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HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCE WITH STUDENT VOICE AND YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS

by

James D. Flynn

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
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Dedication

This research study is dedicated to the amazing people in my life who have helped me achieve the goal of completing a doctoral program through their love and support. Thank you to my wife, Stacey, for her support and sacrifice over the past six years of coursework, dissertation, and research study. My children, Kira, Brendan, and Ally inspire me to accept challenges and be the best I can be. My mother, Mary, my siblings Bernie, John, Betsy, and Bob have always encouraged and supported me in my educational journey and career. Although my father, Jack, left us too early, his life, legacy, and love inspires me every day. My godparents, Anne and Ken Kunzman encouraged me early in my career to pursue the next level of education. My Uncle Dan Degnan, S.J., former President of St. Peter's University, was my role model in education. His passion, strength, and vision for all aspects of education continues to inspire me to this day. Thank you and I love you all.

This research study is also dedicated to the terrific students and staff at Burlington City High School. In particular, this study is dedicated to Antwan Timbers, Jr. Antwan Who was tragically killed in a pedestrian-motor vehicle crash in the Burlington City School Zone on May 22, 2016. The student and staff response to Antwan's tragedy led me into the arena of student voice and youth-adult partnerships. The two-and-a-half year "25 Saves Lives Campaign" of voice, advocacy, and partnership was a tribute to Antwan's legacy. The campaign resulted in Governor Phil Murphy signing "Antwan's Law" on January 31, 2019 which reduced the speed limit in the Burlington City School Zone to 25 mph 24 hours per day. This lifesaving legislation is an example of the power of students using their voices and partnering with adults to advocate for positive change.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my Dissertation Chair, Dr. Cecile Sam. I could not have completed this dissertation and study without her guidance, support, and encouragement. Thank you also to my committee members, Dr. Anna Sun, and Dr. JoAnn Manning. Your feedback throughout the dissertation and study provided me with the essential elements which made the study more impactful. I sincerely appreciate the 10 high school principals who participated in this study. Your effort, time, assistance, and interest in Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership work made the study happen. The experts in the field of Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships played a pivotal role by referring me to high school principals around the nation who have experience in this arena. Dr. Kristine Fox and Dr. Lisa Lande from the Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations; Dr. Jerusha Conner from Villanova University; Helen Beattie and Lindsey Halman from UP for Learning; and Ari Sussman from the New York City Department of Education played an integral role in connecting me to the 10 outstanding high school principals. Dr. Steven Gross provided support and guidance personally and through his work as Co-Director of the New DEEL (Democratic Ethical Educational Leadership). Finally, I would like to thank Dr. John Russell for his advice to begin a doctoral program as well as his support, encouragement, and feedback along this rigorous but rewarding journey.

Abstract

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HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCE WITH STUDENT VOICE AND YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS
2022–2023
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High school principals can foster student voice (SV) and youth-adult partnerships (YAP) while leading their students towards being engaged and informed citizens in our democracy. It is critical to understand the advantages and opportunities high school principals have in listening to and partnering with their students. It is also critical to understand the challenges facing high school principals in their journey towards SV and YAP. A qualitative multicase study of 10 high school principals from across the nation was used to understand the perception and experiences of high school principals in the area of SV and YAP. In addition, this study also focused on understanding how high school principals situate agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice within the framework of fostering SV and YAP in their schools. This multicase study provided a detailed look at 10 high school principals who had experience with SV and YAP. Individual case studies were completed which comprised of an in-depth interview with each principal, artifact and document collection, and observations of the principal or his staff engaged in SV or YAP work. Data was reviewed through these three approaches and analyzed across all 10 individual case studies to form the foundation of the final multicase report. Findings can serve as a foundation for high school principals to begin a journey into the emerging arena of student voice and youth-adult partnerships in their schools.

Table of Contents

Abstract v

List of Figures xii

List of Tables xiii

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Problem 1

Statement of the Problem 4

Purpose of the Study 5

Significance of the Study 7

Research Questions 8

Theoretical Framework 9

Definition of Terms 9

Summary 10

Chapter 2: Literature Review 11

Principal Leadership in Supporting Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships 12

Academic Performance and Outcomes 14

Models of Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships 17

Intermediary Organizations 21

Raising Student Voice and Participation 23

Building Relationships 24

Challenges in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships 25

School Structure 27

Table of Contents (Continued)

Policy 29

Students who are Marginalized 30

Critical Civic Inquiry 31

Collective Systematic Agency 32

Democratic Ethical Educational Leadership Theoretical Framework 34

Summary 37

Chapter 3: Methodology 40

Positionality 42

Research Design and Rationale 44

Selection of Participants 46

Data Collection 47

Interview Procedures 48

Documents and Artifacts 51

Observations 51

Data Analysis 54

Themes (Research Questions) of the Multicase Study 56

Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Report 56

Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme 57

A Map on Which to Make Assertions for the Final Report 57

Multicase Assertions for the Final Report 58

Table of Contents (Continued)

Planning the Multicase Report....58

Ethical Considerations....59

Reliability, Validity, and Credibility....59

Triangulation....61

Limitations....62

Chapter 4: Findings....64

Case Study #1 – Principal Juan and Student Leadership High School....67

Case Study #2 – Principal Darlene and Student Advocacy High School....68

Case Study #3 – Principal Sherry and Collaboration High School....69

Case Study #4 – Principal Dawn and Sustaining Communities High School....69

Case Study #5 – Principal Nick and Courageous Conversations High School....70

Case Study #6 – Principal Ingrid and English Language Learners High School....71

Case Study #7 – Principal Rob and Student Inquiry High School....71

Case Study #8 – Principal Marilyn and Citizenship High School....72

Case Study #9 – Principal John and Youth-Adult Partnership High School....73

Case Study #10 – Principal Ray and Distributed Leadership High School....74

Multicase Report....74

Final Assertion #1: Identifying Staff and Partnering with Organizations....76

Final Assertion #2: Principals Working Directly with Students....79

Final Assertion #3: Identifying Barriers and Leading a Paradigm Shift....83

Table of Contents (Continued)

Final Assertion #4: Creating Structures to Support SV and YAP 88

Final Assertion #5: Creating Meaningful Learning Experiences 92

Final Assertion #6: Distributed and Democratic Leadership Practices 96

Final Assertion #7: Advantages and Outcomes 98

Final Assertion #8: Safe Place to Practice Citizenship 104

Summary 106

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications 108

What are High School Principal's Perceptions and Experience with Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships? 110

What are the Advantages and Disadvantages for High School Principals in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships? 112

What are the Challenges and Barriers for High School Principals in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships? 114

How Have High School Principals Fostered Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships Relating to Equity, Social Justice, and School Reform? 117

How Have Principals Fostered Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships with their Students who are Marginalized 119

Implications for Research 120

Implications for Policy 123

Implications for Practice/Leadership 125

Theory 125

Practice 126

Recommendations 127

Utilize the New DEEL Framework 127

Table of Contents (Continued)

Create Principal Advisory Councils with a Diverse Group of Students 127

Include Students in Staff Meetings and Professional Development 128

Expand Student Council to Include the Raising Student Voice and Participation Program 129

Implement a Youth Participatory Action Research Program 130

Additional Recommendations 131

Conclusion 132

References 135

Appendix A: High School Principal Job Description 142

Appendix B: Interview Protocol 145

Appendix C: Worksheet 1–Graphic Design of the Student Voice/Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study 146

Appendix D: Worksheet 2–Research Questions or Themes of the Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study 147

Appendix E: Worksheet 3–Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Report of the Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study (Case Study #2 Principal Darlene – Student Advocacy High School) 148

Appendix F: Worksheet 4–Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme 153

Appendix G: Worksheet 5–A Map on Which to Make Assertions for the Final Report 155

Appendix H: Worksheet 6–Multicase Assertions for the Final Report 159

Appendix I: Worksheet 7–Planning the SV & YAP Multicase Final Report 160

Table of Contents (Continued)

Appendix J: Key Information and Consent to Take Part in a Research Study–Adult Consent Form for Social and Behavioral Research 165

Appendix K: Individual Case Report – Case #1 – Principal Juan–Student Leadership High School 170

Appendix L: Finding Strips 172

Appendix M: Listening to Student Voices.....173

Appendix N: Staff Resistance.....174

Appendix O: Leading a Paradigm Shift.....175

Appendix P: Safe Place to Practice.....177

List of Figures

Figure Page

Figure 1. Mitra's Pyramid of Student Voice.....18

Figure 2. Quaglia's School Voice Model 19

Figure 3. Fletcher's Student Voice Ladder.....20

Figure 4. SV & YAP Conceptual Framework 37

List of Tables

Table Page

Table 1. YAP Roadmap to Agency....22

Table 2. New DEEL Vision for Educational Leaders....35

Table 3. Data Collection Checklist....48

Table 4. Methods to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions....53

Table 5. Individual Case Study Demographics....66

Table 6. Multicase Assertions for the Final Report....75

Table 7. Student Inquiry High School Essential Questions....95

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Problem

Partnering with students to identify school problems and possible solutions reminds teachers and administrators that students possess unique knowledge and perspectives about their schools that adults cannot fully replicate (Kushman, 1997; Levin, 2000). Principals are the gatekeepers of new initiatives in their schools and they set the foundation for a school's culture. Principals can foster student voice (SV) and youth-adult partnerships (YAP) by building relationships with students, actively listening to students, and establishing a democratic culture which views students as partners with adults (Fletcher, 2017; Gross & Schapiro, 2016; Quaglia & Corso, 2014). The most common framework for SV research emphasizes the connection of SV activities with the concept of YAP (Mitra, 2018).

High school principals can foster SV and YAP initiatives through creating a new way of leading known as Democratic Ethical Educational Leadership (New DEEL). The mission of New DEEL principals is to create an action-oriented partnership, dedicated to inquiry into the nature and practice of democratic, ethical educational leadership through sustained processes of open dialogue, right to voice, community inclusion, and responsible participation toward the common good (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). In *God Has a Dream*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu's (2005) description of *ubuntu* illustrates the potential of New DEEL (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). According to *ubuntu* (Tutu, 2005), it is not a great good to be successful through being aggressively competitive and succeeding at the expense of others. In the end, our purpose is social and communal harmony and

well-being. Ubuntu does not say, “I think therefor I am.” It says rather, “I am human because I belong. I participate. I share (Tutu, 2005).”

Youth can be valuable civic actors who are capable of understanding and achieving political and institutional change (Conner & Zaino, 2014). Youth have become involved and are using their voices in societal issues such as protecting the environment, gun control, and the Black Lives Matter movement. Youth are speaking up for equity and social justice in their communities and their nation. For example, the death of George Floyd in May, 2020 led 16 year old Avani Giri to create GenZChange.com. This website is a space for teens to learn and take action on social issues and spark change. Teen forums called “Agents of Change” discuss issues such as the Black Lives Matter movement, mental health, Covid-19, and gun control (Romalino, 2020). Schools can also be a place where youth receive a foundation in democratic citizenship and are heard in their advocacy for equity, social justice, and school reform. This study will include a conceptual framework in which principals can foster SV and YAP through student agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice (ACES).

The foundational idea of public schools was first to create a citizenry capable of sustaining a democratic society (Dewey, 1916). This citizenry, public school students, spend 13 years in America’s public school system as they receive their formal education. During this time in the public school system, students should experience being active participants in school practices, policies, and reform as they prepare to be citizens in our democracy. However, over the last three decades beginning with the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), principals were forced to look at students as test score results than as future citizens in our democracy (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). As the pressure to equate

student outcomes with test scores increases, the broader democratic mission of schools to prepare students to be informed and contributing citizens (Dewey, 1916) is fading into the background (Mitra & Gross, 2009).

Principals can also hinder SV and YAP initiatives in their schools by creating traditional leadership settings in which power and authority rest almost entirely with adults. These settings are common in urban school settings and low socioeconomic areas where achievement and discipline gaps are evident. Teachers and administrators often decide how to empower students rather than conferring with students about how this might happen (Mitra, 2005). Students who are marginalized often do not get a say in either classroom practices or overall school reform. Youth perspectives in the United States have long been marginalized because of adult conceptions about both the role and capabilities of young people and the responsibility of adults for socializing young people (Fullan, 2007).

The role of adults in fostering student leadership will continue to be a crucial component of understanding how SV can become an avenue for school improvement and enhancing the development of students themselves (Mitra, 2005). It is not enough to tell students to be leaders upon graduation from high school. Students need to be afforded the opportunity to develop leadership roles in classrooms, schools, and their local communities. Schools need to foster student leadership by creating YAP (Fletcher, 2017). YAP define a relationship in which both youth and adults can have the potential to contribute in decision-making processes, to learn from each other, and promote change (Mitra, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

High school principals need to understand how they can play an important role in supporting SV and YAP by empowering adults and youth to work together in an inclusive, democratic school environment. The United States democracy rests on the idea that participation is the fundamental right of citizenship, but many U. S. policies inhibit the voices of young people (Ochoa-Becker et al., 2001). For example, the United States is the only country not to have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Articles 12–15 of the CRC define youth participation as a series of rights, including access to information, expression of views and freedoms to form collective organizations (United Nations, 1989). The traditional school setting in the United States calls for teachers and administrators to make the rules while students are expected to comply without questioning the reasons or rationales. This model does not place enough value in developing ethical, engaged citizens who will graduate high school as confident leaders ready to embrace their opportunities in our democratic society. What is needed is well-grounded theory building that examines how and for what purposes SV might be engaged (Robinson & Taylor, 2007).

Over the last decade, studies have shown how principals can support student agency, citizenship, social justice, and equity. Examples include Critical Civic Inquiry (CCI) (Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017), Critical Consciousness (CC) (Seider & Graves, 2020), Students and Educators for Equity (Sussman, 2020), and Youth Participatory Action Research (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Rubin & Jones, 2007). CCI increases students' sociopolitical development while CC engages students from oppressed groups in learning to decode and challenge their social conditions (Seider & Graves, 2020).

Students and Educators for Equity (SEE) fosters student engagement in the important equity work in schools (Sussman, 2020), and Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) encourages students to research for the purposes of school improvement and reform (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Rubin & Jones, 2007). These local level SV and YAP initiatives can be exemplars for principals to follow in their own schools throughout the nation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the perception and experiences of principals regarding SV and YAP initiatives in schools. In addition, this study will also attempt to understand how principals situate student agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice within SV and YAP in schools. In spite of these democracy-related goals, notions of democracy often do not extend to authentic opportunities for participation in decision-making processes or real leadership experiences during the time students spend in the K–12 educational system (O'Hair et al., 2000). One of the greatest challenges now is how to facilitate the creation of spaces in which SV is not merely demonstrated as being present, but in which that presence also has power, authenticity, and validity (Hall, 2017).

Unfortunately, there remains a pervasive societal belief that high school students are too young, too immature, or not yet wise enough to contribute in a meaningful way (UP For Learning, 2018). However, high school students can work with the adult staff to change schools and communities (Raising Student Voice & Participation, 2018). This important shift will be based upon principals' perception of SV, YAP, and the importance placed upon those initiatives. Similar to any cultural shift, YAP requires frequent tending

through reflection, dialogue, and ongoing goal setting (UP For Learning, 2018). Therefore, this study specifically aims to discover the perceptions of high school principals and use these perspectives to add to the literature of SV and YAP in schools. When deciding on which initiatives to support, principal perceptions may have as much impact as results and data. This study will add to the literature and research gaps in understanding how principals can foster SV and YAP in schools, and uncover the experiences of high school principals in establishing SV and YAP initiatives in their schools. Many aspects of their journey towards SV and YAP will be researched and discussed including:

- Intentionally fostering relationships that break hierarchies between adults and students in high schools.
- Models of SV and YAP high school principals can follow and implement.
- Finding time within the school day and schedule for fostering SV and YAP.

This study will also look at SV from the lens of social justice. Research suggests that SV can impact change with a particular focus on urban secondary schools (Mitra, 2018) and address issues of race and class as it seeks to promote social and economic justice (Conner & Zaino, 2014). Finally, students who have been marginalized or become disengaged are often not involved in opportunities to have a voice in schools. The restrictions on schools can therefore create a paradox of restricting disengaged youth from participating in YAP that could help them increase youth belonging and attachment to school (Mitra, 2009).

Significance of the Study

Few SV examples exist as a new conception of school leadership and an avenue toward school-wide change (Mitra, 2008). Much of the previous research on topics related to SV has looked at classroom-level SV initiatives, including the importance of joint student-teacher responsibility for creating the learning environment (McLaughlin et al., 1990). This study will research principals' perceptions of SV and YAP as a component of school-wide change and reform. In addition, this study will uncover how high school principals can foster citizenship in their students as an integral part of students' high school experience and support the development of youth who are informed and engaged citizens as the ultimate goal of youth voice work in education (Zion & Petty, 2013). The role of adults in fostering student leadership will continue to be a crucial component of understanding how SV can become an avenue for school improvement and enhancing the development of students themselves (Mitra, 2005). This study will provide current and future principals with a foundation of how to foster SV and YAP to enhance student agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice.

The goal of the American educational system should be to prepare its high school graduates to be productive members of a democratic society in the 21st century (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). Student leadership, participation, and voice should be included in the educational experiences of the youth in America in order to achieve this goal. The field of SV has established itself as a legitimate field of study. However, policy in the United States must catch up with international policy and practice. In marked contrast to European nations, the United States lacks any formal policy to spur youth participation (Mitra, 2018). The institutionalizing of SV as a right is needed to bring the United States

into international conversations of youth participation in global settings (Mitra, 2018). High school principals can embrace the potential learning experiences created when youth and adults partner in establishing spaces for respectful dialogue, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Research Questions

It is imperative to examine the perceptions and experiences of high school principals to identify trends and contradictions, as well as support for and challenges to SV implementation in schools. These perceptions and experience will lay the groundwork for future research relating to high school principals' understanding and implementation of SV initiatives. In order to explore the perceptions and experience of high school principals relating to SV and YAP, a qualitative multicase study (Stake, 2006) was utilized. High school principals with experience in SV and YAP were interviewed in a semi-structured, responsive interview technique. The following research questions guided this study:

1) What are high school principal's perceptions and experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
2) What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
    a) What are challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
3) How have high school principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?

a) How have principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships with their students who are marginalized?

Theoretical Framework

Horace Mann (1891) led the public school movement in the 19th century with a vision that connected democracy, social justice, and school reform. This study situated SV and YAP within these three principles using Gross and Shapiro's (2016) New DEEL Framework. New DEEL presents a cohesive framework for aspiring and practicing leaders to explore the complex nature of leadership while supporting democratic citizenry and social responsibility in turbulent times (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). A promising approach to fulfilling the New DEEL's vision of school transformation, where leaders integrate the concepts of democracy, social justice, and school reform through scholarship, dialogue, and action, is to include students into the policy creation, implementation, and review process at the building level (Gross & Poliner-Shapiro, 2016). SV is an important part of the dialogue necessary in the New DEEL framework and YAP create action needed towards school improvement and reform. It is within this dialogue and vision that principals can embrace SV and YAP in school improvement and reform.

Definition of Terms

Critical Civic Inquiry **–** emphasizes sharing power with students, engaging students in critical conversations about educational equity, and guiding students through action research (Zion et al., 2015).

Critical Consciousness – a person's ability to recognize and analyze oppressive forces shaping society and to take action against these forces (Freire, 1970).

Student Agency – learners have a choice and voice regarding what is to be learned and the opportunity to co-create learning (Quaglia et al., 2020).

Student Voice – describes the many ways in which youth have opportunities to share in the school decisions that shape their lives and the lives of their peers (Mitra, 2008).

Youth Activism – cases where young people take collective action to challenge injustices that they experience in their schools or neighborhoods (Mitra et al., 2014).

Youth-Adult Partnership – can define a relationship in which both youth and adults can have the potential to contribute in decision-making processes, to learn from each other, and promote change (Jones & Perkins, 2016).

Youth Participatory Action Research – an approach that invites young people to research their lives and use research as a tool for informed action (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Rubin & Jones, 2007).

Summary

Developing students into productive citizens in a democratic society is a primary goal of the American education system. Students are the greatest resource in the educational system and should develop a voice in school issues so that they are prepared to have a voice in societal matters upon graduation from high school. SV and YAP provide a structure for students to develop voice and leadership skills. School administrators are gatekeepers to allow emerging initiatives such as YAP in their schools. This multicase study revealed the perceptions, experiences, and recommendations of 10 high school principals in relation to SV and YAP. This study will add to the literature regarding the role of high school principals' in empowering the youth in our schools to build capacity and become the leaders of our democracy.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

High school principals have an opportunity to add SV and YAP to their leadership practices. Paulo Freire (1970) viewed voice as a path toward liberation and freedom. Moving students toward liberation, freedom, and increasing engagement and achievement are established goals of high school principals. Research has shown that YAP can increase student engagement and achievement (Conner & Zaino, 2014; Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017). However, SV and YAP are not integrated into the traditional curriculum and graduation requirements placed upon students and schools. Despite the increase in attention to YAP in recent years, they are remarkably absent in one of the most important institutions for youth – schools (Mitra, 2009). In particular, lacking in the literature is research specifically examining the role of the school administrator in SV initiatives (Reaume, 2017). High school principals can play an integral part in developing student leadership and agency by establishing an inclusive culture of SV, choice, and partnership. This literature review will focus on the gap in the literature relating to high school principals' leadership role in SV and YAP. In addition, this chapter will present research describing the opportunities and challenges facing high school principals in the area of SV and YAP.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive background on the literature related to SV and YAP in high schools with an emphasis on the role of the high school principal in fostering SV and YAP. Leadership practices will be identified as well as supports principals can utilize in order to promote SV and YAP. The relationship between SV and YAP regarding academic performance and outcomes will be discussed.

Models of SV and YAP which principals can follow will be presented along with the importance of building relationships with students as part of principals' leadership practice. The literature will also review the challenges principals face in implementing SV in schools including school structure and policies. Literature related to examples of fostering SV and YAP with students who are marginalized including Critical Civic Inquiry (CCI), Critical Consciousness (CC), and Collective Systematic Agency (CSA) will be explored. In an effort to develop a solid foundation for future research, this chapter will include principal leadership practices relating to the New DEEL theoretical framework which can be utilized to support SV and YAP in high schools.

Principal Leadership in Supporting Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships

A 21st Century administrator must be ready to bend, adjust, and when necessary, show partiality to those he/she serves if equity and justice are to be realized (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). In the past, educational leaders trained using military and business models of justice (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) advocate a Multiple Ethical Paradigm (MEP) to assist educational leaders in grappling with complexities, uncertainty, and diversity; and that combines the ethics of justice, care, critique, and profession. Examples of high school principals who subscribe to the New DEEL framework from an MEP lens are highlighted later in this chapter. In describing the ethic of care, Noddings (1992) stated the first job of the schools is to care for our children and place students at the center of the educational process, a concept that likely goes against the grain of those attempting to make achievement the top priority. Freire (1970) advocates liberation over achievement in his view of education. Freire (1970) states education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of

the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of the world.

