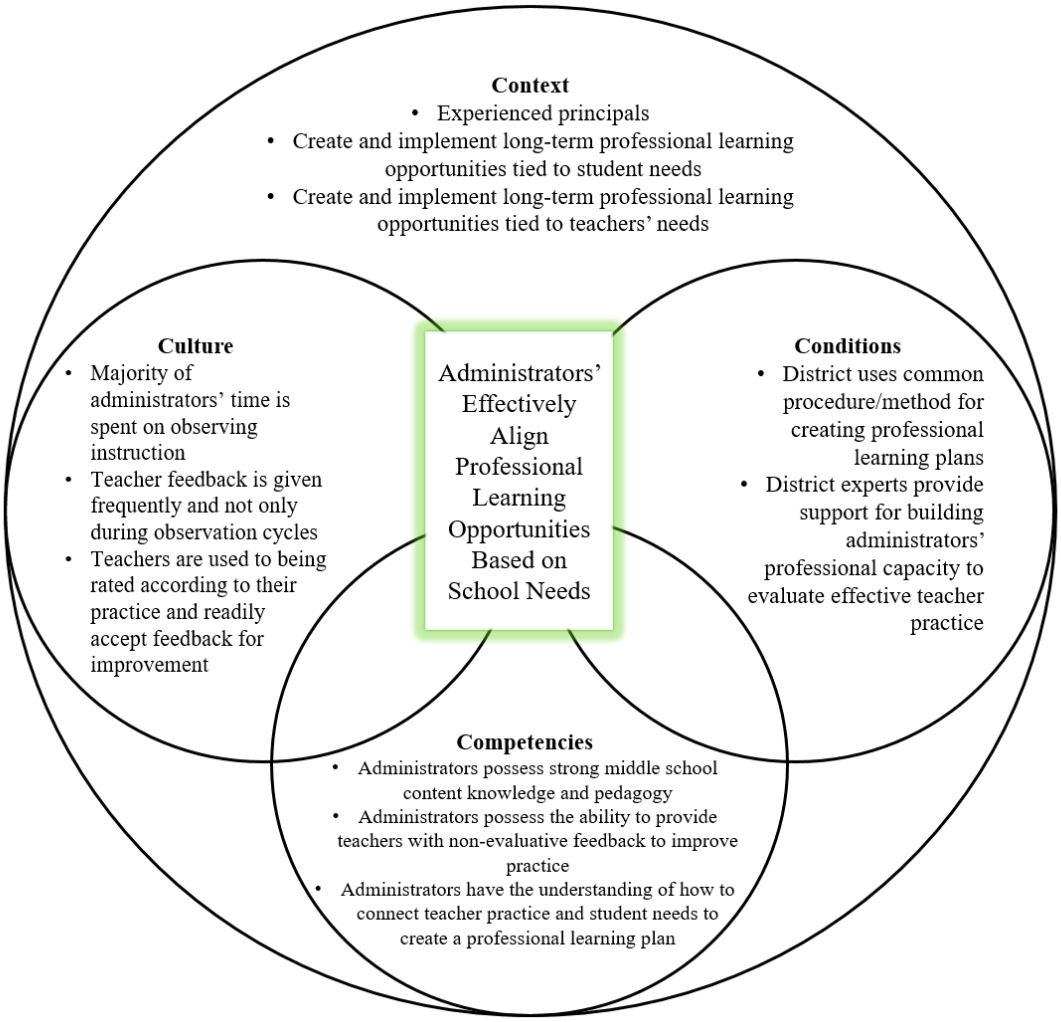
Appendix D

As-Is 4 Cs Analysis



Appendix E

To-Be 4 Cs Analysis



Appendix F

Strategies and Actions Chart

Objectives & Goals	Strategies	Actions
Objective 1: Context & Culture Goal: If a principal has effective leadership qualities and therefore is an "Effective" leader, the faculty will believe in and trust their leadership and be willing to listen to feedback provided on classroom instruction.	• Determine level of effectiveness of principal	• Administer Principal Effectiveness Survey
Objective 2: Context & Culture Goal: If administrators have the ability to effectively evaluate instruction within their school and combine it with student assessment data, then the required components to identify the necessary professional learning will result.	• Principals and assistant principals trained to determine levels of instruction within schools to determine needs • Principals and assistant principals trained to effectively disaggregate student assessment data.	• Administer MILE assessment to determine level to which administrators are able to effectively evaluate instruction • Implement learning walk schedule to build ability to identify effective instruction and determine classroom and building level instructional needs • Administer 2nd MILE assessment to show growth in ability to evaluate instruction

Objective 3: Competencies & Conditions Goal: If goal #1 & 2 are achieved, then effective implementation of professional learning for school improvement will result.	• Determine a professional learning plan focused on addressing instructional and student needs	• Targeted Professional learning plan delivered through the year to faculty