The ethic of critique is aimed at awakening educators to the inequities in society and, in particular, in schools and asks educators to deal with the hard questions regarding social class, race, gender, and other areas of difference (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). The ethic of critique deals with power, privilege, and social justice and is based on critical theory that focuses on an analysis of social class and its inequities (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). High school principals can break down the differences in power between adults and students by encouraging students to have a voice in school-related issues and forging a partnership between students and staff. Situated within the ethic of critique is also an opportunity for principals to be culturally responsive leaders in the 21st Century. Culturally responsive leaders help create independent learners and foster advanced cognitive skills in all of our students, even the one's which are labeled as disadvantaged because of their language, gender, race, or socioeconomic status (Hammond, 2015). Culturally responsive leaders foster an inclusive environment of learning partnerships, SV, agency, and a community of learners (Hammond, 2015).

The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015 places an emphasis on ethics (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Standard 2 is called Ethics and Professional Norms and it states: Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Effective leaders safeguard and promote the values of democracy,

individual freedom and responsibility, equity, social justice, community, and diversity (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). The MEP and Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015 can assist 21st Century principals towards leading from a New DEEL lens. New DEEL school leaders view themselves as democratic actors who use this understanding to enhance an inclusive democratic education (Gross, 2020). This literature review reveals models and studies demonstrating how high school principals can listen, collaborate, and partner with their students from a democratic and ethical perspective in an effort to support and promote SV and YAP.

Academic Performance and Outcomes

One of the most important arguments the literature uncovers in support of SV and YAP is that they improve both academic performance and outcomes. SV is directly related to academic performance and learning, with some emerging research linking Grade Point Average (GPA) with youth activism (Conner & Slattery, 2014; UP For Learning, 2018). One of the many job responsibilities of principals is to increase academic performance in their schools. Research showing improved student and school outcomes can be used by high school principals to support policy changes and overcome some of the identified barriers to implementing SV and YAP. Another important job responsibility of principals is to make positive change in their school community. Research found that YAP can contribute to improved educational outcomes and serve as a catalyst for change in schools (Mitra, 2007). Improving secondary schools, like democracy itself, does not happen by chance. In a climate that pushes students to obey, master facts, and compete, young people can be agents of change in their schools (Mitra, 2018). Public schools should be the central sites for preparing children to assume the

roles and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society (Greenfield, 1993). Even when the work might not be enough to transform injustices into justices, schools can be sites of engaged communities of critical agency, and administrators can champion this work (Mitra, 2018).

Principals who support SV and YAP from the lens of the New DEEL Framework can set the foundation of success for their schools. New DEEL vision statement number three integrates the concepts of democracy, social justice, and school reform through scholarship, dialogue, and action (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). Mitra (2018) stated that the field needs comprehensive, well-funded studies that connect SV to outcomes. The work of Seider and Graves (2020), Quaglia et al. (2020), and Fletcher (2017) provide three studies in the area of SV and YAP which demonstrate promising results. High school principals can use these results as integral components of their plan to gain support for SV and YAP in their school community.

Seider and Graves (2020) conducted a comprehensive study of five principals who fostered SV and YAP through developing critical consciousness in their students. The five principals used Freire's (1970) work in problem-posing education as the foundation for fostering social analysis, political agency, and social action. Freire (1970) argued that critical consciousness is best engendered through a "problem-posing education" in which teachers and students work together to investigate real-world problems shaping their communities and lives. Principals in the study fostered SV and YAP in different ways throughout the students' four years in their schools. These examples included a year-long ninth grade Social Engagement course, culture circles, advisory groups of one teacher and 10–12 students which met every day, project-based

youth-adult community improvement projects, and weekly college readiness courses in junior and senior year. Students at the five charter high schools and four comparison high schools were given critical consciousness surveys five times from the beginning of 9th to the end of 12th grade in the areas of social analysis, political agency, or social action. Categories included awareness of systemic racism, ability to effect social and political change, navigating injustice–social intelligence, and challenging injustice–commitment to activism. Outcomes revealed that critical consciousness-related SV and YAP outcomes were higher at the end of 12th grade in four of the five categories of the CC high schools and tied in one category related to the comparison high schools.

Youth outcomes such as confidence, civic engagement, connectedness, feeling competent and useful, belonging, mental health, optimism, and social skills are key factors in academic engagement, success, and commitment to continued learning (Tolman et al., 2003). Quaglia et al. (2020) use an Aspirations Framework with guiding principles of self-worth, engagement, and purpose leading to the outcome of helping students achieve their hopes and dreams. Aspirations are defined as the ability to dream and set goals for the future while being inspired in the present to reach those dreams (Quaglia & Fox, 2003). It is impossible for students to become who they want to become unless they have a voice in the process (Quaglia et al., 2020). Quaglia et al. (2020) found that voice leads to better experiences with self-worth (students are two times more likely to be academically motivated), engagement (students are five times more likely to be academically motivated), and purpose (students are seven times more likely to be academically motivated).

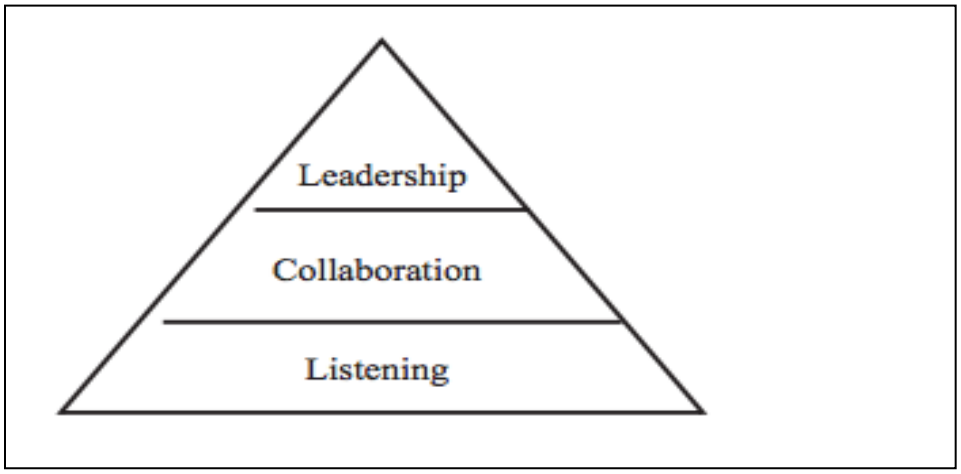
Adam Fletcher (2017) stated that students must become engaged in learning, teaching, and leadership throughout schools in sustained, meaningful ways that demonstrate impact and outcomes. Fletcher's (2017) Meaningful Student Involvement Framework is a systematic approach to engaging students as partners in learning throughout every face of education for the purpose of strengthening their commitment to education, community, and democracy. By reinforcing critical thinking, problem solving, civic participation, and an appreciation for diverse perspectives, Meaningful Student Involvement allows students to apply essential "soft skills" learning to real-world issues that affect them (Fletcher, 2017). These 21st Century skills can help develop our students into engaged, productive citizens in our democracy.

Models of Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships

High school principals face a myriad of job responsibilities; however, fostering SV and YAP may not be written areas of responsibility in principal's job descriptions. Utilizing the following models of SV can help high school principals integrate SV and YAP into an already challenging list of job responsibilities and leadership expectations. Administrators are instrumental in either supporting or inhibiting SV at the local building level (Sussman, 2015). Leaders in the SV and YAP movement created models for principals to follow. Mitra's (2005) Pyramid of Student Voice, Quaglia's School Voice Model (2016) and Fletcher's (2011) adapted Student Voice Ladder (Hart, 1994) provided tools in the arena of SV to assist principals in understanding and supporting SV and YAP. Mitra's (2005) pyramid (see Figure 1) begins with listening to students at the base, fostering collaboration in the middle, and ending with students as leaders at the top of the pyramid.

Figure 1

Mitra's Pyramid of Student Voice



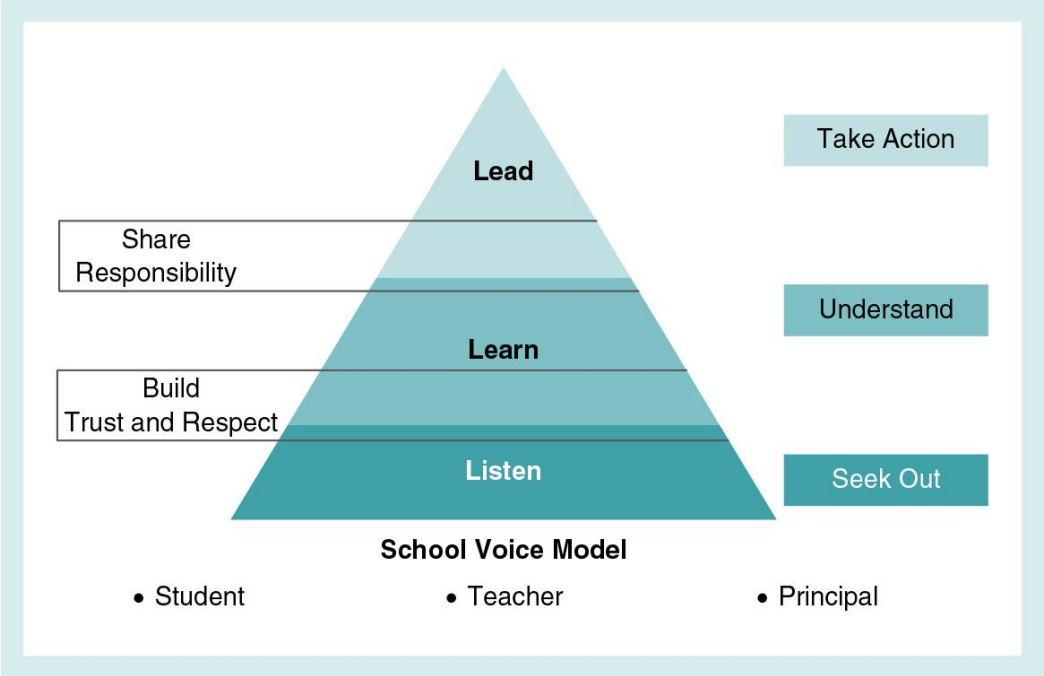
Note. Mitra, D. L. (2005). Mitra's Pyramid of Student Voice. Adults advising youth: Leading while getting out of the way, *Education Administration Quarterly, 41*(3), 520–553.

Quaglia's (2016) School Voice Model calls for students, teachers, and principals to listen, learn, and then lead (see Figure 2). Listening is not a passive act. Effective listening requires outreach, openness, and a genuine interest in understanding the thoughts and ideas of others. Key to the successful development of voice is the fundamental belief that there is something to be learned from the people around you regardless of position, age, or any other qualifying factor. When the School Voice Model is implemented, all stakeholders share in the responsibility to continually improve the school community, valuing the voices of all, and establishing a leadership model that capitalizes on the unique skills and talents of every individual represented in the collective (Quaglia Institute of School Voice, 2016). Fletcher's (2017) Student Voice

begins with manipulation at the lowest rung and ends with equity at the top of the ladder (see Figure 3). These models help high school principals place as much value in SV as they do with the voice of the adults. These models also help fill the gap in the literature related to supporting high school principals in their journey toward creating inclusive communities which consistently incorporate voice, choice, and partnership.

Figure 2

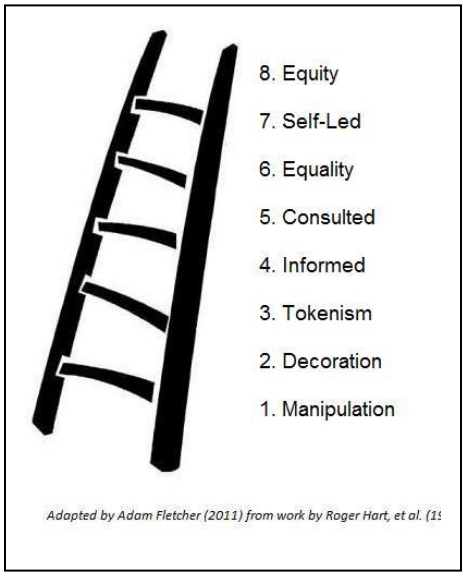
Quaglia's School Voice Model



Note. Quaglia Institute of School Voice, (2016). *School voice report 2016*. Corwin

Figure 3

Fletcher's Student Voice Ladder



Note. Fletcher, A. (2017). *Student voice revolution: The meaningful student involvement handbook*. CommonAction Publishing.

Student leadership and equity are outcomes of these SV models. There is a growing body of research which brings student leadership, SV, and YAP to a higher level of action and agency. Paulo Freire's (1970) problem-posing education fosters SV and YAP through helping marginalized youth develop what he terms critical consciousness. Freire's term *conscientizaco*, or critical consciousness, refers to a combination of reflection and action on the world in order to transform it (Seider & Graves, 2020). In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) called for educational settings in which teachers and students work reciprocally to investigate and address real-world issues. High school students are currently using their voices in areas of educational equity, the environment, the Black Lives Matter movement, school shootings, and gun violence. Freire characterized engagement in such social action as the ultimate goal of critical

consciousness (Seider & Graves, 2020). Principals have an opportunity to foster SV and YAP in their schools through promoting student and staff participation in these real-world issues. For example, in the wake of the horrifying school shooting at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas on May 24, 2022, the advocacy group, Students Demand Action, invited students in all schools across the country to participate in a student walkout protesting school shootings and gun violence. Principals could use these models of SV and YAP to listen, collaborate, and help students lead this walkout in a safe and peaceful manner at their schools.

Intermediary Organizations

Principals can also partner with outside organizations (sometimes called intermediary organizations) to help foster SV and YAP in their schools. UP for Learning is an intermediary organization which has worked with the Vermont Agency of Education for the last 12 years. UP for Learning staff are experts in the field of SV, YAP, and student agency. UP for Learning (2018) defines agency as the ability to make intentional choices about, and take an active role in, the course of one's own life and on behalf of others' lives. The UP for Learning staff partner with principals to help students develop skills in the area of problem definition, data analysis, and proposal writing. For the busy principal who would like to begin a journey into SV and YAP, partnering with intermediary organizations such as UP for Learning provides the expertise and support needed to begin the process. This roadmap situates youth as recipients, consultants, emerging partners with adults, and full partners with adults. Table 1 shows the highest levels of YAP in the Roadmap to Agency.

Table 1

YAP Roadmap to Agency

Category	Youth and Adults as Full Partners
What we believe about youth and adults as partners (mental models)	Adults and youth believe that youth input with full participation in decision-making is a basic need and right. Both believe that partnership and shared responsibility are essential to quality education. Young people and adults can learn the skills they need to be trusted partners.
Power Dynamic	Youth and adults share power and value equity as essential norms. All youth and adults are empowered to voice their thoughts or opinions without fear.
Communication/Collaboration	Mutual respect and trust ensure a fully authentic YAP through a collaborative process. Communications flows freely between youth and adults; all feel valued, comfortable, and competent in their new roles as partners. If the group strays from partnership norms, either youth or adults flag the issue and re-establish norms.
Decision-making and Shared Responsibility	Decisions reflect a variety of opinions across the generations; all voices are equally heard and valued. Comfort with accepted norms of partnership allows for many decision-making options depending on the task or context. Both deeply believe that sharing responsibility and valuing all voices are essential to successful decision-making.

Note. UP For Learning. (2018). *Taking the pulse of partnership: Youth-adult partnership reflective tool*. Retrieved from: http://www.upforlearning.org.

Raising Student Voice and Participation

The literature uncovered an important opportunity for high school principals to embrace SV and YAP and the majority of high schools are positioned to begin the journey. High school principals can focus their SV and YAP efforts by supporting their Student Councils. It is important to honor the work of Student Councils and other student leadership groups by building bridges between them and adult leadership teams so that both groups contribute to a shared agenda (Sussman, 2015). An emerging student leadership program endorsed by the National Student Council is their Raising Student Voice and Participation (RSVP) program. In the RSVP Executive Overview, it states that a core purpose of a student council is to be the catalyst and conduit for SV on campus and support broader efforts that foster a culture where SV is valued (National Student Council, 2020). National Student Council and the National Association of Secondary School Principals have long recognized the impact of authentic SV on school culture, and the centerpiece for this support is the RSVP program. RSVP is anchored by its student-led processes that encourages students to move through a logical progression of sharing their thoughts and listening to peers in meaningful dialogue, proposing realistic solutions, and supporting efforts to bring about positive change through civic-based, volunteer action (National Student Council, 2020).

The RSVP program contains many of the essential elements needed in a school-based YAP. Student Council students already work with an adult advisor. Student Council is a nationally recognized institution in schools. Student Council has a time and a space to meet during school or after school in order to plan for RSVP programs. RSVP helps principals overcome the challenge of training for themselves and their staff by

following the Executive Guide or hosting an RSVP training at their school. The outcomes of an RSVP program include a completed Civic Action Plan for implementing the positive change in a school or community. The RSVP process gives all students a voice at school and provides students with the opportunity to take responsibility for making positive change (National Student Council, 2020). The National Student Council offers training to advisors and principals in the RSVP curriculum and planning. The National Student Council has provided an opportunity for principals and administrators to support YAP and SV in a setting which is already within the structure of their school. Thus, supporting Student Council students and advisors in initiating an RSVP program is a start to supporting school-based YAP and SV. Future research regarding high school principals whose schools implemented RSVP in relation to SV and YAP can contribute to the gap in the literature.

Building Relationships

Fletcher (2017) stated that the greatest challenge facing schools today is not simply the achievement gap, but the crisis of disconnection. It is disconnection from learning, from curriculum, from peers, from adults; it is disconnection from rigor, relevance, and relationships. Principals can build a culture of positive relationships and trust between youth and adults in their school setting. Meaningful relationships between principals and students are important and can amplify SV to support aspiration and achievement (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). Without an intentional focus on building relationships, SV can easily become tokenism (Mitra et al., 2012). In many Student Councils, for example, students show leadership by planning and organizing school dances and activities. Moving to true voice and partnership through the RSVP process

creates a higher level of relationships between the principal, adult advisors, and students. Meaningful relationships can lead to creating true partnerships between high school staff and students. By high school, young people should have established clear and equitable relationships with adults throughout schools in order to participate in full Student/Adult Partnerships (Fletcher, 2017).

This approach is far different than seeing students as the clients or customers of the well-meaning work of adults (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). Learning to communicate and create shared spaces where all voices are heard and recognized is a complex task that requires intentional efforts to build those skills and systems. This applies to adults no less than students (Zion & Petty, 2013). In everyday discussion, some principals make it clear that SV is a priority and a core value (Sussman, 2015). There are several strategies for developing these relationships, including acknowledging SV, increasing intergenerational equity between students and adults in schools, and sustaining Student/Adult Partnerships throughout the learning environment (Fletcher, 2005). Moreover, one benefit of Fletcher's (2017) Meaningful Student Involvement Framework is providing greater access to information about, and relationships with, student groups which are marginalized (Mitra, 2004; Cook-Sather, 2002; Fletcher, 2003).

Challenges in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships

Researchers posit that successful efforts to promote youth leadership stem from partnerships between youth and adults (Mitra, 2005). However, principals face challenges in efforts to promote SV and YAP in their schools. For example, the traditional "banking model" concept of schools with the idea of adults being in charge and students being seen as clients and recipients of knowledge is one barrier for principals to overcome (Gross &

Shapiro, 2016). There is a gap in the literature regarding how high school principals can overcome the challenges of implementing SV and YAP in their schools. Creating time and space for SV and YAP within a high school academic day is a challenge for principals due to demands of graduation requirements and curricular mandates. In reviewing the SV and YAP literature, only a few high schools were found which have approved courses which establish YAPs in areas of social justice, civic engagement, CCI, or CC. Attempts by students, or adults in partnership with students, to carve out a space that moves beyond these historical sites of student leadership can encounter significant resistance from administrators and teachers (Silva, 2003). Principals are accountable and face pressure to focus on increasing test scores on standardized tests. Principals are not accountable for increased outcomes in student agency, equity, and citizenship in a traditional school model. However, given the strong influence schools have on young people, the value of school-based YAPs cannot be ignored, regardless of the difficulties in achieving them (Mitra, 2009).

The data demonstrate that efforts to reshape student roles face great resistance and require intentional effort on the part of adults and youth to sustain partnerships (Mitra, 2009). From the adult perspective, educators often have limited knowledge of the most powerful ways to partner with and engage youth in educational reform (Zion & Petty, 2013). Support in the form of district and school policy, professional development, and intermediary organizations can help high school principals implement SV and YAP. From the student perspective, they may have the desire to develop agency, voice, and partnership, but need to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience (Zion & Petty, 2013). A common misstep in the effort to improve SV in schools is to assume that

because students want to have a voice, they know how to have a voice (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). Included in this literature review are models that principals and other adults in high schools can follow in order to listen to what students need and embrace them as partners. The challenges do not end once SV and YAP are established in schools. Students and adults struggle regarding power in developing SV initiatives, including how best to delegate responsibilities to students, how to provide opportunities for all members to participate, and how to resolve disagreements of opinion – especially when adults and young people have opposing views **(**Mitra et al., 2012). What is needed is well-grounded theory building that examines how and for what purposes SV might be engaged (Zion & Petty, 2013). The literature presented in this section will bridge the gap in terms of challenges relating to school structure and policy and examine how a New DEEL theoretical framework based upon inclusion, voice, partnership, and social justice can help principals overcome the challenges of implementing SV and YAP.

School Structure

Within the traditional school structure lies two areas that create challenging components in the effort to partner with students–accountability to state standardized tests and the power distinction between adults and students in the school. Increased demand for accountability and visible results of student achievement narrows the vision and purpose of schooling in recent years, not only in terms of pedagogy and content, but also democratic participation (Mitra & Gross, 2009). For example in New Jersey, administrators and teachers are evaluated based upon a rubric which includes the results of state standardized tests. The focus of schooling has become “the test” and the subsequent student results. The voices of our students become less important than the

score they achieve on their standardized tests. The models and examples researched in this literature review show that high school principals who move away from the traditional structure of schools to a more democratic approach have been able to support SV and YAPs in their schools.

The New DEEL Framework (Gross & Shapiro, 2016) suggests that rather than being held to a system's accountability standards, educators need to be animated by an internal sense of responsibility to students, families, and the wider community. Principals' responsibility to students can include fostering their voice and agency, as well as collaborating with them as partners. This move away from the traditional school structure may require a rupture of the ordinary (Fielding, 2001). Creating a new set of working conditions that could foster YAP requires new norms, developing new relationships, and new organizational structures within them (Della Porta & Diani, 1999). Paulo Freire called for educational settings in which teachers and students work reciprocally to investigate and address real-world issues. Freire believed that, in such settings, students come to see their community and world as capable of transformation and to see themselves as possessing the agency to bring about such transformation (Seider & Graves, 2020).

Despite promising benefits of school-based YAPs for youth and for school improvement, the institutional constraints of schools make it difficult to develop partnerships and empower youth–and indeed, often it is difficult to empower adults as well (Mitra, 2009). Many youth grew accustomed to adults upholding power differentials and assuming that students are not qualified to contribute to important decisions (Sussman, 2015). The power and status distinctions in schools between adults and youth

provide a dynamic form of asymmetry–especially because of institutional norms of deference to adult authority and to separation of adults and youth in schools (Mitra, 2005; Mitra et al., 2012). Sustaining democratic initiatives is only possible if at some point these practices become imbedded in the day-to-day functioning of the school (Mitra et al., 2012).

Policy

In European nations, youth participation has been reinforced by formal policies and national educational structures. Influenced by Articles 12–15 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), youth participation is defined as series of rights, including access to information, expression of views, and freedom to form collective organization (United Nations, 1989). The CRC highlights the need to bolster the capacity of young people and adults to enable child participation, and the need for strong standards and accountability to guide this process; and European policies have aligned with these goals (Mitra et al., 2014). Within the American context, we are just beginning to reach a point where SV has reached a level of broad acceptance (Biddle & Schafft, 2015). High school principals can capitalize on this emerging acceptance and propose intentional school-wide policies which foster SV and YAP. High school principals can also encourage students use their voices based upon the emerging literature on community-based youth organizing outside of school which demonstrates young peoples' capacity to organize themselves collectively, engage in strategic planning, and influence public policy (Ginwright et al., 2006).

A challenge facing SV initiatives is that the United States lacks national standards to structure educational curricula. At the heart of this policy is the belief that education

fundamentally remains a local issue–yet not necessarily an issue that should include youth participation (Mitra et al., 2014). Given these policy contexts, it can be challenging to locate spaces where robust opportunities for democratic participation and SV exist. Yet, despite the research occurring only in isolated contexts, a strong tradition of scholarship related to youth participation has developed in the United States (Mitra et al., 2014). SV calls for adult leaders to make youth partnership a priority that is evident in our institutional policies and everyday practices (Sussman, 2015). High school principals can use the research in this literature review to transform their policies, leadership practices, mission statements, and vision statements relating to SV and YAP. The importance of consulting students about their views of school and learning is not only progressively more accepted, it is becoming inscribed within policies and directives (Reaume, 2017).

Students who are Marginalized

In the last decade, urban schools serving youth of color have taken on an increasingly technocratic approach to education–aimed at reducing the "achievement gap" on high stakes tests–and have lost sight of the civic mission of schools (Levinson, 2012). One of the goals of education is to create an improved system that serve all students well and help to build a society and world of reflective, compassionate, and engaged citizens (Zion & Petty, 2013). Minority youth growing up in under-resourced neighborhoods, especially those who are not attending college or who were born outside the United States, face significant barriers to civic integration and political power (Mitra et al., 2014). We see this reflected in the lack of opportunities for marginalized youth to vocalize and interrogate their lived experiences of poverty, racism, or stratified schooling

(Rubin, 2007 as cited in York & Kirshner, 2015). There exists a need in the field of education to identify programs and strategies that promote the empowerment of students who are marginalized (Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017). There is also a gap in the literature regarding high school principals' role in supporting SV and YAP with their students who are marginalized. Freire's Critical Consciousness (1970) is one model which promotes this type of empowerment with students who are marginalized. Two other models–CCI and CSA –are examples of additional models which empower youth who are marginalized and foster SV and YAP.

Critical Civic Inquiry

Hipolito-Delgado and Zion (2017) highlight a transformative SV initiative that engages students in critical conversations about educational equity and inquiry-based learning to increase SV and promote civic action called Critical Civic Inquiry (CCI). CCI–a project developed by Ben Kirshner, Shelley Zion, and Carlos Hipolito-Delgado–utilizes instructional approaches situated in critical pedagogy, antiracist education, and sociopolitical learning theory (Zion et al., 2015). CCI emphasizes sharing power with students, engaging students in critical conversations about educational equity, and guiding students through action research (Zion et al., 2015). Specifically, critical pedagogy aims to challenge cultural and structural power relations (Freire, 1970) through an analysis of these systems of power such as practices within schools (Zion et al., 2015). Hipolito-Delgado and Zion (2017) examined how critical conversations, which seeks to foster critical consciousness, associated with the CCI curriculum facilitates the psychological empowerment of marginalized youth.

As part of CCI, students work together to identify a problem that affects them in their schools, design and carry out a research project to explore the problem, and engage adults in their school in conversations about a proposed solution to their problem (Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017). Hipolito-Delgado and Zion's study was comprised of students in three high schools. Two classes in each school were chosen with one receiving the CCI curriculum and one being the control group. Students completed surveys at the beginning and end of the critical consciousness phase of the CCI curriculum. Findings of the study reported statistically significant increases in ethnic identity and civic self-efficacy as compared to the control group. Findings of the study also indicate the importance of supportive adult relationships that include sharing power and voice, and engaging in critical conversations, in fostering the psychological empowerment of marginalized youth (Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017). These findings are similar to the results in Seider and Graves' study of critical consciousness and problem-posing education (Seider & Graves, 2020). Principals can follow these models in an effort to support SV and YAP with the marginalized youth in their high schools.

Collective Systematic Agency

Collective Systematic Agency (CSA) refers to the capacity to organize others, participate in discussions, develop a systematic analysis, and take action in complex institutions such as schools. CSA promotes actions civics in which young people do civics by engaging in a cycle of research, action, and reflection (Levinson, 2012). Adam York and Ben Kirshner's (2015) study analyzed the ways that students were enabled or constrained by the ways that school personnel positioned them throughout their work on action research projects at school. For example, if administrators position students as

rational agents or people whose experiences matter, then we would expect students to have opportunities to share their views or participate in some level of policy deliberation (York & Kirshner, 2015). The study paid particular attention to the ways in which adults positioned students through dialogue and action because of the power differential that shapes adult-youth relations in schools (York & Kirshner, 2015). This study shows high school principals the importance of positioning students as partners and valuable members of a democratic culture.

York and Kirshner's (2015) study compared two schools–Smith and Central—which implemented CSA. One class from each school implemented the CCI curriculum throughout the school year. Findings showed that the adult personnel at Smith tended to position students as low achiever, incapable students who were excluded from formal roles as leaders or change agents in the school. In contrast to the patterns at Smith, adult personnel at Central positioned students as agents of change and important members of the school community who were capable of working collectively and as members of a group that impact school climate. The principal, assistant principals, and other adults came to the CCI classroom weekly, listened to students, and provided critical feedback. Classroom positioning reflected school narratives about student roles and positioned students as people with expertise who had something to contribute. York and Kirshner's (2015) analysis of adult positioning of students identified school- and classroom-level conditions that contributed to student learning and engagement in civic action repertoires. What remains promising for this model is the strong sense of engagement and belonging expressed by many students at Central. York and Kirshner (2015) concluded that collective systematic agency will be best supported with a more inviting set of learning

opportunities when school personnel work together to position students as capable learners and active participants in school decision-making.

Democratic Ethical Educational Leadership Theoretical Framework

Supporting the voices and agency of students and partnering with students in an inclusive manner is a key component of the New DEEL theoretical framework (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). The New DEEL mission statement includes creating an action-oriented partnership dedicated to the inquiry into the nature and practice of democratic, ethical, educational leadership through sustained processes of open dialogue, right to voice, community inclusion, and responsible participation for the common good (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). The framework is organized around the five "New DEEL" visions for leaders (See Table 2 – The New DEEL Vision for Educational Leaders) which integrate democracy, social justice, and school reform through dialogue and deliberation (Gross & Poliner-Shapiro, 2016). The New DEEL Framework supports the belief that the first job of the school is to help young people become effective citizens in a democracy. Students are viewed as participants in their school and society rather than as objects to be manipulated by school and society. New DEEL leaders believe that there is no democracy without social justice and no social justice without democracy, and these two mutually inclusive concepts are indispensable ingredients to school improvement (Gross & Shapiro, 2016).

Table 2

New DEEL Vision for Educational Leaders

New DEEL Vision for Educational Leaders
1. Guided by inner sense of responsibility to students, faculty, staff, families, the community and social development on a world scale. 2. Leads from an expansive community-building perspective. A democratic actor who understands when and how to shield the school from turbulence and when and how to use turbulence to facilitate change.
3. Integrates the concepts of democracy, social justice, and school reform through scholarship, dialogue, and action. 4. Operates from a deep understanding of ethical decision-making in the context of a dynamic, inclusive, democratic vision. 5. Sees one's career as a calling and has a well-developed sense of mission toward democratic social improvement that cuts across political, national, class, gender, racial, ethnic, and religious boundaries.

Note. Gross, S. J., and Shapiro, J. P. (2016). *Democratic ethical educational leadership: Reclaiming school reform.* New York: Routledge.

Vision statement number three speaks to the need for a coherent perspective that connects, rather than atomizes, the values of democracy, social justice, and school reform while encouraging dialogue and high-quality scholarship (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). A major element of the New DEEL scholarship comes in the fourth vision statement in which leaders use the Multiple Ethical Paradigm to enhance an inclusive democratic vision (Gross & Shapiro, 2016; Gross, 2020).

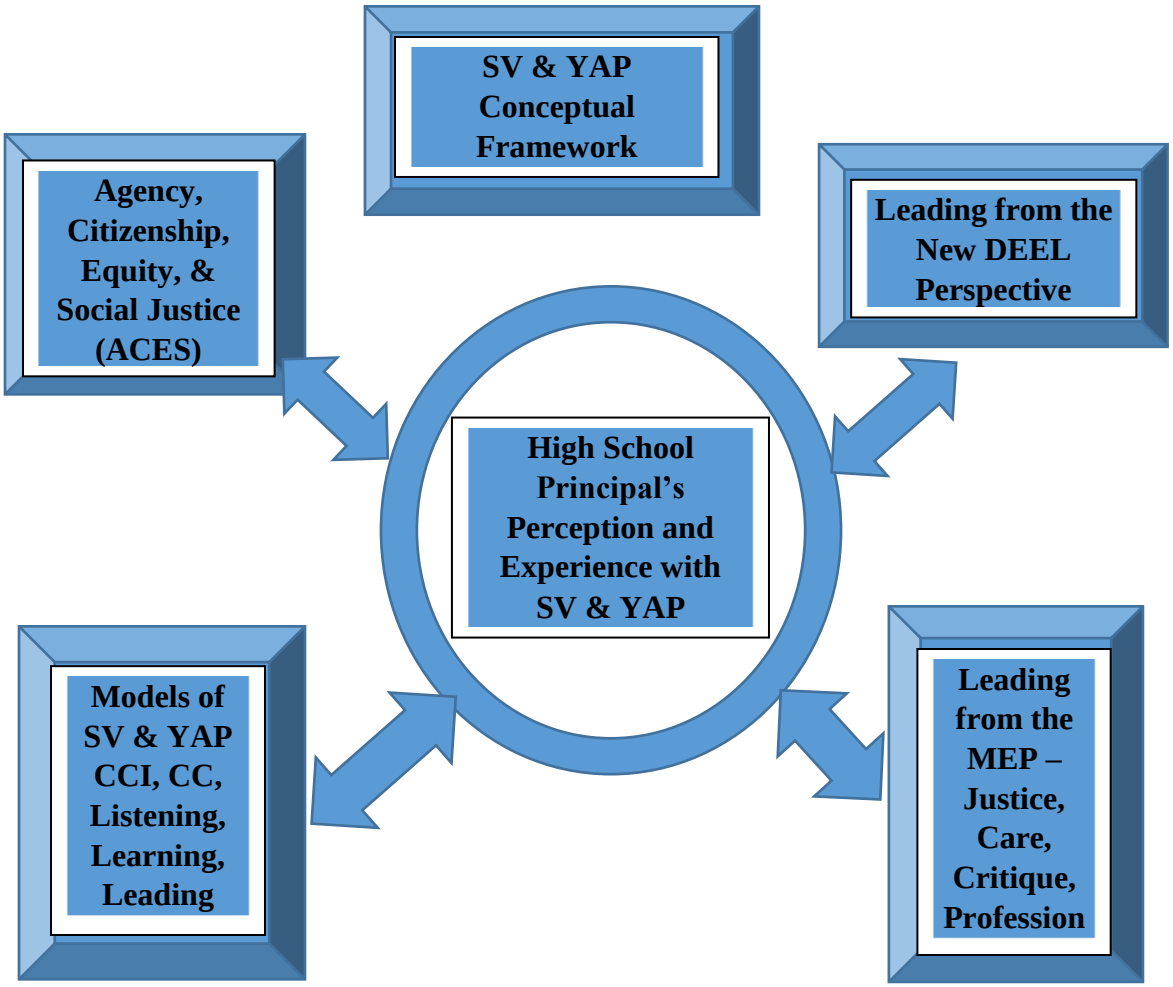
High school principals who work within a democratic ethical framework can integrate the voices of their students and see them as partners in an inclusive school community. These principals expand participation in decision-making throughout the school and school district. A leader who expands the definition of who belongs, widens the circle of "us," and makes the organization ever more inclusive. Principals can support

SV and YAP through the mission and vision of democratic ethical perspectives. Principals can apply these democratic perspectives while using the SV and YAP models presented in Chapter 2 to foster SV and YAP in their schools. In addition, the New DEEL Framework is a key element in the conceptual framework of this multicase study (See Figure 4 – SV & YAP Conceptual Framework).

High school principals' perception and experience with SV and YAP are impacted by: a) the New DEEL's mission; b) the Multiple Ethical Paradigm of justice, care, critique, and profession; c) the models of SV and YAP; as well as d) the ACES model of agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice.

Figure 4

SV & YAP Conceptual Framework



Summary

SV owes much of its classroom-based practices to the constructivist theory of learning, dating back to Dewey's earliest writings. Similar to constructivist learning theory, democratic education sees students as active cocreators of their own learning, and SV is deeply connected to democratic principles (Quaglia et al., 2020). High school principals who situate their leadership practice within the New DEEL framework can

foster SV and YAP through an inclusive, democratic school model. This literature review has presented the challenges that exist for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP in their schools. However, this literature review has also provided examples and models of SV and YAP that principals can follow to enter the SV and YAP educational arena. The literature also provided examples of positive academic and school-wide outcomes of SV and YAP. The majority of high schools in the United States have a Student Council. Implementing a program like RSVP is an excellent segway into SV and YAP in high schools. Partnering with intermediary organizations such as UP For Learning provides an option for principals who may not be able to allocate additional resources to SV and YAP initiatives. Improving the educational experiences of marginalized students and reducing opportunity gaps is a worthy educational cause for high school principals. Fostering Freire's (1970) work with critical consciousness (Seider & Graves) as well as Hipolito-Delgado, Kirshner, and Zions work with CCI and CSA are researched based examples for high school principals to follow in their schools. Future research should continue to include the role of adults, in particular, high school principals, fostering SV and YAP in their schools.

This literature review contributes to the overall literature as it relates to high school principals' role in the leadership opportunities and challenges regarding SV and YAP. The particular focus from the leadership perspective of high school principals should contribute to an emerging foundation of literature related to inclusive, democratic leadership practices which prepare students to be participating members of the United States democracy while in the K–12 educational setting. The most impressive findings related to SV and YAP in the studies presented in this chapter were from studies which

included a course in civics or social action within the curriculum for students who are marginalized. Additional studies should focus in this area. The SV and YAP research, theory, and practice movement is making great progress. However, there is still more to do in order to equip all high school principals with the necessary foundation to foster SV and YAP in their schools. As Quaglia et al. (2020) state: though connecting democratic values with the educational process is not a new idea, intentionally seeking SV and partnership with students has not become a standard foundational practice in schools. This literature review helped bring high school principals one step closer to this standard.

Chapter 3

Methodology

High school principals are leaders of their schools who are ultimately responsible for all aspects of school operations—overseeing everything from student achievement through staff morale. Job descriptions of high school principals often include between 30 and 40 key areas of performance responsibilities (See Appendix A). The New DEEL has the additional responsibility of situating SV and YAP within an inclusive and supportive environment (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). For the purpose of this research study, I explored the perceptions, experiences, opportunities, and challenges of high school principals in fostering SV and YAP in their schools. I used a qualitative multiple case study (Stake, 2006) in order to provide an in-depth analysis of high school principals' perceptions and experiences of SV and YAP. Qualitative case study was developed to study the experiences of real cases operating in real situations (Stake, 2006). This study sought to understand the lived experiences and perceptions high school principals had in relation to SV and YAP. Much of the research in the area of SV and YAP centered around the impact it had on the primary stakeholder–students. For example, the Quaglia School Voice Surveys (2016) were taken by 48,185 students in Grades 6–12 during the 2015–2016 academic year. It might seem counterintuitive to study SV from the perspective of adults; however, the Quaglia (2016) survey results showed that only 43% of students felt adults listened to their suggestions and only 50% believed that students and adults worked together to make school better. High school principals, especially those principals who work from the New DEEL framework, are a group of adults who can help increase those percentages among students in their schools. High school principals are key

stakeholders and have the final say on how they structure their schools in an inclusive manner and where they place priorities on listening and partnering with their students. The challenge of where and how principals spend their time is a leadership puzzle. It is a given that principals will never have enough time in a day to do everything asked of them, however, leading with voice increases principals' efficiency and effectiveness (Quaglia, 2016).

In addition, decision-making tends to be restricted to administrators and to a lesser extent teachers (Mitra, 2009). There is a gap in the SV and YAP research as it relates to adults and, in particular, principals regarding their perspectives in fostering SV and YAP. There has been little empirical investigation of ways in which adults facilitate the development of SV and, subsequently, youth leadership (Mitra, 2005). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) believe that research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making a difference in people's lives. Thus, the goal of this study was to add to the research by exploring the perceptions, experiences, opportunities, and challenges of SV and YAP through the eyes of high school principals. The following research questions guided this study:

1) What are high school principal's perceptions and experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
2) What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
    a) What are challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

3) How have high school principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?
    a) How have principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships with their students who are marginalized?

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of high school principals' perceptions and experiences of SV and YAP, a qualitative multiple case study (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2018) was the method used in this research. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Qualitative research was appropriate for this study because it allowed me to obtain a detailed picture of the levels of SV and YAP fostered by high school principals. Qualitative research allowed me to construct knowledge (Creswell, 2013) based upon the worlds in which principals live and work. This study also related the literature regarding principals who used Freire's (1970) critical consciousness framework to foster SV and YAP by taking a critical research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) perspective. Crotty (1998) described critical research as a contrast between research that seeks merely to understand and research that challenges, between research that accepts the status quo and research that seeks to bring about change.

Positionality

As a high school principal, I began this dissertation with a sad story of a tragedy which took a student's life and the response to that tragedy which moved me into the arena of SV and YAP. On May 22, 2016, Antwan Timbers, Jr., was struck and killed in a pedestrian-motor vehicle crash on Route 130 near Burlington City High School. Antwan

was a member of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC). His loss was devastating to our school community. The student leaders of the JROTC and staff started a campaign called “25 Saves Lives” where we rallied outside of our high school which sits directly on this dangerous state highway and simply asked for motorists to slow down. The voices of our students were heard and the campaign caught the attention of local lawmakers Diane Allen, Herb Conaway, Troy Singleton, and Carol Murphy who sponsored a bill in honor of our student. “Antwan’s Law” called for the speed limit on Route 130 to be reduced to 25 mph in the Burlington City School Zone. A two-and-a-half-year journey commenced as our students and staff worked together through the legislative process in New Jersey. Students testified along with legislators in Senate and Assembly Transportation Committees, presented their findings to various organizations, and advocated on behalf of our students and school. On January 31, 2019, Governor Phil Murphy signed Antwan’s Law officially reducing the speed in Burlington City School Zone along Route 130 to 25 mph 24 hours a day.

Antwan’s legacy is one of making our community safer for students and pedestrians in the Burlington City School Zone. The experience of responding to Antwan’s tragedy as a school community, listening to our students’ voices, and working side by side with them in partnership has made a lasting impression on me. I realized that principals play a key role in fostering SV and YAP in their schools. I also realized that the situation in the Burlington City School Zone could be related to social justice and equity. Burlington City is a low socioeconomic district in which our students walk to school. From 2004 to 2016, there have been four major student pedestrian-motor vehicle

crashes on Route 130 in our school zone. One other student was killed and two others were seriously injured. I began to ask questions:

- Why haven't changes been made due to these four serious incidents which took the lives of two students?
- Did people outside of Burlington City believe the lives of our students do not matter because they were Black or from a low-income area?

The "25 Saves Lives" Campaign led me to understand how SV and YAP can foster student agency and citizenship as well as make changes in the areas of social justice, racial injustice, and equity.

Research Design and Rationale

To understand complex programs, it is often useful to look carefully at persons and operations at several locations (Stake, 2006). I modeled my study after Stake's Multiple Case Study Analysis (2006) framework in which one small collection of people, activities, policies, strengths, problems, or relationships were studied in detail. This multicase study provided a detailed look at the perceptions and experiences of high school principals regarding SV and YAP. Each individual case was comprised of an in-depth qualitative interview with a high school principal, artifact and document collection, and observations of principals and student events. A responsive interviewing technique (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) was utilized which enabled me to respond to and then seek further questions about what I heard from the interviewees rather than rely on predetermined questions. This technique allowed me to incorporate a naturalistic approach guided by social construction (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I was able to collect and analyze in-depth data in the form of question responses from each of the principals. The

intent was that this data be used to guide other high school principals in an effort to begin a journey of fostering SV and YAP.

Multiple case study designs have distinct advantages and disadvantages in comparison to single-case designs. The evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall multicase study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; Miles et al., 2014). The multicase research design for this study yielded findings which were presented in the multicase report included in Chapter 4. A graphic model of the case study research design was created and the multicase report allowed the data to be analyzed in terms of the entire collection of cases. Stake (2006) described this collection of cases as a "quintain." The quintain is something that we want to understand more thoroughly, and we choose to study it through its cases, by means of a multicase study (Stake, 2006). In my study, the quintain related to high school principals' perceptions and experiences of SV and YAP. The goal of the individual cases was to gain insight into the lived experiences of each individual principal at their own school.

Qualitative research is based on a view that social phenomena, human dilemmas, and the nature of cases are situational (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The study of situations revealed experiential knowledge, which was important to understanding the quintain (Stake, 2006). Each individual principal case study was conducted from the perspective of their own school situation and experience related to SV and YAP. Examining situational complexity is a vital part of social science research (Stake, 2006). Results from the research of each individual principal's situation may lead to alternative explanations and perspectives regarding SV and YAP.

Selection of Participants

Even in larger case studies, the sample size is often too small to warrant random selection (Stake, 2006). For qualitative fieldwork, researchers usually draw a purposive sample of cases, a sample tailored to our study; this will build in variety and create opportunities for intensive study (Stake, 2006). I incorporated a purposive sample of 10 high school principals from across the nation for this multicase study. One of the most important tasks for the multicase researcher is to show how the programs of phenomenon appear in different contexts (Stake, 2006). I felt that the study needed to include 10 different contexts of SV and YAP. I was referred to the 10 principals with SV and YAP experience through experts in the field of SV and YAP. These experts had either directly worked with one or more of the 10 participants, were currently working with them, or had heard of the principals' involvement with SV or YAP.

The purposive sample of principals resulted in an abundance of data collected from a range of perspectives, experiences, and worldviews. Principals had the opportunity to respond to my research questions in a comprehensive and thoughtful manner. The resulting data from the individual cases were collected and analyzed in relation to whether fostering SV and YAP is situated within the framework of a Democratic Ethical Educational Leader. Yin (2018) stated that rather than thinking about your case study as a sample, you should think about it is an opportunity to shed empirical light on some theoretical concepts or principles. The data helped situate high school principals within the range of a developing perspective of listening to SV through the highest levels of leadership in SV (Mitra, 2005; Quaglia, 2016) and equity in YAP (Fletcher, 2017).

Data Collection

Data was collected for each individual case through interviews, document and artifact analysis, and observations during the spring and fall of 2021 (See Table 3). I sought to understand the levels of SV and YAP experience of interviewees as well as challenges faced in implementing SV and YAP, barriers which emerged in fostering SV and YAP, and overall themes associated with SV and YAP. I learned about the perceptions and experiences of high school principals in relation to SV and YAP. Recent essays and empirical research about learning emphasize that the process is active, that the researcher is an agent rather than just a receiver (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). Rossman & Rallis (2017) stated that researchers are actively engaged in constructing deeper understandings (knowledge) about their topics, the participants, the research process, and themselves as inquirers. I created a case study protocol and a case study database (Yin, 2018) in order to have a systematic plan to collect and organize the data. Yin (2018) stated that having a case study protocol is desirable under all circumstances but is essential if you are doing a multiple case study analysis.

Table 3

Data Collection Checklist

Interview	Observation	Website
Student Leadership High School, California (Principal Juan)	Student Leadership High School	Student Leadership High School
Student Advocacy High School, New Jersey (Principal Darlene)	Student Advocacy High School	Student Advocacy High School
Collaboration Two High School, California (Principal Sherry)	Collaboration Two High School	Collaboration Two High School
Sustaining Communities High School, Vermont (Principal Dawn)		Sustaining Communities High School
Courageous Conversations High School, New Jersey (Principal Nick)	Courageous Conversations High School	Courageous Conversations High School
English Language Learners High School, California (Principal Ingrid)	English Language Learners High School	English Language Learners High School
Student Inquiry High School, Pennsylvania (Principal Rob)	Student Inquiry High School	Student Inquiry High School
Citizenship High School, New York (Principal Marilyn)		Citizenship High School
Youth-Adult Partnership High School, Vermont (Principal John)	Youth-Adult Partnership High School	Youth-Adult Partnership High School
Distributed Leadership High School, New Jersey (Principal Ray)		Distributed Leadership High School

Interview Procedures

A semi-structured (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), responsive interview protocol with open-ended questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) was utilized in each case study. The semi-structured interviews began with predetermined sets of questions but allowed for latitude to pursue other questions as the interview proceeded (Freebody, 2003). Responsive

interviewing was a flexible design which allowed me to search for context and richness, meaningful exchange, and treat the participant more as a partner than a research subject (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because I actively contributed to the conversation, I needed to be aware of how my own opinions, experiences, cultural differences, and even prejudices influence what I asked. Rather than pretend to have no biases, I examined how my preconceptions might slant the research and then I worked to formulate questions to offset my biases (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I do believe that SV and YAP have a place in high schools. As I stated in the Positionality section in this chapter, my experience with the "25 Saves Lives Campaign" at Burlington City High School was an example of how a YAP can make a positive change in a school and community. Although I referenced my experience and knowledge of SV and YAP during the interviews, I was aware of not allowing it to interfere with the interviewee's thoughts, opinions, and answers. I was careful not to come across as a teacher in an interview. The interview was not about educating or debating with the interviewee, but rather hearing what he or she had to say. I also did not push an interviewee to respond to a question if he or she seemed reluctant to answer (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I was non-judgmental, sensitive, and respectful of the principal participant during the process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). An interview protocol (See Appendix B) was created for the cohort of 10 cases of principals with SV and YAP experience. Included in the protocol were the procedures for how I recruited the high school principals who participated in their individual case studies. As stated above, I was aware of how my own attitudes might influence the questions I asked as well as how I reacted to answers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I also was aware that the conditions of my

study will be negated if I sought to use a case study to substantiate a preconceived position (Yin, 2018).

Interviews were also conducted through a naturalist-constructionist paradigm with a lens toward critical perspective (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Naturalistic researchers look for engaging topics, unanswered questions, or social problems that need investigation (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A few of my interview questions related to the current equity, racial injustice, and social justice issues facing schools and communities. In addition, this study collected data related to principals' use of SV and YAP with the students who are marginalized in their buildings. In critical inquiry the goal is to critique and challenge, to transform and empower (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, I did not pressure the interviewees to participate or answer questions in which they were reluctant (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). A critical lens was used for interpreting data in a qualitative study and the hope is often that people will take action as a result of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In particular, questions were asked regarding how SV and YAP could foster equity as well as racial and social justice. The critical perspective maintained that the purpose of research should be discovery and remediation of societal problems. Critical researchers argue that research should lead to action to reduce problems caused by oppression by connecting the "everyday troubles individuals face to public issues of power, justice, and democracy (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Frameworks of Critical Civic Inquiry (CCI) and Critical Consciousness (CC) are leading the way in SV and YAP school reform. I wanted a component of this study to reveal where administrators situated SV and YAP in school reform efforts related to equity and social justice.

This multicase study was conducted during the spring and fall of 2021. Covid-19 guidelines and restrictions were in place to protect the health and safety of students and staff members in schools. As a result, all interviews were conducted on the Zoom platform which provided the ability to record audio and video of the research participants at the same time without the need for additional equipment (Lo Iacono et al., 2016). Interviews were approximately one hour in length, recorded, and then transcribed. In addition, I took notes and wrote down follow-up questions to ask later in the interview. Transcripts were provided to interviewees for clarification and feedback (Yin, 2018).

Documents and Artifacts

Along with the extensive data collected from interviews, important documents including school and district policies, regulations, board of education agendas and minutes, vision statements, mission statements, student handbooks, codes of conduct, news clippings and other articles, and school and district websites were reviewed and collected (Yin, 2018; Rossman & Rallis, 2017). Yin (2018) stated that implementing systematic searches for relevant documents are important in any data collection plan. These documents were collected to determine if SV and YAP were highlighted or mentioned in them. Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that documents are most useful when combined with in-depth interviews which allow you to discuss with their creators what they contained and how they were prepared.

Observations

Observations are common in many types of qualitative research such as case studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I observed six of the high school principals or staff and students in their schools via Zoom, and one in-person during meetings and

interactions with staff and students. Observations occurred in the principals' actual high school setting and within the principals' leadership practice. I also observed students in meetings or classes and during actual SV and YAP school-related activities. Observations were distinguished from interviews in two ways. First, the observation took place in the setting where the phenomenon of interest naturally occurred; second, observational data represented a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than a secondhand account of the world obtained in an interview (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I took detailed written field notes of all observations which were analogous to interview transcripts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Observations and field notes were conducted in order triangulate emerging findings; that is, they were used in conjunction with interviews and document analysis to substantiate the findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Table 4 (Methods to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions) synthesizes the data collection methods which were used in this study.

Table 4

Methods to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions

Research Questions	**Methods I Will Use to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions**
What are high school principals' perceptions and experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships?	**Interview Questions:** 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 **Documents/Artifacts:** Examples of SV & YAP in policies, regulations, BOA agendas, student handbooks, websites. **Observations:** Principal meetings with staff and students to determine SV & YAP content. Student activities related to SV & YAP to support principal's perception of SV & YAP.
What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?	**Interview Questions:** 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12 **Documents/Artifacts:** Examples of SV & YAP in policies, regulations, BOA agendas, student handbooks, websites.
Research Questions	**Methods I Will Use to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions**
	Observations: Principal meetings with staff and students to determine SV & YAP are being fostered. Student activities related to SV & YAP to support principal's concept of fostering SV & YAP.
What are challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?	**Interview Questions:** 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 **Documents/Artifacts:** Examples of challenges and barriers in policies, regulations, BOA agendas, student handbooks, websites. **Observations:** Principal meetings with staff and students to demonstrate barriers and challenges with SV & YAP. Student activities related to SV & YAP to demonstrate barriers and challenges to principal's support of SV & YAP.

Research Questions	Methods I Will Use to Capture Data and Answer Research Questions
How have high school principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?	**Interview Questions:** 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 **Documents/Artifacts:** Examples of programs, initiatives, SV, & YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform through checking policies, BOA agendas, student handbooks, mission statements & vision statements. **Observations:** Principal meetings with staff and students to demonstrate how students are involved with equity, social justice, and school reform regarding SV & YAP. Student activities related to SV & YAP to demonstrate how students are involved equity, social justice, or school reform with SV & YAP.
How have high school principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships in their students who are marginalized?	**Interview Questions:** 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 **Documents/Artifacts:** Examples of programs, initiatives, SV, & YAP, with students who are marginalized through checking policies, BOA agendas, student handbooks, mission statements & vision statements. **Observations:** Principal meetings with staff and students to demonstrate how students who are marginalized are involved with SV & YAP. Student activities related to SV & YAP to demonstrate how students who are marginalized are involved with SV & YAP.

Data Analysis

Multicase research can be handled well as dissertation research. Other than for a dissertation, a single multicase researcher seldom does all the case studies (Stake, 2006). I began the data analysis phase by transcribing interviews using Dragon Naturally Speaking software and then organized using NVivo12 software. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that there are great benefits to conducting interviews yourself, not the least of which is

increasing your familiarity with the data. However, since Dragon Naturally Speaking software recognized only the voice of the trained speaker, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) recommend using what they call the "parroting" function. Thus, I listened to the recording of the interview through headphones and repeated the recorded text into the Dragon microphone as I heard it. I then read through each transcription while listening to the audio recording I created in order to verify accuracy. Another key component of this multi-faceted data analysis was conducting an extensive Initial Coding process using Dedoose software to help organize the data and to see what themes developed.

At this critical point in the data analysis, I followed Stake's (2006) cross-case analysis framework. For grand strategy, Stake (2006) stated that it is desirable for the analyst to set up a "case-quintain dialectic"–a rhetorical, adversarial procedure, wherein attention to the local situations and attention to the program or phenomenon as a whole contend with each other for emphasis. To facilitate the cross-case analysis, I utilized Stake's (2006) seven worksheets which were intended to help the analyst in his/her work. The worksheets are listed below.

- Worksheet 1: Graphic Design of a Case Study (Appendix C)
- Worksheet 2: The Themes (Research Questions) of the Multicase Study (Appendix D)
- Worksheet 3: Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Report (Appendix E)
- Worksheet 4: Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme (Appendix F)
- Worksheet 5: A Map on Which to Make Assertions for the Final Report (Appendix G)

- Worksheet 6: Multicase Assertions for the Final Report (Appendix H)
- Worksheet 7: Planning the Multicase Final Report (Appendix I)

These worksheets helped analyze the multiple case study in both stages of analysis–the within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Themes (Research Questions) of the Multicase Study

A case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry (Stake, 2006). My research questions drove the case study in its focus of high school principal's perception and experience of SV and YAP. These questions generated what Stake (2006) described as cross-cutting themes, focused on the binding concepts that hold the cases together (SV and YAP), and were conceptual infrastructure for building the study (Stake, 2006). My research questions were selected to guide this search for understanding and were included in the interview protocol. These questions generated the Initial Codes from interview transcriptions leading to 38 cross-cutting themes and assertions. Worksheet 2 (Research Questions or Themes of the Multicase Study) assisted in organization and analysis and ensured the themes preserved the main research questions of the overall study (Stake, 2006).

Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Report

As stated above, each individual case interview was transcribed so that the data could be analyzed. As I read each case, I used Worksheet 3 (Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Study Report) to document overall notes regarding case findings, unique situations, and cross-case themes. I kept systematic notes, made comments in margins, used Post-it Notes on special pages of the report, underlined, and color-coded (Stake, 2006). Due to the large number of cases (10), it was valuable to keep these detailed notes

in order to provide essential information from the cases for the cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006). Completing a detailed Worksheet 3 assisted in meeting the challenge Yin (2018) described in doing a cross-case synthesis which was to know how to develop strong, plausible, and fair arguments that are supported by my data. My notes in Worksheet 3 also helped me understand the individual cases in depth before I analyzed the case findings and prepared the cross-case report (Stake, 2006).

Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme

After I thoroughly read each case report and its corresponding analyst notes (Worksheet 3), I rated the themes via Worksheet 4 (Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme). I rated themes based upon their utility one at a time across all 10 cases as H (High Utility), M (Middling Utility), or L (Low Utility). When all cases were rated, I carefully scanned the ratings noting the highly relevant cases for each theme. Stake (2006) noted that this step was so important that it will be repeated with fresh thinking later on.

A Map on Which to Make Assertions for the Final Report

I worked towards making several cross-case assertions based upon the case evidence gathered. Although I began listing tentative assertions during the study, I decided at a later time which assertions to emphasize, which to subordinate, and which to drop (Stake, 2006). The decision was facilitated by a sustained look at the matrix I created in Worksheet 5 which was based upon the review of each case report. Worksheet 5 become a detailed table with cases and findings listed in the left column and themes listed in the horizontal rows along the top of the sheet. I used another three-point scale for rating of H (High Importance), M (Middling Importance), and L (Low Importance). The

rating was based upon the importance of the finding (derived from its case) for understanding of the quintain (SV and YAP) with regard to the theme (Stake, 2006). I moved through the cases one at a time until all the cells in the table were completed. I color coded the ratings in Worksheet 5 in order to identify the prominent themes from all 10 cases.

Multicase Assertions for the Final Report

The data rated Highly Important from Worksheet 5 was the main source of assertions from the cross-case analysis and will be utilized in Worksheet 6 (Multicase Assertions for the Final Report). Each assertion had a single or common focus, a contribution toward understanding the quintain, and evidence to support it (Stake, 2006). The heart of the final report was the assertions about the quintain and the Final Assertions of Worksheet 6 helped visualize the reporting for the cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006). Final Assertions emerged from the data, themes, and findings of the worksheets and were included in the final report. Stake (2006) stated that most assertions are based upon compelling persuasion–at least compelling to the researcher. Thus, in Worksheet 6, eight final compelling assertions were established that will be the heart of the final report.

Planning the Multicase Report

As I moved into Worksheet 7 (Planning the Multicase Report), my task shifted from analysis to synthesis (Stake, 2006). Worksheet 7 was a diagram for planning the writing and assembly of the final multicase report (Stake, 2006). I utilized an Excel Sheet to identify main topics, themes, assertions, and main findings. I also included a brief summary in the last section of Worksheet 7. Worksheet 7 was a key component in setting

the foundation for the final multicase report which will be presented in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

The seven worksheets provided an analytic strategy which Yin (2018) described as making sure that your analysis is of the highest quality. Yin (2018) emphasized four principles that underlie all good social science research that deserve our attention (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2013) and were included in my study: my analysis showed that I attended to all of the evidence, my analysis investigated all plausible rival explanations, my analysis addressed the most significant aspects of my case study, and I demonstrated a familiarity with the prevailing thinking and discourse about the case study topic. Finally, the goal of the data analysis and the multicase report was to produce an exemplary study. Yin (2018) stated that to produce a case study in this manner required a researcher to be enthusiastic about the research and want to communicate the results widely. In fact, a good researcher might even think that the case study contained earth-shattering conclusions. This sort of aspiration should pervade the entire investigation and indeed lead to an exemplary study (Yin, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

Reliability, Validity, and Credibility

The highest measures of protection for the principals who participated in this multiple case study were enacted. I followed the guidelines of the National Research Council (2003) which called for the following: gaining informed consent from all persons (See Appendix J), protecting participants from any harm, including avoiding the use of any deception, and protecting the privacy and confidentiality of participants. This research plan was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). In addition, the

highest degree of ethics were incorporated into this multiple case study. Yin (2018) stated that the case study will be negated if a researcher only seeks to use a case study to substantiate a preconceived position. By using a protocol which encouraged multiple perspectives and experiences, the individual case studies and resulting cross-case analysis generated wide-ranging results and implications. I also tested my tolerance for contrary findings (Yin, 2018) by sharing my final assertions to the participants in the study.

To have any effect on either practice or the theory of the field of SV and YAP, this research study must be rigorously conducted and present insights and conclusions that ring true to readers, practitioners, and other researchers (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This multicase study on high school principals' perceptions of SV and YAP contained all of the necessary components of a rigorous study. It had a thorough research design, case study protocol, interview protocol, case study database, and went into great depth modeling Stake's (2006) modified worksheets. Lincoln et al. (2011) proposed two kinds of rigor–methodological, related to the application of methods, and interpretive, related to judging outcomes. Both of these types of rigor were represented in this qualitative multicase study of 10 high school principals.

A major strength of qualitative interviewing was that it produced highly credible results: Every conclusion was tightly linked to solid evidence, all embedded in a context. However, credibility does not just happen by itself; it has to be built into the research design (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). As mentioned previously, I read each transcribed interview–often multiple times - and then invited the interviewees to check the transcription for accuracy. Credibility came not just from who you interviewed and how well you checked what they said; it also came from showing readers how carefully you

have carried out the research (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). One of the goals of a multiple case study report was that it should show the reader that all of the single-case studies were treated fairly and that the cross-case conclusions were not biased by undue attention to one or a few of the entire array of case studies (Yin, 2018). This in-depth Cross-Case Analysis incorporated reliability and credibility checks throughout the research study. Finally, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that the best-known strategy to shore up the internal validity of a study was triangulation.

Triangulation

Triangulation occurred both within individual case studies and across the multicase study. Stake (2006) stated that researchers want assurance that most of the meaning gained by a reader from their interpretations was the meaning they intend to convey. The process of gaining these assurances was called triangulation. Triangulation was mostly a process of repetitious data gathering and critical review of what was being said (Stake, 2006). Every case study was conducted with the same procedure, interview protocols, note-taking, reflection, and transcription. Worksheets 1 through 4 helped me triangulate individual case studies. I constantly reflected on both individual case studies and the quintain. I reflected on my personal biases and experiences with SV and YAP in order to ensure the individual case studies represented accurate interpretation of data without my personal interest in the topic. Rossman and Rallis (2017) described the self (or researcher) at work as reflexive. When used in the context of social science, reflexive means that a method or theory takes account of itself or especially of the effect the personality or presence of the researcher on what is being investigated (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). I ensured that as I conducted semi-structured responsive interviews, my

own beliefs and personality did not impact the interviewee's answers. Inquirers explicitly identify reflexively their biases, values, and personal background, such as gender, history, culture, and socioeconomic status that shape their interpretations formed during a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), Triangulation for a multicase study served the same purpose as in a single-case study: to assure that we had the picture as clear and suitably meaningful as we can get it and relatively free of our own biases. Triangulation occurred along the way. Some of it was done while organizing and writing the final report (Stake, 2006). I ensured that triangulation occurred throughout the multicase study by asking an expert in the field of SV and YAP to review my study and offer suggestions on its method, procedures, and protocols. Triangulation also required going further afield, checking with people who know some of the quintain or related activity. We learn many things from knowledgeable people, but we need also to know what they can see is wrong with the views we are reporting (Stake, 2006).

Limitations

There were three limitations to my multicase study. First of all, in a study relating to SV and YAP, I did not interview any students regarding their perceptions of SV and YAP. However ironic this may seem, the focus of my study was to explore adult perceptions–in particular, high school principals' perceptions–of SV and YAP. I could have chosen to survey or interview high school students of the principals in my study. I observed students in meetings with principals, in classes, and during SV- and YAP-related activities. Obtaining the in-depth perceptions of students regarding SV and YAP in their schools and relating this data to principals' data could add to the current literature. This type of study could represent a gap in the literature and could be a focus

of future study. For this study, I chose to follow Fletcher's (2017) perspective that students should not be held responsible for meaningful student involvement if adults do not take the first step of ownership. Secondly, I interviewed 10 high school principals in my purposive sample who had experience with SV and YAP. A study could be conducted which included a sample of high school principals who did not have experience with SV and YAP to get their perceptions. Thirdly, as a principal myself, I support SV and YAP. In the Positionality section of this chapter, I provided my personal connection to the topic of SV and YAP. My experience in partnering with my students due to the tragedy of having one of our students killed in a motor vehicle-pedestrian crash in our school zone compelled me to become passionate about SV and YAP. The two-and-a-half year grassroots "25 Saves Lives Campaign" personified a YAP and resulted in Antwan's Law being signed by Governor Murphy which reduced the speed limit in front of Burlington City High School to 25 mph 24 hours per day.

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the perception and experiences of principals regarding SV and YAP in high schools. Ten principals who had experience with SV and YAP were interviewed from across the nation. Observations of these principals doing SV or YAP work, or the structures these principals created for SV and YAP, were observed. An analysis of the school and district websites as well as other school related documents were conducted. The interview, observation, and document analysis combined to make an individual case study. The 10 individual case studies were combined to create one multicase study. This chapter will describe the individual cases in both a table (See Table 5–Individual Case Study Demographics) and narrative form. In addition, the cross-case analysis utilizing seven multicase worksheets will be presented. Finally, the multicase report with final assertions and cross-cutting themes will be presented and discussed. I chose to structure this chapter based upon Stake's (2006) Final Assertions which form the heart of the multicase study.

For the purpose of this research study, I used a qualitative multicase study in order to provide an in-depth analysis of high school principal's perceptions and experiences of SV and YAP. Each individual case study was comprised of one in-depth semi-structured interview with a high school principal, artifact and document collection, and observations of principal's, classes, or school events. Individual case reports were completed for each case (See Appendix K) using the interview transcription and document analysis as well as the seven Multicase Worksheets (See Appendices C–I) for planning of the cross-case analysis and multicase report. Finding strips were utilized for each finding from each individual case based upon themes. Finding strips were case-identified and numbered

(See Appendix L – Findings Strips). Evidence was provided for each final assertion as it related to cross-cutting themes.

Table 5

Individual Case Study Demographics

School	Student Population	Demographics of Students	Urban/Suburban
Student Leadership High School, California	1,626	Hispanic - 66% White – 13% Asian – 9% Black – 5% Filipino – 4% Other – 3%	Urban
Student Advocacy High School, New Jersey	1,750	White – 56% Asian – 18% Hispanic – 13% Black – 8% Two or More Races – 5%	Suburban
Collaboration Two High School, California	1,800	Hispanic – 55% White – 34% Asian – 4% Two or More Races – 4% Black – 2% Pacific Islander – 1%	Urban
Sustaining Communities High School, Vermont	252	Black – 34.2% White – 33.7% Asian – 22.4% Two or More Races – 6.6% Hispanic – 2.6%	Suburban
Courageous Conversations High School, New Jersey	1,906	White – 73.2% Black – 11.6% Hispanic – 6.7% Asian – 4.9% Two or More Races – 3.5%	Suburban

School	Student Population	Demographics of Students	Urban/Suburban
English Language Learners High School, California	970	Latino – 71% White – 13% Filipino – 7% Asian – 4% Black – 3%	Urban
Student Inquiry High School, Pennsylvania	504	White – 38% Black – 37% Asian – 11% Hispanic – 10% Two or More Races – 4%	Urban
Citizenship High School, New York	534	Black – 70% Latino – 24% White – 2% Asian – 2% Other – 2%	Urban
Youth-Adult Partnership High School, Vermont	377	White – 93% Hispanic – 3% Two or More Races – 2% Asian – 1% Black – 1%	Suburban
Distributed Leadership High School, New Jersey	597	White – 80% Hispanic – 8% Black – 7% Asian – 2% Two or More Races – 2% Other – 1%	Suburban

Case Study #1 – Principal Juan and Student Leadership High School

Student Leadership High School is a large, urban school with 1,626 students who are primarily Hispanic (66%). Student Leadership's Mission and Vision Statements included developing responsible community members who contribute their time and talents to improving their school, families, and communities. Principal Juan empowered

students to be involved in school-level decisions by participating on the School Site Council and School Leadership Council. Student Leadership High School focused on SV and leadership by having students lead school-wide events such as Back To School Night and a student-led Carnival of Knowledge. I observed a School Site Council Meeting and a School Leadership Council Meeting. Students actually led the meetings, made motions, and voted on important school items such as the Title I Budget. Student Leadership High School has a Parent-Teacher-Student-Association (PTSA) as well as having an English Learners Parents Association.

Case Study #2 – Principal Darlene and Student Advocacy High School

Student Advocacy High School is a large, suburban school with 1,750 students who are primarily White (56%) and Asian (18%). Mission and Vision Statements included describing students as open-minded thinkers, making the world a better place, and demonstrating positive citizenship in their schools and communities. Principal Darlene possessed a tremendous amount of belief in her students and truly believes they can be change agents in the world. Twenty of Principal Darlene's students formed her Principal Advisory Council. Student Advocacy High School focused on fostering a mindset and a culture of student agency and advocacy. I observed Principal Darlene at one of her principal Advisory Council Meetings. Students at Student Leadership High School actually advocated for an African American History Course as a racial and social justice campaign and made a presentation to the Board of Education. The Board of Education not only approved the course, it became a graduation requirement. Student Advocacy High School is the first high school in their state to make an African American History class a graduation requirement.

Case Study #3 – Principal Sherry and Collaboration High School

Collaboration High School is a large, urban school with 1,800 students who are primarily Hispanic (55%) and White (34%). Principal Sherry's letter on the school website mentioned Quaglia's Eight Conditions and posted results of the My Voice Survey on the website. Survey questions related to citizenship, having a voice in school decision-making, leadership, agency, and working with adults. Principal Sherry set up structures for SV and YAP with Leadership Courses within the curriculum and what she calls Collab Two time set in their master schedule once a month. Collab Two sessions were made up of students and adults working together to lead school-related activities or solve school-related problems. I observed both a Leadership Class and the Aspirations Collab Two. Both observations were a picture of youth and adults working together to make Collaboration High School a better place. Students at Collaboration High School actually ran important school events such as Athletic and Academic Awards Banquets, attended PTA Meetings, and worked with Booster Clubs in order to lead the Athletic Awards programs.

Case Study #4 – Principal Dawn and Sustaining Communities High School

Sustaining Communities High School is a small, suburban school with 252 students who are primarily Black (34.2%), White (33.7%), and Asian (22.4%). The Superintendent's message stated that the schools were integrated into the fabric of the community, education was relevant and meaningful to each student, and students had a voice and a choice in their learning. A letter from the Sustaining Communities School District stated that they invest in SV and leadership training. Principal Dawn endorsed the concept of democratizing schools and truly wanted to put students in charge. Sustaining

Communities High School focused on an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning with an emphasis on community partnerships. Students at Sustaining Communities High School complete three of six Capstone projects as a graduation requirement. The Culture and Community Capstone called for an individual community-oriented project which was designed to create a positive social change in the local community.

Case Study #5 – Principal Nick and Courageous Conversations High School

Courageous Conversations High School is a large, suburban school with 1,906 students who are primarily White (77%). The Strategic Plan highlighted opportunities for students and teachers to communicate and build connections. Student focus groups were a priority and student surveys stated that all students have a voice, and provided examples of student advocacy. Principal Nick led a group of 20–25 students in fostering courageous conversations related to race and social justice. The Courageous Conversations High School District is focused on equity, diversity, and anti-bias initiatives and has partnered with Equity University to help achieve these goals. The Superintendent and professor at Equity University facilitated a community panel and discussion on Zoom titled "I Wish I Knew," which focused on recent alumni of Courageous Conversations High School who provided their experiences while at Courageous Conversations. Principal Nick's group of 20–25 students was an outcome of the session. There is still a link to the program on the website and I viewed it as my observation. The Superintendent, Principal Nick, Board of Education President, and a few staff members all mentioned listening to students as an important component of

equity and inclusion. The Superintendent ended the session by stating that "we have learned tremendously by listening to our current and former students."

Case Study #6 – Principal Ingrid and English Language Learners High School

English Language Learners High School is a large, urban school with 970 students who are primarily Latino (71%). Mission and Vision Statements described developing students into productive citizens. The website also highlighted statements regarding Racial Justice, Black Lives Matter, and discussion links about race. The website also had a link to an article titled "Teen Voice: How to Take Anti-Racist Action." Principal Ingrid often described students as "amazing" and facilitated having students lead staff professional development sessions. One session included students teaching a class in Spanish to show teachers who it feels to not understand classroom lessons due to the language barrier. English Language Learners High School focused on creating safe spaces for all students, particularly English Language Learners, to learn and develop their voice as citizens. I observed Principal Ingrid in an 11th Grade Advisory Session where she worked directly with students and teachers regarding important school topics. The major topic of the session was the Senior Graduation Portfolio process. Eleventh-Grade students had this opportunity to voice their opinion and be heard about changes which could be made to the Portfolio process. Principal Ingrid started the meeting by saying, "I wanted to hear from you the 11th graders." This meeting was an example of a principal empowering students and listening directly to them.

Case Study #7 – Principal Rob and Student Inquiry High School

Student Inquiry High School is a small, urban school with 504 students who comprise a diverse school community (White – 38%, Black – 37%, Asian – 11%, Hispanic – 10%).

Student Inquiry High School is a partnership high school between the School District of Burlington and The Hamilton Institute. Student Inquiry High School was an inquiry-driven, project-based high school focused on 21st century learning. The Mission Statement actually generates three questions:

- How do we learn?
- What can I create?
- What does it mean to lead?

These three essential questions formed the basis of instruction at Student Inquiry High School. Principal Rob described himself as the "listener-in-chief" and set up safe spaces for students to have actionable SV. Student Inquiry High School focused on students being independent learners through inquiry and practice. Students at Student Inquiry High School partner with members of the local community in an apprenticeship model. Student Inquiry High School also has a four-year longitudinal Advisory Program which placed one adult with a group of 15–20 students for the entire four years of high school. I observed Student Inquiry High School on a day when the seniors were holding a student-led debate as the Presidents of their political party they created led the discussion. As I visited Student Inquiry High School, examples of SV, student leadership, agency, empowerment, and partnership were visible throughout the classrooms and hallways.

Case Study #8 – Principal Marilyn and Citizenship High School

Citizenship High School is a small, urban school with 534 students who are primarily minority (70% Black and 24% Hispanic). Mission and Vision Statements had a single goal: to help our students become healthy, independent, successful adults. Students at Citizenship High School are descried on the website as being citizens and community

members who possess the skills they need to have agency and choice in their adult lives. Principal Marilyn was a true believer in an Advisory Program where students and a staff member worked together and get to know each other. Principal Marilyn mentioned student agency and helping students become citizens in their communities and our world. Citizenship High School focused on preparing students to be positive members of their school and local communities and possessing the agency and confidence to stand up for their beliefs. Principal Marilyn also has a full-time Restorative Justice Coordinator who helps ensure students are treated fairly and learn from their mistakes. Restorative Circles were built in weekly to the Advisory Classes.

Case Study #9 – Principal John and Youth-Adult Partnership High School

Youth-Adult Partnership High School is a small, suburban school with 377 students who are primarily White (93%). Mission and Vision Statements stated: At Youth-Adult Partnership High School, we are guided by the vision of our citizenry and school board, which charge us to foster in young people the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to be prepared for the next stage of their lives, which justify the resources invested by the community. Principal John emphasized partnership in the community and working on real-world adult problems with the rising adults in his high school. Youth-Adult Partnership High School focuses on building these partnerships through courses within the curriculum as well as the Senior Capstone Project with adult mentors in the community. Principal John had a full-time Director of Career and Workforce who helps build and sustain community partnerships and the Senior Capstone Project. The Youth-Adult Partnership website highlights the Project-Based Learning Lab, Career Pathways, Innovation Center, Senior Project, Advisory Class, and the Racial Justice Class. The

cover of the Student Handbook featured a quote from James Baldwin stating, “The world is before you and you need not take it or leave it as it was when you came in.” I observed the Racial Justice Class at Youth-Adult Partnership High School. The Racial Justice Class was a true example of a Youth-Adult Partnership. Students had terrific thoughts and adults facilitated those thoughts into ideas for action.

Case Study #10 – Principal Ray and Distributed Leadership High School

Distributed Leadership High School is a small, suburban school with 597 students who are primarily White (80%). Core Values in the Code of Conduct included stating that there is a right way to express yourself in school if you want to be heard and that school is a special place where everyone had the right to feel safe. Principal Ray endorsed a Distributed Leadership approach in leading the staff and students at Distributed Leadership High School. Multiple certifications and pathways were encouraged at Distributed Leadership High School. SV and leadership were not directly mentioned on the website or in the Code of Conduct. However, there are leadership opportunities available through the clubs and activities highlighted on the website. Principal Ray worked directly with students on his Equity Committee. Principal Ray even taught leadership skills to his students at the beginning of every school year. Principal Ray also makes an effort work with and hear from a diverse group of students.

Multicase Report

The cross-case analysis resulted in 48 tentative assertions based upon cross-cutting themes. Data rated highly important from the cross-cutting themes comprised the heart of the multicase report in the form of final assertions. Eight final assertions based upon the strongest and most relevant combination of findings were developed (See Table

6–Multicase Assertions for the Final Report) regarding high school principals' perception and experience with SV and YAP.

Table 6

Multicase Assertions for the Final Report

#	Final Assertions	Evidence in Which Cases
Final Assertion #1	Identifying a small group of interested staff and partnering with outside organizations were strategies used by high school principals in this study to foster SV and YAP.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #2	Working directly with leadership and advisory councils, listening to student and teacher voices, and creating partnerships to solve real-world community problems were actions principals took to support SV and YAP.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #3	Identifying barriers to SV and YAP and leading a paradigm shift to overcome them were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #4	Creating structures to support SV and YAP through the curriculum, master schedule, and professional development were part of the experience of all of the principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
Final Assertion #5	Creating meaningful, relevant, inquiry-based, and project-based learning experiences enabled principals in this study to promote and sustain SV and YAP.	4,7,9

#	Final Assertion	Evidence in Which Cases
Final Assertion #6	Instituting shared, distributed, caring, and democratic leadership practices which support SV and YAP was a common theme among principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #7	Realizing the outcomes and advantages outweigh the challenges and barriers kept principals in this study committed to fostering SV and YAP in their schools.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #8	Viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP and a place to prepare them to be citizens in our communities and democracy was an approach shared by high school principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

Included in this report is how the evidence from each final assertion section related to the overall themes.

Final Assertion #1: Identifying Staff and Partnering with Organizations

Identifying a small group of interested staff and partnering with outside organizations were strategies used by high school principals in this study to foster SV and YAP. Piloting new initiatives with a small number of staff members and students is a common practice in educational leadership. Partnering with experts from outside organizations is prevalent in training sessions and professional development experiences of high school staff. All 10 of the principals in this study implemented one or both of these components in their efforts to foster SV and YAP in their high schools.

Identifying a Small Group of Interested Staff. The data showed that one of the key strategies used by principals in this study was finding a cohort of adults in the building who were interested in SV and YAP. Five participants in the study utilized this

strategy and described this cohort in terms such as, “critical mass of adults” (Principal Juan), “bench of people” (Principal Marilyn), and “core group of adults” (Principal Nick). The core group of staff helped principals in the study take the initial steps in leading and supporting SV and YAP in their schools.

> Administratively, you want to understand that you can't do it alone. I think you need a cohort of teachers and faculty members because they'll help you to sell this to the rest of their peers. I think that you probably want to go through a common training or read material or interact with people that have knowledge of student voice work. I think once you have that cohort of people together with common knowledge and common understanding whether it had been a training or not, then I think you begin to reach out to students. (Principal Darlene)

For these principals, the data showed fostering SV actually started with collaborating and empowering adults and being part of a team effort. “You can position yourself to be a really supportive champion for those teachers who are trying to practice SV” (Principal Dawn). Principals in this study realized they cannot foster SV and YAP without the help and involvement of their staff. Supporting the staff who were interested in this work helped to overcome challenges which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Partnering with Outside Organizations. The data indicated that 5 of the 10 principals in the study partnered with outside organizations in an effort to foster SV and YAP in their schools. These intermediary organizations such as the Quaglia Institute for Voice and Aspirations and UP for Learning provided staff assistance, surveys, and professional development to schools who partner with them. Additional examples of

partners for high schools were universities as well as departments within local districts such as New York City's Students and Educators for Equity.

> I knew what students wanted, but I just didn't know how to make it happen. I want them to feel like they are equal partners in this journey with us. Quaglia did that for me. I didn't know if my district would be supporting that and I waited. A year later, I get this invitation from the district asking if I would like to be partners (with Quaglia) and be a school who would be doing this work. I was so excited. I have been working with them for 3 years and it has totally changed our story at English Language Learners High School. (Principal Ingrid)

Four out of the five principals whose schools partnered with IO or universities did so with the Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations. Quaglia's staff are experts in the field of SV and help lead the SV movement. All four principals stated that Quaglia helped them build a solid foundation of the SV initiatives in their schools.

Principal Nick described a partnership with Equity University. The original goal of the partnership was a district-wide program regarding equity. As discussed in earlier chapters, including the voices of all students is one outcome of more equitable schools.

> The conversation had been floundering prior to me getting to Courageous Conversations. The Superintendent touched base with a local university and a professor, and began to have these equity conversations administratively in the summertime about three years ago. Throughout those conversations it was broken out that we had to get the students' voice in the midst of these conversations. (Principal Nick)

In Principal Nick's case, the Superintendent reached out to Equity University in order to provide administrative training and professional development. This experience led to a panel where former young alumni minority students shared their experiences with a school district and community panel called, "I wish I knew."

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #1 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP relied on other professionals to implement and sustain SV and YAP. Final Assertion #1 represented a cross-cutting theme as all principals in this study with experience in SV and YAP either utilized the help of internal staff members or external IO. Collaborating with staff within their high schools and partnering with IO who had expertise in SV and YAP allowed high school principals in this study to gain the experience needed to foster SV and YAP in their high schools.

Final Assertion #2: Principals Working Directly with Students

Working directly with leadership and advisory councils, listening to student and teacher voices, and creating partnerships to solve real-world community problems were actions principals took to support SV and YAP. All of the principals in this study took personal actions in order to make SV a priority in their schools. Principals either worked directly with student leadership or advisory councils or set up structures for other adults in their schools to do so. Principals noted that they modeled how to listen and act upon both student and teacher voice. In addition, Principal Dawn, Principal Rob, and Principal John established partnerships with their local communities in order to promote SV and YAPs.

Principals Working Directly with Leadership and Advisory Councils. A few principals in the study led the SV and YAP effort in their schools by working directly

with students on teams described as Leadership Councils, School Site Councils, Principal Advisory Councils, and Equity Committees. These principals felt that, in order to ask staff to listen to student voices, they needed to model the initiative by working directly with students in a formalized manner. Principals described their beliefs that working directly with students was not only an effective strategy, but also that it was a rewarding experience for them as principals.

Principal Ray took over at Distributed Leadership High School with a goal of working with students in a formal capacity. He decided to use existing programs that his high school had such as Student Council to create a council in which he was a participant. Principal Ray was successful in fostering communication and collaboration between him and student leaders at Distributed Leadership High School. This Council opened up additional conversations as student leaders decided in meetings that "they needed more of this" (Principal Ray). One result was the formation of an Equity Committee at Distributed Leadership.

> When I took over at Distributed Leadership as Principal, we did not have an avenue or vehicle for student feedback. We had a Student Council. We had a Class Advisor. We had National Honor Society. But there was no cohesiveness or system in place. The first thing that I worked on was how I connect these things. I ended up forming a separate Leadership Council of students made up of class officers from each of those kind of groups. Our demographics has changed rapidly. We have more students of color in the building than we have ever had. I think some of that old, "The rule is the rule" doesn't fit every student and doesn't

> fit every demographic. Some kids feel neglected in that process. I feel our Equity Committee has been student-driven. (Principal Ray)

Principal Ray noted that between the Leadership Council and Equity Committee at Distributed Leadership, SV included all students on an increasingly higher level. Students who were quiet, underrepresented, or not in leadership positions had a vehicle to express their voices.

Listening to Student and Staff Voices. The data indicated that all 10 of the principals in the study listened to the voices of their students and made it a priority in their SV and YAP work. For principals in this study, intentionally listening to the voices of students meant being a role model so that their staff would do the same.

> We have to set priorities. Since student voice is a priority for me, I want to try to do the best I can to be at everything that involves the development of student voice at school. Just talking to them and getting them to see that, "Hey, your voice is important. What you have to say is important. (Principal Juan)

Appendix M (Listening to Student Voice) provides additional examples from principals in the study relating to "walking the walk" (Principal Dawn) of this cross-cutting theme of intentionally listening to their students. In addition, the majority of principals directly mentioned listening to staff voices as another key component to promote a culture of listening at their schools.

> All the same things I want my teachers to manifest in their classrooms for kids, I have to manifest with teachers. I've got to be the listener-in-chief. I've got to be a co-conspirator, a collaborator, and not an autocrat. I have to be caring. So if I want teachers to care for kids, I have to care about teachers. (Principal Rob)

Principals in this study created a foundation of listening to students and staff in their buildings. This foundation is evident in formal structures they have created such as the observed Leadership Councils and Advisory Councils. This foundation of listening was also evident in the descriptions of their interactions with students in observed visits to their schools.

Creating Community Partnerships. A few principals in this study initiated effective school-community partnerships which fostered SV and YAP. These principals prioritized community involvement for a variety of reasons. They believed schools played a vital role in the community at large. Community partnerships created opportunities for their students to learn real-world adult skills. In addition, their involvement assisted in the needs of the community and helped to solve community problems.

> I think one place to start is to reflect on the needs of the community and of the kids. Inventory the challenges and the strengths of our school, our kids, our faculty and of our community, particularly in the community. What were the problems that we need to solve? And then the next question is, "How can we orient the resources of the school to approach those problems?" (Principal John)

One of the ways Principal John oriented the resources of Youth-Adult Partnership High School to reach into the community was to focus on the Senior Project. Principal John and his staff turned the mandated project into an engaging community project which was a highlight of both the school and local community. Principal John believed the outcome of the Senior Project was a YAP which mutually benefited his students and the community. His students learned valuable skills and did "adult work" (Principal John).

Community members received assistance with their organizations while also teaching civic and employable skills to the next generation of citizens.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #2 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP modeled how to work directly with students in their high schools, listen to the voices of both students and staff, and created community partnerships in order to foster SV and YAP. By working directly with students, principals attempted to hear from a diverse group of students who represented the demographics of the entire school. High school principals in this study also helped foster equity, social justice and school reform by working directly with their leadership groups.

Final Assertion #3: Identifying Barriers and Leading a Paradigm Shift

Identifying barriers to SV and YAP and creating solutions to eliminate them were part of the experience of all the principals in this study. Principals identified a number of barriers and challenges in their efforts to support SV and YAP. “I think the very, very difficult thing is that SV is hard work” (Principal Rob). Principals in this study identified four main barriers and challenges which led to the hard work and inconvenience of SV and YAP. These four barriers were staff resistance, parent resistance, marginalized students not being accustomed to using their voice, and funding.

Identifying Barriers to SV and YAP.

***Staff Resistance*.** The data and findings of this research study revealed that so much of principals’ experience with SV actually related to working with other adults. As referenced earlier in this chapter, one of the keys to success of principals’ implementing SV and YAP was finding a core group of interested staff willing to assist in the initiative. This core group of educators needed to help overcome the overall staff resistance which

seven out of the 10 principals' identified as a major barrier to success. The barrier of resistance ranged from a lack of belief in any new initiative, a lack of belief in student agency, a lack of understanding how to foster SV and YAP, and not wanting to relinquish the control they have in the classroom.

"Giving up control in the classroom is the biggest barrier to SV and YAP. Giving up command and control requires such a fundamental rethinking of the power dynamic of the classroom" (Principal Rob). Principals in this study faced the challenge of staff resistance in their buildings and put solutions in place to overcome this challenge (see Appendix N – Staff Resistance). Principal Darlene decided that she needed to be a role model to her staff and gave teachers more voice and input. Principal Darlene saw progress in those same areas in classrooms at Student Advocacy High School. Principal Rob decided to eliminate the front of every classroom. Teacher desks were placed at other locations in the classroom and multiple boards and Smart Panels were located on various walls.

***Parent Resistance*.** Parents possess their own unique memories and experiences of their high school experience and learning. Principals in this study acknowledge that their work with fostering SV creates a different experience for their students than what might have been for their parents and it is not "school as they know it" (Principal Rob). The principals in this study showed that they have met this challenge head on.

> Another barrier comes with the parents who are very traditional. They feel they are sending their kids to school similar to what the teachers think. Why do you have to let kids talk about Black Lives Matter, for example? Why are you letting kids do this when I don't want to let my kids talk or have a debate about politics in

> classes? Why should you take time away from English to talk about what's going on in the world? (Principal Ingrid)

Principal Ingrid believed students should be able to discuss and debate the real-world issues in which her students are interested. The traditional high school setting that many parents experienced has been replaced with schools such as the ones in this study which allow students to express their voices in the classroom and with their principals.

***Marginalized Students*.** A challenge of fostering SV mentioned by several of the principals in this study centered on trying to get the voices of all students heard. Students who get elected to Student Council searched out these leadership opportunities but represented a small segment of the student population.

> You have people who naturally gravitate to the top but you also have those kids who aren't being spoken for. You have to try to continue to outreach as much as you can. Even with a solid twenty students, how do we take those conversations and have it reach out to the entire student body in a productive manner? That's the challenge. That's a heavy challenge. (Principal Nick)

One of the reasons Principal Nick felt he had not been as successful fostering SV within his marginalized population was the sheer size (1,906 students) of Courageous Conversations High School. Similarly, Principal Sherry tried to foster SV and leadership within her Hispanic student population at Collaboration High School. Hispanic students comprise 55% of students at Collaboration. Although the data on the My Voice Survey showed that her Hispanic students and other students who are marginalized enjoy being at Collaboration High School, it was difficult fostering a sense of agency and voice.

> But when you look at how kids love campus through the Quaglia surveys and we have great longitudinal data, the Hispanic and African American students, the marginalized, the underrepresented kids, love school. Love their teachers. Love Collaboration High School. But we have not been able to bridge that gap to having them feel like they are welcome at the table or as efficacious leaders. We are not succeeding with that population and we have not figured out why. (Principal Sherry)

This challenge might be greater in large schools like Collaboration High School and Courageous Conversations High School. However, a few principals in this study who led smaller schools expressed similar experiences in reaching students who are marginalized and fostering their voices.

Funding. Principals in this study faced funding challenges related to SV and YAP in areas such as curriculum, personnel, training, and consulting. Five of the principals in this study created or supported courses which directly fostered SV and YAP. Principal Sherry reflected on a positive outcome of creating meaningful courses at Collaboration High School:

> We went from one leadership class to two leadership classes in the space of a year. Then the next year, we had 90 kids sign up, and I am thinking, "I created this problem." Now they know adults will listen to them and they are expected to do meaningful work. We had 90 kids so how do I pick which 60 because we only had two sections? It's expensive to add a class to the master schedule. In our district, it's $22,500 for each class.

Principal Sherry reallocated resources so that she could keep up with the increasing interest her students' had in utilizing their voice and leadership skills to make a difference at Collaboration.

However, principals stated that Superintendent and Local Boards of Education (BOE) must make a commitment to fund and be supportive of SV opportunities in their high schools.

Leading a Paradigm Shift. Principals in this study began to overcome the challenges presented above by leading a paradigm shift relating to power dynamics, control, and belief in their students. The change in mindset did not come easily at the principals' high schools, it took time, and it was still a work in progress.

> There was the old guard who said, "The rule is the rule and kids should follow the rule." However, it's been a little bit of a paradigm shift as far as giving student voice. I think that, overall, people understand the process and they respect it. (Principal Ray)

Principals utilized staff meetings, professional development opportunities, and worked with their intermediary SV and YAP partner organizations (IO) to assist in shifting the mindset towards SV and YAP. Principal Nick credited his shift in mindset to his efficacy and belief in his students at Courageous Conversations High School. Principal Marilyn encouraged her staff to allow students at Citizenship High School to respectfully engage in difficult and courageous conversations about school, community, and societal issues which impact them. Principal Rob believed that his teachers and administrators who accepted the hard work of changing the dynamic have created a more rewarding educational experience for themselves and their students. Appendix O (Paradigm Shift)

describes additional insights principals in this study had regarding making the important shift towards SV and YAP.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #3 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP had to overcome challenges and barriers in their journey of supporting SV and YAP. A cross-cutting theme was the challenge of staff resistance especially at the beginning of the SV and YAP initiative. Including and fostering the voices of students who were marginalized was a challenge to high principals in this study. Another cross-cutting theme in Final Assertion #3 was the response high school principals had by deciding to lead a paradigm shift in their high schools.

Final Assertion #4: Creating Structures to Support SV and YAP

Creating structures to support SV and YAP through the curriculum, master schedule, and professional development were part of the experience of all of the principals in this study. Five of the principals went into detail regarding the importance of these structures in leading to successful outcomes in their SV and YAP work. Principal Marilyn stated, "You have to approach SV in a couple of different ways. There's the more concrete lens of looking at actual structures and initiatives. Deciding what SV looks like in curriculum, class, clubs, advisories, and actual structures of instruction." This section will present the most common structures utilized by principals in this study relating to curriculum, building in classes in the master schedule, and staff professional development.

Curriculum and Master Schedule. Allocating the precious resource of time within a school day is a leadership practice and skill that is honed with the logistics high school principals work through on an annual basis. Principals in this study found a

variety of ways to integrate SV and YAP in their master schedule during school hours. Principal John fostered SV and YAP through a curriculum focused on the needs of Youth-Adult Partnership High School's surrounding community.

> There are no more important resources in the school than these two—human resources and time. In our curriculum planning handbook, we emphasize that we should be planning our curriculum with the needs in mind—the needs of the kids and the needs of the community. We are encouraging teachers to do work that involves kids getting out into the community and working with meaningful tools to get adult tasks done. Broad-scale orienting the curriculum in these directions where we try to treat young adults like adults to solve contemporary problems. It's not happening everywhere in the curriculum, but is a priority for us. (Principal John)

Examples of this community-oriented curriculum were Youth-Adult Partnership's Senior Project, Racial Justice Alliance Course, and Personalized Learning Plans (PLP). Principal John thought that the curriculum led to community and staff mentorships with his students. The outcome of this mentorship model, according to Principal John, was an example of a true YAP.

A few of the principals integrated an Advisory Class which meets between once-a-month to twice-a-week within the master schedule. Advisory Class was designed to have one adult build relationships, listen to students' needs, advocate for students, and partner with students to create change.

> Then when you marry that to the ethic of care that is manifest by the advisory program, you really have a school where students are at the heart and center of

> everything we do and not in the sort of paternalistic way. But it is very authentic. Their ideas, their vision, their needs, and their thoughts are at the center. And again that notion that we can teach teachers to be better listeners, and all of us, and we can really create that notion of really listening to kids it becomes super important. (Principal Rob)

Principals noted that advisories are set up as YAP with caring adults interested and advocating for students in their class. Principal Rob's Advisory Class actually called for the one adult to have the same 20 students for their entire four years at Student Inquiry High School.

Creating approved courses and Advisory Classes within the curriculum were common themes for a few of the principals in this study. Principals noted that this comprehensive approach to SV courses developed over time. It did not happen overnight. In addition, principals were able to integrate collaboration sessions within the monthly master schedule. These Collaboration Sessions encouraged SV and fostered YAP in areas of school and community improvement. "Students knew that adults were listening to them and they were expected to do meaningful work (Principal Sherry)." Principal Sherry credited the collaboration sessions as the reason for the expansion of additional leadership courses within the master schedule. In the span of three years, Principal Sherry's three Leadership Classes were integrated into the master schedule.

Professional Development. The importance of building the capacity of their teachers and staff in training and professional development regarding SV and YAP work was a common theme of principals in this study. Principals viewed the training for both the small cadre of staff who initially embraced SV and YAP and for the entire staff in the

school as beneficial to their work in fostering SV and YAP. Principal Darlene credited a multi-faceted training approach at the school- and district-level which provided Student Advocacy High School with the professional learning needed to encourage SV and YAP. "Staff who are entrusted the responsibility of interacting and working with students need to be provided with ideology and training on how to best allow students to express their voice and express their positions" (Principal Darlene). Principal Darlene cited teacher leaders called PLC Coordinators at Student Advocacy High School who facilitated training with staff members bi-weekly. "They talked about ways to allow students to be able to infuse their thoughts in the classroom setting—their thoughts, their feelings, and things along those lines" (Principal Darlene). Student Advocacy School District also partnered with the Quaglia Institute for Student Voice and Aspirations. Principal Darlene gave her Superintendent credit for Bringing in Quaglia and having them speak to the entire staff. Principal Darlene noted that Quaglia's follow-up professional development "allowed staff to go through a common training and interact with people who have knowledge and experience in SV work." The building-level and district-level training provided Darlene's staff with the necessary knowledge and inspiration to begin implementing the move towards embracing SV and YAP at Student Advocacy High School.

Implementing student-led professional development was a strategy a few principals in this study supported. Principal Ingrid identified student-led professional development as a valuable process. "One of the things which has been amazing at my school is that we have integrated professional development led by students" (Principal Ingrid). Principal Ingrid provided two impactful examples of how her students led

trainings which had positive staff outcomes. During one session, students shared some of their traumas and how it affects their learning. In another session, English Language Learners spoke in their own language, showed teachers how it felt to learn in their classrooms, and gave strategies which would help them. “It is great for students to see that we are not just talking the talk but we are also walking the walk. We are showing them that their voice is important” (Principal Ingrid). Principal Ingrid felt so strongly about student-led professional development that she included it in English Language Learner High School’s overall professional development plan for the past three years. She described the process as a win-win. The staff learn directly from their students and the students felt empowered.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #4 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP needed to create structures within their high schools in order to foster and sustain SV and YAP. Allocating the resources of time within the master schedule and funding within the high school budget were cross-cutting themes mentioned by high school principals in this study. One aspect of creating time within the master schedule successfully used by principals in this study was creating Advisory classes in their schools.

Final Assertion #5: Creating Meaningful Learning Experiences

Creating meaningful, relevant, inquiry-based, and project-based learning experiences enabled principals in this study to promote and sustain SV and YAP. The paradigm shift and structures noted above helped principals implement learning experiences in which students were agents of their own learning and critical thinkers. Principal Dawn believed in student inquiry as a Social Studies teacher prior to becoming

a Principal. “I was teaching an Alternative Civics Course called Creating Sustainable Communities. It was from that course that I started to really explore and delve into student inquiry and soliciting the voices of students in development of curriculum” (Principal Dawn). Principal Dawn’s experience with her classes, as well as with exploring inquiry-based teaching and learning in other countries through a grant she received, set the foundation for her work as Principal of Sustaining Communities High School. Principal Dawn pointed out opportunities for her students to be critical thinkers by engaging in meaningful, real-world experiences through Sustaining Communities’ emerging culturally responsive curriculum.

> I became an administrator at the school where I was championing student voice. In goalsetting with staff, it was really about this inquiry process and really making sure that when I went into classrooms, I wanted to make sure that I was seeing our students asking genuine questions, and where might they be helping to shape the learning experience. More recently, I saw student voices come alive since George Floyd. We saw our school go through the process of raising the Black Lives Matter flag. Those are some ways in which students will look back at their high school experience and remember what they learned and got to practice. This is the stuff that they are going to remember for years down the road. It's not the high school experience where the school lunches really sucked. (Principal Dawn)

Principal Dawn and her students looked at ways to become an antiracist school, wrestled with having an armed School Resource Officer at school, and supported Black Lives Matter.

Sustaining Communities' structure and culture under Principal Dawn's leadership allowed its students to find meaning with these real-world issues impacting them.

Principals in this study also felt that placing the students at the center of their learning fostered meaning and relevance while encouraging SV and YAP. Principal Rob situated relevance in the form of essential questions in grades nine through eleven. See Table 7 – Student Inquiry High School Essential Questions.

Principal Rob described these essential questions as encouraging students to have a voice in "understanding themselves, their world, and how they make change. Kids have an understanding of the relevance of their education." Principals pointed to these components of student learning in classrooms and in their schools which lead directly to fostering SV and YAP.

> On some kind of a very basic level, an inquiry-driven, caring education where students have the opportunity to really drive their education in meaningful ways inherently demands student voice. That process of inquiry, research, collaboration, presentation, reflection - those iterative core values—are inherently student-centered, and therefore are inherently about student voice. When you create a framework for curriculum design that has those core values, it is really powerful. (Principal Rob)

Principals in this study moved away from focusing on traditional direct instruction with the teacher at the center and students regurgitating the information. Principals noted that inquiry placed students and the center of their learning and inherently promoted independence, meaning, identity, agency, SV, and YAP.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #5 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP created meaningful educational experiences for all students in their high schools. Inquiry-based and project-based learning implemented within the overall high school curriculum had an impact on students at every grade level including those who were marginalized. A cross-cutting theme in creating meaningful learning experiences also related to allowing students to learn and use their voices regarding real-world social justice issues in which they were interested.

Table 7

Student Inquiry High School Essential Questions

Grade	Theme	Essential Questions
9	Identity	Who am I? How will I impact my world? How does my world impact me?
10	Systems	What are the systems that exist in the world? How do systems impact individuals? How do individuals impact systems?
11	Change	How am I a change agent in the world? How does my world change me?

Final Assertion #6: Distributed and Democratic Leadership Practices

Instituting shared, distributed, caring, and democratic leadership practices which support SV and YAP was a common theme among principals in this study. Four out of the 10 principals in this study directly mentioned distributed leadership as a practice which helped them support SV and YAP. Additional common leadership practices utilized by principals in this study were delegating, empowering, and collaborating. These important leadership practices and approaches allowed principals to promote an open, inclusive school culture where students are seen as valued stakeholders in their educational journey. Empowering those around him was the leadership strategy that Principal Nick embraced in order to support SV and YAP at Courageous Conversations High School with his 1,906 students. Principal Nick was able to empower his staff because he has confidence in them.

> I am brilliant because I know I am not. I have no problem delegating because it empowers people around me to be productive. I have to empower or I wouldn't get anything accomplished. I have some fantastic teachers and they have great connections with kids. I know that they have the passion and the time to dedicate to SV so that keeps things rolling. They work with the students and think outside the box. (Principal Nick)

Principal Nick noted that one of his roles as leader was to help teachers create the time necessary within their schedules to work with students. For example, Principal Nick created solutions by taking teachers off of duties during student lunch so that teachers could foster SV and YAP.

Principal Ray directly mentioned empowering students as an important piece of his leadership strategy. Principal Ray did his doctoral research on distributed leadership. “If you are going to have student leadership and voice, you also have to have action. I wanted to make sure that I am using students’ voice and feedback and empowering students to make decisions on those actions” (Principal Ray). Principal Ray set the foundation for students to be empowered by actually taking time in the beginning of each school year to teach leadership skills and processes to his students. Principal Ray stated that he has seen the results as his students were able to take their ideas from conception to implementation.

Sustaining Communities High School, under the leadership of Principal Dawn, was centered on a democratic mission. Principal Dawn’s experience as a teacher set the foundation for her democratic leadership style. Principal Dawn promoted having her students engaged in the ideals of democracy in her school and community. Similar to Principal Marilyn, Principal Dawn framed her approach around two important questions. “How do you democratize schools? How can schooling become truly a laboratory for student voice?” (Principal Dawn). Principal Dawn provided background to her approach by stating:

> High school is the time and place where students are not just subjected to an adult and then swallowing the opinions and rhetoric about others, but they are given that genuine space and opportunity to really apply and practice democracy. To become truly aware of the identity work that adolescents have to do and find where their voice feels strong.

Principal Dawn cited the work with her students in confronting community issues as examples of how her students learned to engage in the democratic civic life of their neighbors. Students had the opportunity to talk about the levers of power in a democracy and touch those levers as they tried to solve community issues and challenges.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #6 showed that principals with experience in SV and YAP were able to support these initiatives through distributed and democratic leadership practices. These leadership practices promoted an inclusive school environment which fostered respect, listening, and collaboration with everyone in their school community including students. Final Assertion #6 was a cross-cutting theme because distributed, democratic, collaborative leadership practices were utilized by all principals in this study regardless of school size or demographics.

Final Assertion #7: Advantages and Outcomes

Realizing the outcomes and advantages outweigh the challenges and barriers kept principals in this study committed to fostering SV and YAP in their schools. Principals mentioned a variety of advantages and outcomes relating to their experience in fostering SV and YAP. Principal John pointed directly at Youth-Adult Partnership High School's attendance data and graduation rates as evidence that his SV and YAP work was making an impact.

> Another positive outcome is engagement in school. Attendance improves and for us at Youth-Adult Partnership High our focus of the last 10 years has been on relationships and relevance. Relevance involves doing real-world work that involves working with adults. You start to see your graduation rates rise. We used to have persistently below state averages. The average four-year graduation rate

> was 77, 78% before I joined our school. During my tenure it has climbed into the 90s and now every year we are at or above state averages in part because of this focus on doing work that matters. (Principal John)

The most prevalent advantages and outcomes were developing students who possessed agency, advocacy, and self-esteem as well as connecting students' authentic learning to both school and real life. This section will discuss other positive advantages and outcomes principals' in this study credited to their work with SV and YAP.

Agency. The experience of principals in this study showed that one of the greatest advantages and outcomes to fostering SV and YAP was developing student agency. Principals noted that instilling agency in their students through SV and YAP was a process and a journey. Principal Marilyn stated the journey took time, effort, focus, planning, and structure:

> When we talk about student voice, we are also talking about their ability to have agency, to be self-directed, to form their own opinions, to be critical thinkers, to engage with themselves, to engage in the world, to engage with others in a way that healthy and beneficial for them and for our society. And also, it means they're empowered in their own life trajectory.

Principal Marilyn's students had a foundation of skills which applied to school as well as their lives in their community and society at large. Principal Rob stated his views on agency as he reflected:

> I want school to be healthy and meaningful and powerful. I want kids to understand that they are valued and valuable and I want them to see themselves as active, powerful agents of change in their world. The only way to do that is to

> value their voice and to understand that our job as educators is to be a little wiser than they are and to hopefully impart some of that wisdom to them and then help them to unlock their agency so their path is a little smoother. That's our job.

Similar to Principal Marilyn, Principal Rob wanted his students to transfer the skills and lessons they have learned at Student Inquiry High School and apply them to their lives beyond high school. Not only did Principal Rob want to set his students up for a successful transition, he wanted them to be active change agents in their communities and in our democracy.

Advocacy. Principals' experience with SV and YAP resulted in building advocacy in their students. Principal Darlene worked directly with a group of her students who were interested in making a change at Student Advocacy High School. Principal Darlene had a group of students who were interested in having enhanced dining options. This group wanted healthy options, vegan options, and more fresh fruits. Principal Darlene facilitated meetings between the district food service provider and her students. The result was the district food service provider did make important changes to the menu options. Students at Student Advocacy High School even started a Vegan Club and now have a subcommittee for healthy dining.

> The idea of advocacy is very important. Just because something is what it appears to be now doesn't mean it has to be that way as we move forward. I think if you do SV right and support it, you provide students opportunities like this and they can deliver. They can deliver and show you what they are capable of. Kids are amazing. I truly, truly believe in kids. (Principal Darlene)

Principal Darlene's belief and efficacy in her students was contagious. Students in Principal Darlene's Leadership Council displayed confidence, self-esteem, and a sense that their advocacy was important to the Student Advocacy school community.

Self-Esteem. Principals' belief in their students led to a culture of SV and YAP that allow students to possess self-esteem, a sense of purpose, identity, and sense of worth. Principal John pointed to his Senior Project which is a capstone graduation requirement at Youth-Adult Partnership High School and required his students to work with a mentor in the community.

> Something significant and I think, for the individual child, there's a sense of purpose and a sense of efficacy and a sense of identity that starts to coalesce when you feel like you're doing work with purpose that the community needs doing or that meets an individual need, or a need of the school, or in need of the community. Young people who are searching for a sense of self as they move through adolescence can emerge from these experiences a sense of their identity as a person who does meaningful work in the world. (Principal John).

Principal John believed that the Senior Project even provided his students a sense of vocation as they moved from high school into the next phase of their education and careers. Working with a community mentor helped to increase confidence and raise their self-esteem.

Connections to School. Principals in this study felt that through their support of SV and YAP students were able to positively connect to their high schools and their learning experiences. Their high schools became more than a place where students simply "do school" (Principal Nick). Principal Nick worked hard to foster SV and, along

with his partnership with Equity University, created a culture in which students value the connections they have made to Courageous Conversations High School.

> I think the kids feel comfortable and they think that they have input. I think that is a positive outcome. I think they are not afraid and they feel like they're not just being talked to. They feel like they are being talked with. We do a really good job and emphasize really getting student voice on everything. I think one of the positives is that the students do feel that they have a voice in the district. Even during this pandemic, we have relied on some of the seniors both this year and last year to help us make some pretty heavy decisions. So I think they feel that they truly have input in the running of their school and they take ownership. (Principal Nick)

Principal Nick's willingness to rely on students to assist with important decisions at Courageous Conversations helped them feel valued and that they have a voice, a vote, and an impact in their education. Principal Nick noted that students say that Courageous Conversations High School felt "different" to them in a positive way compared to their other schools. Students felt that they were able to engage in important conversations and demonstrate their leadership abilities.

Connections to Real Life. Providing students with authentic learning experiences which relate to real life was an advantage of SV and YAP noted by principals in this study. Principal Dawn recounted an example of one of her proudest moments as a teacher which helped form the basis of being a principal who fosters SV and YAP. One of the topics in Dawn's Creating Sustainable Communities Course was students' relationship to energy. Dawn and her students tried to understand what energy is, how we consume it,

and our relationship to it. Students expanded their knowledge by exploring the school's relationship to energy. They started asking important questions such as, "Where does our energy come from? What are we consuming for energy? What do our electric bills look like?" (Principal Dawn). Students gathered the answers and asked Principal Dawn to help them share their findings. Principal Dawn connected her students to the energy audit organization in the state. Representatives from the energy audit organization encouraged Dawn's students to do a presentation to the Board of Education.

> It's authentic performance assessment. We want to see our kids taking their education and doing good in the world. I think this example is the epitome of student voice. Some of the things we can't measure are "What are they going to carry forward?" I watch in a number of my students five or six years out, start to become really engaged in their community. You can see them on front porch forums or on social media sites, or in the newspaper in they are championing causes that they believe in. To me, that's the testament to the value of student voice. (Principal Dawn)

Principal Dawn recalled that her students were excited to do the presentation and the School Board Members asked them great questions. They convinced the Board of Education to make a $13,000 investment in retrofitting all the lighting in the school with T8 lightbulbs instead of the T12s that were being used. Principal Dawn's students proposed using the savings to support other important programs at Sustaining Communities High School.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #7 showed that there were many advantages and positive school outcomes where principals fostered SV and YAP in their

high schools. These outcomes and advantages provided students with skills, confidence, leadership capacity, and personal attributes which could help them be successful in high school and in real life. These positive outcomes were cross-cutting themes both for individual students and the school community at large.

Final Assertion #8: Safe Place to Practice Citizenship

Viewing high school as a place to prepare students as citizens in school and society was a theme shared by all principals in this study. Principals shared their beliefs that SV and YAP helped to impart valuable lessons in citizenship, learn and practice valuable skills, and set them up for success as citizens in their communities and in our democracy. Principals viewed citizenship both as a valuable trait for students while in their schools and as preparation for being future citizens in our democracy. Allowing his students to have a voice during high school was an example of "developing citizenship and making a positive difference" (Principal Ray). Principal Marilyn felt that it is critically important to establish voice while in school due to the challenges students faced as citizens in our democracy after leaving high school.

Principal Marilyn pointed to the Capitol Insurrection, racial disparities, and social justice issues as examples of the challenges our democracy faces as our students graduate and become adults in our society. Principal Marilyn felt that utilizing high school as an opportunity for students to practice using your voice in appropriate ways provided a foundation for her students to be successful in their futures as citizens.

> I think you have to be really intentional about creating, over time, lots of different kinds of spaces, ways for kids to practice using their voice. But when we talk about student voice, we are also talking about their ability to have agency, to be

> self-directed, to form their own opinions, to be critical thinkers, to engage with themselves, to engage in the world, to engage with others in a way that healthy and beneficial for them and for our society. And also, it means they're empowered in their own life trajectory. We need to prepare them to be able to tackle the real entrenched and intractable problems that it in many ways we created for them. The benefits, selfishly, is that I want to support our children in being smarter and more thoughtful and more compassionate, more powerful in tackling those problems than we have been. I also want them to be able to survive it and thrive in this increasingly complicated and difficult world. (Principal Marilyn)

Principals in this study believed that preparing students to be citizens in our democracy is the overall job of the educational system and that SV sets the foundation for citizenship and allows our students to be positive, productive members of the society they enter upon graduation (see Appendix P – Safe Place to Practice Citizenship Statements). . The theme of fostering SV and YAP during high school to provide knowledge and skills which help to create prepared citizens was a cross cutting theme in this study. Principals emphasized this outcome as an important component of their focus in prioritizing SV and YAP.

The evidence supporting Final Assertion #8 showed that high school principals in this study viewed their schools as a safe place for students to practice and learn valuable skills which will help them be citizens in their communities. A theme of the principals in this study was that the reason for a high school education was to prepare students to be members of our society at large. Students needed to use their voice and be assisted by the adults in schools in order to become engaged and responsible citizens in our democracy.

Summary

This chapter presented information about each individual case study and provided a multicase report based upon final assertions of the multicase analysis. Final assertions included identifying small groups of staff, partnering with outside organizations, working directly with students, identifying and overcoming barriers, creating structures and meaningful learning opportunities, instituting shared distributed leadership practices, and viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP. Data from interviews, observations, or document analysis were provided as evidence of each assertion. High school principals with experience in SV and YAP have clearly made it a priority in their schools and in their leadership practices to foster and support SV and YAP. Outside partnerships assisted in beginning the journey into SV and YAP or in helping participants in this study sustain SV and YAP. Embedded professional development including student-led professional development was a factor in the success of SV and YAP efforts for the principals in this study. Partnering with outside organizations takes a financial commitment which was supported at the district level, at least initially, for the high school principal participants.

Challenges and barriers involving SV and YAP for the high school principals in this study were also presented along with outcomes, advantages, and solutions. The most prominent challenges were staff resistance, parent resistance, engaging students who are marginalized, funding, and creating time and space for SV and YAP. Principal participants overcame those challenges by leading paradigm shifts, breaking down power dynamics, integrating courses in the curriculum which fostered SV and YAP, implementing inquiry-based and project-based approaches, and situating their high

schools to help improve the overall community. Although the challenges are many, the evidence in this study revealed that high school principal participants felt that the outcomes and advantages of supporting SV and YAP are worth it. These advantages and outcomes included developing students in their high schools who possess agency, advocacy, and self-esteem and who are prepared to be citizens in their communities and the world.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the perception and experiences of high school principals regarding SV and YAP in their schools. This study utilized Stake's (2006) Multiple Case Study Analysis by interviewing and observing 10 high school principals who had experience with SV and YAP. A multicase report was completed which included eight Final Assertions based upon cross cutting themes from individual cases. The study was situated within the New DEEL theoretical framework (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). In many ways, this study was based upon recommendations of Reame et al. (2017) study titled Listening, Learning, and Relationships: An Investigation of How Principals Facilitate Student Voice. Reame et al.'s study (2017) focused on elementary school principals and concluded that it would be helpful to examine the secondary principal in facilitating SV. This study also attempted to understand how principals situate student agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice within SV and YAP in high schools. Reame et al. (2017) stated a critical study that marries social justice and SV would be a thought-provoking and informative critical piece of research. This chapter will summarize key findings based upon research questions; discuss implications for practice, policy, research, and leadership; and provide recommendations for high school principals regarding SV and YAP.

The perception and experience with SV and YAP of the 10 principals in this study were varied and unique. In one or more ways, principals in this study made SV and YAP a priority. This conclusion was evidenced by principals' responses to interview questions as well as through the observations of their SV and YAP initiatives at their schools. High

school principals in this study prioritized SV and YAP by modeling how to listen to SV. Many principals took personal action by forming Principal Advisory Committees or Equity Committees made up of students. These high school principals also found small groups of staff who were interested in fostering SV and YAP and piloted initiatives with them. Every principal in this study had to overcome barriers to SV and YAP by changing the paradigm and shifting the power dynamics of traditional education. These principals created structures to support SV and YAP in their schools by creating meaningful learning experiences, creating time within their master schedule, and viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP. All of the principals in this study could be characterized as New DEEL leaders who promote democratic and distributed leadership practices. This study set out to answer three research questions:

1) What are high school principal's perceptions and experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
2) What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
    a) What are challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering student voice and youth-adult partnerships?
3) How have principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships in relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?
    a) How have principals fostered student voice and youth-adult partnerships with their students who are marginalized?

What are High School Principal's Perceptions and Experience with Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships?

The principals in this study successfully fostered SV and YAP by making it a priority within their leadership practice. Principals with experience in SV not only listened to their students, they went a step further by taking individual, group, or school-wide action in order to foster SV and YAP. Principals also went beyond state and local mandates and decided to foster a culture of listening *to* and partnering *with* their students. They demonstrated an unwavering belief in their students and a desire to make an impact on them during their high school years. The SV and YAP literature in Chapter 2 cited listening as a first and necessary step for principals in fostering SV (Mitra, 2005; Quaglia, 2016). In addition, principals also realized that they could not foster SV and YAP alone. This study also revealed that empowering a small group of adults to help principals foster SV and YAP was a key component in the success of the initiative.

The literature in Chapter 2 identified only a few examples of approved courses in high school curricula which truly fostered SV and YAP. This study revealed that a number of high school principals with experience in SV and YAP had approved courses, Advisory Classes, or collaboration sessions in their schools which fostered voice and partnership with students. SV can focus on pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, and classroom or school culture. It can be spontaneous or carefully planned out, but perhaps the simplest distinction among various types of SV initiatives is whether they are endorsed by school leaders (Conner, 2020). High school principals in this study planned and approved courses and sessions which helped build and sustain SV and YAP in their schools. The example I used in the positionality statement from Burlington City High School was an administrator-endorsed spontaneous SV and YAP initiative. The "25

Saves Lives" initiative fostered SV and YAP for the duration of the campaign. However, it was not engrained into the curriculum, and, therefore, the SV and YAP were not sustained to a high level in the next few years at Burlington City High School. High school principals in this study kept SV and YAP at a high level by having dedicated courses, staff, and resources focused on sustaining SV and YAP.

The review of the literature suggested that professional development in the area of SV and YAP helped high school principals introduce, foster, and sustain SV and YAP. This professional development was often provided by intermediary organizations, higher education partners, or Department of Education initiatives. Six of the high school principals in this study utilized these organizations to provide professional development to their staff; and a few principals extended the professional development and learning opportunities for their staff by having students lead staff professional development sessions. We have learned that there is often one thing missing from most professional learning sessions that can significantly improve them: students. SV can be a significant contributor to a climate of professional learning (Nagle & Bishop, 2021). High school principals in this study who had students lead professional development stated that the sessions not only added legitimacy to the voice of students, but also created very effective professional learning for their staff.

The literature emphasized that the role of the student within the traditional power dynamic between students and teachers, as well as students and administrators, had to be redesigned in order to foster SV and YAP. Cook-Sather (2015) stated it is essential that anyone engaged in SV work critically to analyze the politics in play, the way power dynamics between students, teachers, and administrators play out in that work, and to

identify the underlying assumptions and purpose of education. High School principals in this study with experience in SV and YAP were able to effectively reduce the power dynamic of the traditional high school setting. Reducing this power dynamic took a multi-faceted approach which started with genuinely wanting to listen to the voices of their students, place them at the center of their learning, and positioning them as agents of change within their schools.

What Are the Advantages and Disadvantages for High School Principals in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships?

An important advantage for principals fostering SV and YAP was the democratic school culture which resulted from their efforts. The literature reviewed regarding SV and YAP traced its beginning to the work of John Dewey and Paulo Freire. In his 1937 speech, "Democracy and Educational Administration," Dewey lifts up three priorities for leadership practice (Boydston, 2008):

1. School administrators should support participatory classrooms in which all students engage in dialogue and inquiry about vital issues of shared concern.
2. Leaders must create opportunities for students to exercise voice and participate in school governance.
3. Leading for democracy entails establishing a democratic culture in which hierarchy and coercion are replaced by "mutual consultation."

The majority of high school principals in this study modeled these three priorities as they fostered SV and YAP. Principals established inquiry-based and project-based classrooms and learning experiences. Principals created opportunities for students to express their voices and take action in school and community improvement initiatives. Principals established YAP to allow students and adults to work together in mutual consultation in

order to solve real-world problems. These YAP were also described by Freire (1970) as a liberating and problem-posing education. YAP working with real-world issues were most evident in the Racial Justice Class at Youth-Adult Partnership High School, the savings of $13,000 in electrical bills at Sustaining Communities High School, and the campaign to form an African American History Class at Student Advocacy High School.

Another advantage for high school principals in this study was that they felt their support of SV and YAP helped to develop citizenship and prepare their students for being citizens of our democracy. In the literature review, Greenfield (1993) called for schools to prepare students for the roles and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society. High school principals in this study were able to foster agency, confidence, and the leadership skills necessary for students to have an understanding of how to participate in the democratic process. Rogers and Kahne (2021) tell us that this process is not the typical one in our schools:

> Historically, Americans have looked to public schools to establish democratic commitments and enable young people to engage thoughtfully in social issues. Yet, in recent decades, preparing students for college and the workplace has garnered more and more attention, often at the expense of civic preparation. Only about one in three high school principals in a national survey we conducted in 2018 cited "promoting informed participation in civic and community life" as one of their school's top three goals.

Many of the principals in this study felt that their high school should be a place for students to practice being engaged future citizens in our democracy. These principals modeled the New DEEL framework of inclusion, dialogue, and democratic participation.

A major disadvantage of trying to foster SV and YAP can be found in the overall structure, curriculum, and policies of the traditional high school setting. SV and YAP are not graduation requirements and do not have a sequence of identified courses such as English Language Arts or Mathematics. The courses which high school principals in this study established are examples of electives or additional civics courses. Although these courses may be used for elective credits towards graduation, they are not required in order to get a high school diploma. The Vermont Agency of Education took steps towards formally supporting SV and YAP in their flexible pathways to graduation called Act 77 which was enacted in 2013. Act 77 calls for students to have a voice in creating pathways towards graduation which interest them. Flexible pathways to graduation means any combination of high-quality academic and experiential components leading to secondary school completion which may include assessments that allow the student to apply his or her knowledge and skills to tasks that are of interest to that student (Vermont Agency of Education, 2022). Act 77 situates the student in the center of his or her learning with a Personalized Learning Plan PLP designed to attain postsecondary readiness and be prepared to engage actively in a civic life (Vermont Agency of Education, 2022). Students in Vermont have a PLP based upon their input, interests, aspirations, and abilities as a requirement to graduate rather than being required to attain a score on a state assessment.

What Are Challenges and Barriers for High School Principals in Fostering Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships?

High school principals in this study faced many challenges in their efforts to include, foster, and sustain SV and YAP in their schools. The overall challenge was moving from a traditional high school structure and mindset to a new paradigm of listening,

partnering, and taking action with students. Principals in this study viewed students as being capable of framing their individual education as well as making positive changes in their school and community. This inclusive and democratic view was not initially shared by many of the staff members in the high schools studied. These staff members held the traditional view that there should be a power distinction between staff and students. Principals in this study had to overcome this traditional mindset by finding a few staff members who believed in SV and YAP and who were willing to participate in the initiative. Principals used this small group of staff members as a model to help the other adults in the building step outside of their comfort zone of control and embrace the new paradigm (Benner et al., 2019). In addition, high school principals faced challenges of creating time in their own schedule to meet with students, creating time within their master schedule to encourage SV and YAP, promoting SV and YAP with their students who are marginalized, and formalizing SV and YAP in their schools with funding and policy changes.

An important finding in how high school principals overcame the challenge of implementing SV and YAP in their schools was not initially uncovered in the literature. The study found that the majority of high school principals created time within their personal practice to meet directly with a group of students. Principals had different names for these groups including Principal Advisory Committees, Equity Committees, or Leadership Councils. These principals were models of how to include the voices of students, how to partner with students, and how to situate students as important stakeholders in the educational community. The message was clear. If the principal can find the time meet, listen, and partner with students, the rest of the staff could commit to the same practice. In researching Principal/Student Advisory Councils, I found one study

in which Student Advisory Committees were mandated in the high schools of a large, urban district. High school principals in that study also faced challenges and results varied in terms of successful implementation. However, findings suggested that most high school principals were receptive towards the implementation of SV initiatives as a platform for exercising SV at school (Giraldo-Garcia et al., 2020). Establishing a Principal Advisory Committee or Student Advisory Committee like the ones established in these studies can help high school principals overcome challenges they face in implementing SV and YAP in their schools.

In contrast to the literature which revealed only a few high schools which allocated time, resources, and courses within the schedule, the majority of the high school principals with experience in this study created time or classes built into the schedule which supported SV and YAP. This commitment led to SV and YAP not only being implemented in their schools but also being sustained as part of the foundation and new tradition of their schools. This commitment helped high school principals overcome the challenge of making opportunities for SV equally open to all students (Council for Europe, 2021). SV was not just something which was open to students in formalized settings such as Student Government. Students were able to take Leadership Courses, Racial Justice Courses, and have built-in collaboration time to use their voices and partner with adults. Finally, many of the high school principals in this study implemented Advisory classes for all students and staff in their buildings to have time for discussions, restorative circle time, and SV projects.

Overcoming the many challenges high school principals encounter in fostering and sustaining SV and YAP was the overall challenge in itself faced by high school

principals in this study. High school principals in this study worked from a strong sense of belief in their students and a belief that high schools should help prepare their students for being citizens in our democracy. These high school principals modeled many of the components of being New DEEL leaders who supported inclusive and democratic leadership approaches to their practice as educational leaders. Principals in this study can be described as New DEEL leaders who are scholars in the field of educational administration calling for more progressive, ethical, and democratic forms of renewal for schools in the United States. These leaders are part of a long tradition linking social justice and democracy in education (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). These principals were willing to overcome and eliminate barriers evident in the traditional model of education and move their schools towards involving, listening, and partnering with students as a new and democratic model of education.

How Have High School Principals Fostered Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships Relating to Equity, Social Justice, and School Reform?

This study began in March of 2021 during a worldwide Covid-19 pandemic as well as a national focus on racial and social justice. George Floyd had been killed less than a year earlier and the Black Lives Matter movement called for change in our society. The pandemic and murder brought equity issues to the forefront of our students' attention both during school and in their lives outside of school. High school principals in this study had fostered equity, social justice, and school reform prior to the pandemic and George Floyd's murder and were well situated to respond to these societal issues as well. These principals had already listened to their students, partnered with them, and instilled a sense of agency and identity in their students. These principals believed in their students and trusted their students to be agents of change and productive citizens in their

school. The trust established between Principal Ingrid and one of her students allowed her to reflect a social justice issue and then act on it. A few days after George Floyd was murdered, a student emailed Principal Nidia and asked why she had not put out a statement regarding his death. The student said teachers were not talking about it because Principal Nidia had not provided the forum by making a statement. Principal Nidia reflected on the email, talked to the student, and released a written statement the next day. The student felt that Principal Nidia's response statement allowed students and teachers to discuss racism and social justice in a much more effective manner due to Principal Nidia's statement and support.

There are a number of examples of how high school principals in this study had demonstrated equity, social justice, and school reform. Principal John supported his students in hosting the first ever statewide Conference on Racism due to the efforts of the YAP Racial Justice Alliance class. Principal Darlene supported her students in a campaign to be the first high school in the state to approve a new African American Studies class as a graduation requirement. Principal Marilyn established restorative justice circles in her Advisory classes. These examples demonstrate SV and YAP efforts which are transformative and high-level models. Transformative versions of SV are more inclusive of all students, but less commonly embraced by schools and are often rebuffed by school leaders (Logan, 2020). High school principals in this study epitomized leading transformative efforts of SV and YAP and can serve as models for other high school principals.

High school principals in this study also fostered equity, social justice, and school reform by leading from a democratic, ethical framework which attempted to inclusive of

all students in their schools. High school principals attempted to engage all students as self-directed, independent learners who were critical thinkers and who could speak for themselves. Principals created inquiry-based and project-based classes and curricula and wanted to empower students to be connected to their schools and their community. Principals endorsed PLP, Senior Projects with mentors in the community, and partnerships to work on real-world issues in the school and community. These learning experiences were open to all students in a fair and equitable manner and in keeping with Dewey's (1916) participatory and Freire's (1970) liberating educational frameworks.

How Have Principals Fostered Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships with their Students who are Marginalized?

Although there were examples of SV and YAP with their students who were marginalized, high school principals noted that fostering SV and YAP with this student population remained a challenge. As mentioned earlier in this chapter and in Final Assertion #8, principals in this study viewed high schools as a safe place for all of their students to practice being citizens in their schools, communities, and overall democracy and this included students who were marginalized. However, principals found that students who were marginalized often did not expect to have a voice in school matters and needed assistance in developing the confidence and agency to offer their voice and solutions. Democratic leadership practices, listening to students on advisory committees, and building relationships helped to set a foundation for success in fostering SV and YAP with students who were marginalized. In addition, including LGBTQIA+ students and English Language Learner students in staff professional development fostered the voices of these student populations. However, this study showed that more needs to be done to

promote voice and partnership with students of color, students in low socioeconomic status, students whose first language is not English, and LGBTQIA+ students.

High school principals can utilize the New DEEL Theoretical Framework and the SV and YAP Conceptual Framework in order to advance the voices and promote partnerships with students who are marginalized. New DEEL leaders can set up structures in their schools which focus on students who are underserved and marginalized so that these students are seen, heard, and included as valuable members of the school community. High school principals can use the ethic of care to ensure the voices of underserved students are being heard, and the ethic of critique to ensure the needs of students who are marginalized are not overlooked. Fostering agency and citizenship in students who are marginalized and allowing them to practice this agency and citizenship in high schools can promote voice and partnership with all students in the building.

Implications for Research

This study focused on high school principals who had experience with SV and YAP. Findings revealed strategies and leadership practices high school principals utilized in order to foster SV and YAP. Findings also revealed advantages, disadvantages, challenges, and barriers to high school principals in fostering SV and YAP. The literature demonstrated that there is a growing body of research related to SV and YAP in schools. However, gaps remain in the research relating to best practices in SV and YAP for educational administrators, local boards of education, state departments of education, and the federal Office of Education. These gaps represent important research opportunities in the SV and YAP educational movement. Additional studies should be done to understand a) best practices for high school principals to work directly with students; b) how high

school principals view and work with Student Councils; c) how high school principals foster agency, equity, citizenship, and social justice; and d) how high school principals foster SV and YAP with their student who are marginalized.

Giraldo-Garcia et al. (2020) study of mandatory implementation of Student Advisory Committees is an example of a study which attempted to establish best practices in SV for high school principals. Student Advisory Committees (SAC) are similar to the Principal Advisory Committees (PAC) which many high school principals in this study utilized (see Recommendations later in the chapter). Results of the study varied based upon principal and school characteristics and few schools demonstrated adherence to best practices in SV programming. However, the schools who did create regular adult-facilitated spaces for SAC to meet and discuss school issues (Giraldo-Garcia et al., 2020). Additional studies should be conducted where SAC or PAC are being utilized by high school principals. Perhaps these studies could be structured so that high school principals volunteer to implement a PAC/SAC in their high school and they receive the appropriate training and professional development necessary to lead it.

This study was exclusively conducted through the lens of the high school principal. Although students were observed, they were not active participants in the study. Additional studies should be conducted from the students' perspective regarding SV and YAP. There are many avenues to pursue relating to students' experience with SV and YAP. For example, students who are in high schools with principals who have experience with SV and YAP could be studied. These students could be compared to a control group of high school students picked at random. Students in high schools which partner with intermediary organizations can be studied and compared to a control group.

Finally, a study directly relating to the experience of high school students who are marginalized should be conducted.

The majority of high schools in the nation have a Student Council or Student Government structure. The National Student Council was formed in 1931 and is endorsed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals of which many high school principals belong. Among the goals of the National Student Council is SV—promoting Student Council as the voice of the student body and giving every student an opportunity to be heard (National Student Council, 2022). One of National Student Council's belief statements is to empower students as vehicles for positive change in their school and community (National Student Council, 2022). A concern of Student Councils based upon the literature is that they can be tokenistic in nature if they are limited to only make decisions on school activities. Another concern is that Student Councils are not representative of the entire student population. Additional studies should be conducted regarding how high school principals work with, view, and position Student Councils. Student Councils are established organizations in high schools and could be used to a greater capacity for fostering SV and YAP in schools.

This research study identified examples of how high school principals attempted to foster agency, citizenship, equity, social justice (ACES) and engage students who are marginalized. Many of the high school principals in this study viewed their schools as a place to instill agency and practice citizenship. These principals promoted equity and social justice through listening and partnering with their students. However, many principals also agreed that there were challenges in engaging all students and, in particular, students who were marginalized. Additional studies should be completed to

determine how high school principals can lead schools in which these very important characteristics and practices are evident. One promising model can be found with the recently formed Transformative Student Voice (TSV) network. TSV offers a curriculum and training materials in Critical Civic Inquiry (CCI) which are available online. Additional studies describing how principals can lead, facilitate, implement, or support TSV in their schools would add to the literature regarding ACES and student engagement.

Implications for Policy

Enacting policies at every level of education–federal, state, and local–which include provisions for SV and YAP in high schools would assist high school principals in fostering SV and YAP in their schools. Students have the greatest stake in their education, but little to no say in how it is delivered. This lack of agency represents a lost opportunity to prepare students for a world in which taking initiative is paramount to success (Banner, Brown, & Jeffrey, 2019). Including provisions for SV and YAP in regional accrediting institution's standards, as well as locally developed Strategic Plans, would also bring intentional focus to the practice of including the voices of our students and partnering with them during their educational journey. For example, one of the high schools in this study which was successful in fostering SV had clearly identified SV-related goals in its Strategic Plan and another high school had SV identified in their accreditation plan. There are a few models of statewide policy (Vermont) and local policy (the Los Angeles Unified School District and the New York City School District) which have been adopted and foster voice and partnership and can be looked to for guidance. Other states and local districts should implement similar policies.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the Vermont's Agency of Education's Act 77 is an example of policy allowing for flexible pathways to graduation including PLP and work-based learning experiences for all students in Grades 7 through 12. Students have a voice and a choice on how they create their own PLP. Personalization is defined by the National Association of Secondary School Principals as a learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway towards their own purposes, and work cooperatively with others in challenging tasks all with the close support of adult mentors (Vermont Agency of Education, 2022). High school principals in my study who were from Vermont utilized Act 77 to promote SV within their students' PLP and encouraged students and their adult mentors to partner in solving community-related real-world issues for their Senior Projects. Similar statewide policies should be enacted so that students have a voice in their own education and the opportunity to work with adults in meaningful ways while gaining valuable real-world experience. These policies would empower high school principals to be creative with SV and YAP while not mandating students pass state tests in order to graduate.

Local school districts have the opportunity to validate the voices of their students as well as promote partnerships between students and adults. Endorsing students as voting members of school-wide or district-wide councils or boards elevates students in the eyes of their peers. To facilitate student representation within schools, the Los Angeles Unified School District's Article XXVII mandated one or more student representatives be included on the local School Leadership Council. In my study, one high school had two students on the Leadership Council. As that principal pointed out, students had more votes than he did on important matters such as the school budget. In

another example, the New York City Department of Education committed staff positions to promote SV and YAP. The result is a YAP called Students and Educators for Equity (SEE). High school principals in New York City can partner with SEE to participate in a Quality Review of the inner workings of their school which include SV, equity, and policy issues. Local school districts should commit resources in terms of staff positions for important work in the area of equity, voice, partnership, and policy change.

Implications for Practice/Leadership

Theory

Leading a paradigm shift from a traditional high school setting whose goals are tied to standardized test scores to an inclusive, student-centered high school promoting voice and partnership is a challenging professional task for high school principals. As I begin to discuss implications relating to theory and the New DEEL Framework, it may not be a coincidence that all 10 principals in this study could be characterized as New DEEL leaders. This study is based upon a purposive sample of 10 high school principals who had experience with SV and YAP. What became evident to me was that these principals possessed many of the key components of a New DEEL leader in promoting SV and YAP. These leaders expanded the participation in decision-making throughout the school and understood that community-building required an ever-expanding definition of who belonged. The goal was to widen the circle of "us," making the organization ever more inclusive (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). The "us" meant "students" to the principals in this study.

High school principals who would like to prepare for the challenge of shifting to an inclusive, democratic paradigm can use the theories set forward by Mann (1891),

Dewey (1916), Freire (1970), and the New DEEL Framework (Gross & Shapiro, 2016) as their guides. The New DEEL Framework strives to create an environment to facilitate democratic ethical decision-making in educational theory and practice which acts in the best interest of all students and views students as participants in society rather than as objects to be manipulated by society (Gross & Shapiro, 2016). These inclusive high schools need to pay particular attention to students of color, students in the LGBTQIA+ community, and English Language Learner students.

Practice

The SV movement is gaining momentum, and as it does, it is critical that we continue to ask the larger questions about politics, power, and purpose (Cook-Sather, 2015). In this regard, let us consider the purpose of high school principals' professional practice and the implications this study has on that practice. High school principals have a myriad of job responsibilities to accomplish, goals to achieve, and mandates to enforce. Even a principal who has every intention of fostering and supporting SV and YAP might find it difficult to undertake. A major implication from this study in terms of principal practice was that the high school principals in this study did not do the SV and YAP work alone. It is true that the majority of principals did find the time within their practice to work directly with students on their Principal Advisory Committees. However, many of these principals were also able to partner with intermediary organizations who trained and supported the principals and their staff in SV and YAP best practices. This training and support were critical elements in the success of the high school principals in their practice of fostering SV and YAP.

Recommendations

Utilize the New DEEL Framework

High school principals in this study demonstrated many of the characteristics of a democratic, inclusive leader. The New DEEL Framework aligns with principals including the voices with all stakeholders and developing partnerships with all stakeholders. Students are an important stakeholder in the New DEEL Framework. High school principals can follow the lead of the principals in this study who fostered SV and YAP by implementing inclusive, democratic practices which positioned students as positive actors in their educational journey. High school principals can read *Democratic Ethical Educational Leadership: Reclaiming School Reform* by Steven Jay Gross and Joan Poliner Shapiro (2016) to gain a foundation of knowledge in this transformative framework. High school principals can use the New DEEL Framework to help them overcome the challenges to fostering SV and YAP such as the power dynamic in the traditional school setting, and staff resistance to non-traditional educational practices.

Create Principal Advisory Councils with a Diverse Group of Students

Principals who fostered SV walked the walk by modeling how to listen and partner with their students. Creating a Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC) is something high school principals can add to their practice immediately. This committee does not depend on funding or Board of Education policy. As Giraldo-Garcia et al. (2020) stated, successful Student Advisory Committees (PACs in my study) focused on one to two campaigns per year and worked with the school principal and district leadership to enact policy changes. A Principal's Advisory Committee also overcomes the challenge of staff resistance and buy-in because principals directly control this

component of fostering the voices of their students. A Principal's Advisory Committee can also serve as the first YAP in their school and, once again, be a model for the staff.

A PAC can also include partnering with various clubs and organizations in a high school. For example, a high school principal can form a PAC with the Black Student Union or Gay Straight Alliance in order to directly listen to and partner with student members of these clubs. A principal in this study formed a PAC with a group of Black male students in order to foster voice and engagement. High school principals can follow the lead of this principal and work directly with students of color. Finally, high school principals can create a PAC with English Language Learner students. High school principals can include a bilingual staff member on the PAC or utilize communicating device such as a Pocketalk Translator to foster communication.

Include Students in Staff Meetings and Professional Development

Lasting change comes from the heart as much as the head, and nothing speaks more to the heart than students themselves (Nagle & Bishop, 2021). This study revealed a best practice in the area of including students in areas normally thought of as adult-only spaces. A few principals in this study included students in staff meetings to allow them to provide insight, feedback, and updates to the staff. One principal in this study elevated the voices of her English Language Learner student population in professional development sessions. Her students provided concrete examples of the challenges they faced in learning and offered insights on how to better reach them through the language barrier. The principals in this study who included students in these adult spaces spoke to the impact it had on both breaking down power dynamics and positioning students as capable members of the educational community. Nagle and Bishop (2021) describe this

best practice as an opportunity to hear directly from students presents educators with a new professional paradigm, one that places students at the center of teacher learning. This recommendation can also be immediately implemented by high school principals. High school principals have control over their staff meeting agendas as well as building-level professional development.

Expand Student Council to Include the Raising Student Voice and Participation Program

High school principals should build the capacity of their current Student Council by adding the Raising Student Voice and Participation (RSVP) program. High school principals in this study provided many models and examples of how to foster SV and YAP. However, the results showed that these high school principals wanted to find ways to include more students overall, and particularly more students who were marginalized in their SV and YAP initiatives. The RSVP program is perfectly aligned to help achieve those SV- and YAP-related goals and, very importantly, calls for the principal to be involved. RSVP engages the largest percentages of the student body, prompts meaningful discussions and student-led action, and is inclusive of underrepresented, fringe, and marginalized populations. The most important key to success of the program is principal support. (National Student Council, 2020). High school principals can have the RSVP student leadership team also be members of the PAC. High school principals can work with the Student Council Advisor, the National Honor Society Advisor, and other staff volunteers to facilitate the RSVP program.

The RSVP team represents the involvement of a small group of adults who believe in the work which was a Final Assertion of the study. RSVP provides an opportunity to take collective SV and effect real change in schools and the community by

conducting three student-led classroom or school wide (National Student Council, 2020). The summits systematically move students from identifying school and community issues and concerns to proposing actions the students might take to address priority issues. RSVP falls into Freire's (1970) problem-posing educational approach results in three Civic Action Plans. Finally, principals who support RSVP as a leadership practice can find themselves situated within the New DEEL Framework of including dialogue, agency, and citizenship. These high school principals will have expanded the definition of "us" (Gross & Shapiro, 2016) and included the voices of students who are marginalized by implementing RSVP at the school-wide level.

Implement a Youth Participatory Action Research Program

The literature uncovered an emerging trend in SV and YAP work in the area of Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR). The CCI Curriculum referenced in the literature became available in 2019 and has at its centerpiece an action research project in which students study about an educational barrier at their school and then develop solutions to it (Kirshner, 2018). A few of the principals in this study implemented their own YPAR courses or assisted students in developing research campaigns to solve educational barriers at their schools. Examples included the Racial Justice Alliance Class at Youth-Adult Partnership High School and the development of an African American Studies course at Student Advocacy High School. The CCI Curriculum offers high school principals a model and design to follow which draws from action civics and critical pedagogy to foster authentic student engagement and activism in addressing real-world social problems (Transformative Student Voice, 2022). The curriculum consists of eight cycles which can be taught in eight weeks or over one school year. It can be integrated

into a range of academic classes during the day, including literacy, science, math, and traditional civics. A principal would need a small team of teachers to embrace the CCI Curriculum and then provide the time for these teachers to learn the curriculum and resources.

High school principals could also consider creating a four- to six-week YPAR Summer Institute program. The YPAR Summer Institute would be an effective way to encourage students who are marginalized to conduct school- or community-related action research and provide solutions to making their school or community better from their perspectives. The YPAR Summer Institute could extend the school year for students in the Black Student Union, Gay Straight Alliance, or the newly created English Language Learner PAC. The members of the YPAR Summer Institute can present their findings to the high school administration and local Board of Education.

Additional Recommendations

The following recommendations are impacted by school- or district-level decisions and structures, and should be considered in a long-term journey toward fostering SV and YAP. These recommendations were included in the Final Assertions from the research study and would bring high school principal's ability to foster SV and YAP to a higher level. These additional recommendations include:

- building the capacity of teachers and staff in SV and YAP through professional development;
- partnering with intermediary organizations or universities;
- creating student leadership classes within the master schedule;
- implementing an Advisory Class within the schedule; and

- promoting and inquiry-based or project-based curriculum.

The literature revealed excellent IOs such as the Quaglia Institute for Voice and Aspirations in California and UP For Learning in Vermont. High schools in this study whose districts committed to partner with Quaglia provided their principal with a tremendous amount of professional development and support in fostering SV and YAP. This study revealed a new best practice of creating time within the master schedule for classes which promote SV and are actually models of a YAP. The Advisory Class concept is one which warrants additional research and consideration for high school principals. One of the high school principals in this study who had a 4-year longitudinal Advisory Class is on the cutting edge of a new best practice and can serve as a model for other high school and districts.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to use interviews, observations, and document analysis in a qualitative, multicase approach to understand the perception and experiences of high school principals' regarding SV and YAP in their schools. This study revealed best practices high school principals can utilize in order to foster SV and YAP in their schools, as well as challenges principals face in elevating SV and situating students as partners in their schools. The overarching personal and leadership characteristic principals in this study possessed was a strong sense of efficacy and belief in their students. High school principals who possess a similar belief in their students can use the results of this study to elevate the voices of their students and position them as partners in their educational journey. In addition, high school principals who subscribe to Dewey's (1916) foundational idea of public schools was to create a citizenry capable of sustaining

a democratic society can use the New DEEL Framework and results and recommendations of this study to allow students to practice democratic participation in their schools. Rogers and Kahne (2021) add to Dewey's foundational idea by stating:

> If we want students to appreciate the democratic values of tolerance and inclusion and speak up effectively in the face of injustice, then we need to immerse them within respectful communities in which their voices are heard. Schools are well positioned to provide such opportunities and to do so equitably. Indeed, we must run our schools as though democracy depends on it. Because, in many significant ways, it does.

This research study can contribute to the professional learning and leadership practice of high school principals who believe in the true impact their schools have on their students and on our democracy.

As this research study concludes, we find ourselves in a critical moment in the history of our democracy and in the profession of education. On January 6, 2021, our democracy was directly challenged with the insurrection on the United States Capitol. There are also equity, social justice, and racial justice movements occurring in our nation and in our schools. High school principals are in a position to lead their schools through these movements in an inclusive and democratic manner. An equitable approach to education calls for high school principals and their staff to listen to their students and partner with them. Benner et al. (2019) stated:

> Across the country there are various examples where schools, districts, and states are meaningfully incorporating student perspectives. They are not only empowering students to share their perspectives–but they are also encouraging

them to actively partner in transforming schools. Clearly, given their experience, more schools, districts, and states should follow suit.

I am fortunate to know many dynamic high school principals who are up for the task. This research study allowed me to meet 10 outstanding high school principals who can serve as models for the profession in the area of SV and YAP. I believe the significance of this study lies in the foundation of success evident in the experience of these 10 high school principals. Their experience not only provides the framework to foster SV and YAP in our schools, but also to overcome the challenges associated with fostering SV and YAP. High School principals can use the experience of the participants in this study, along with the results and recommendations, to implement SV and YAP initiatives in their high schools, position students as partners in their educational journey, and prepare them as citizens in our democracy.

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Appendix A

High School Principal Job Description

TITLE: PRINCIPAL

QUALIFICATIONS:
1. Valid New Jersey Principal Certificate or eligibility for certification
2. Demonstrated leadership skills in the areas of curriculum development, program evaluation, staff development and school improvement
3. Strong interpersonal and communication skills
4. Must pass required criminal history background check and proof of US citizenship or legal resident alien status

REPORTS TO: Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent

SUPERVISES: All certified and support staff assigned to the school

JOB GOAL: To provide leadership and managerial oversight to the instructional program and school operations to ensure a school climate that fosters the educational development of each pupil

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Management of the school in accordance with law, administrative code and board policies and regulations.
2. Exercises leadership in school-level planning for improvement of instruction.
3. Establishes and maintains an effective learning climate in the school.
4. Assists in the selection of appropriate instructional materials and monitors delivery of the instructional program.
5. Participates in the development, evaluation and revision of curriculum and assumes responsibility for the implementation of approved programs.
6. Plans, organizes and supervises all curricular and extracurricular activities.
7. Interviews, recommends for appointment, assigns, supervises and evaluates the performance of all school employees and assists them in achievement of their job goals.
8. Conducts periodic observations of teaching staff members; prepares written comments; and offers constructive suggestions for improvement when appropriate.
9. Prepares and submits the school's budget requests and monitors the expenditure of funds.

10. Establishes and maintains an efficient office system to support the administrative functions of the school.
11. Ensures the safekeeping of student and personnel files and other confidential records and documents; and the destruction of public records in accordance with law and regulations.
12. Approves the master teaching schedule and classroom assignments.
13. Maintains high standards of student conduct and enforces discipline as necessary in accordance with board policy and the students' rights to due process.
14. Notifies immediately the parent or guardian and the chief school administrator to arrange for an immediate examination by a physician of any pupil suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or of using anabolic steroids.
15. Reports incidents of violence, vandalism and substance abuse. Ensures the removal of students in possession of firearms from the general education program and provides notification as required by law and administrative code. Works cooperatively with law enforcement authorities in maintaining a safe and drug-free school environment.
16. Participates in the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services for pupils who are having difficulty in their classes and who have not been classified in need of special education.
17. Plans and supervises fire and other emergency drills as required by law and board policy.
18. Prepares or supervises the preparation of all reports, records and other paperwork required or appropriate to the school's administration.
19. Conducts staff meetings as necessary for the proper functioning of the school.
20. Plans and supervises regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences; and makes arrangements for special conferences as necessary.
21. Acts as a liaison between the school, home and community; interprets policies, programs and activities; and encourages broad community participation in the affairs of the school. Communicates information to parents and the community that is required by law or administrative code.
22. Keeps the superintendent informed of school activities and needs and works cooperatively with central office on matters relating to the school and the district.
23. Assumes responsibility for his/her continuing professional growth and development by attendance at professional meetings, memberships in professional organizations, enrollment in advanced courses and by reading professional journals and other publications.
24. Develops and maintains a master schedule for the academic, extracurricular programs, and works cooperatively with the business administrator to schedule community use of the school building and grounds.
25. Attends special events held to reorganize student achievement and other school-sponsored activities and functions.
26. Ensures the proper collections, safekeeping, and accounting of school activity funds.

27. Suspends a pupil for any cause deemed sufficient in accordance with Title 18A: 37-2 for the State statutes and the school district's code of conduct. In all cases, the principal shall send written notice to the student's parents and to the superintendent, detailing the reasons for suspension.
28. Deals with pupils who have problems relating to school attendance, personal and social adjustment.
29. Works with Child Study Team on referrals. Works with juvenile authorities, parole officers, and city police on extreme problems.
30. Investigates situations which fall into the category of complaints. Recommends remedial help of action.
31. Works cooperatively with the guidance department (if available within the school) to interpret New Jersey Ask and the High School Proficiency Assessment and other assessments approved by the district.
32. Represents the school through participation in the activities of local, state, and national professional organizations, and encourages other members of the staff to extend their participation in a similar way.
33. Cooperates with recognized social and law enforcement agencies for services in the best interests of the school.
34. Maintains the general morale of the staff and good human and professional relationships with the school. Makes himself/herself available for consultation with teachers, students and parents, and encourages their active participation in efforts to improve the school.
35. Establishes procedures for the security and accountability of all school facilities, property and equipment.
36. Directs and supervises, when necessary, the custodial staff, within the school, and cooperates in the care, maintenance and improvement of the school plan and other physical facilities of the building.
37. Cooperates in the operation of the cafeteria or lunch program in the school.
38. Reports problems of plant management to proper personnel.
39. Confers with the superintendent concerning the need of proposed building changes.
40. Performs other duties which may be assigned or required by law, code, regulation/board policy.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Work year and salary to be determined by the Board of Education

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated annually in accordance with state law and the provisions of the board's policy on evaluation of certified staff

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

High School Principals with Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership Experience

1. How did you foster or encourage student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

2. What have been the significant advantages and outcomes in supporting student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

3. What have been the significant barriers and challenges in fostering student voice and youth adult partnerships?

4. How have you been able to sustain student voice and youth-adult partnerships in your school so that students and staff stay engaged?

5. What leadership practices have you emphasized while supporting student voice and youth-adult partnerships and how has your involvement with them influenced your leadership practice?

6. How would you describe your leadership role in relation to student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

7. How do you get buy-in from teachers and staff to support student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

8. How do you envision using student voice and youth-adult partnerships to foster agency, citizenship, equity, and social justice in your school and community?

9. What would your advice be to high school principals who want to embark on a journey of student voice and youth-adult partnerships?

10. How do you think including student voice and youth-adult partnerships prepares students for being engaged citizens now in their future?

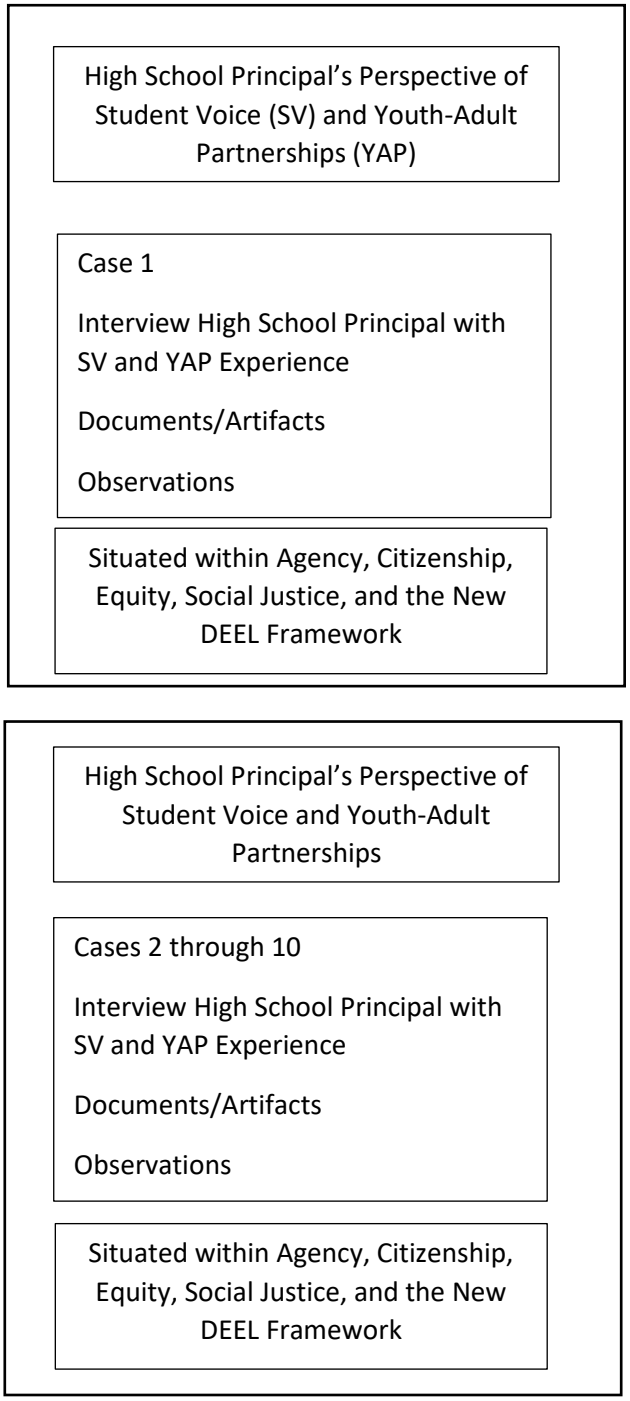
11. How supportive are your Superintendent and Board of Education in your student voice and youth-adult partnership efforts?

12. Where do you hope your school is in terms of student voice and youth-adult partnerships in 5 years and how do you think you will get there?

Appendix C

Worksheet 1

Graphic Design of the Student Voice/Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study



Appendix D

Worksheet 2

Research Questions or Themes of the Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study

Theme 1 What are high school principals' perceptions and experience with SV and YAP?
Theme 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?
Theme 3 What are challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?
Theme 4 How have high school principals fostered SV and YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?
Theme 5 How have high school principals fostered SV with their students who are marginalized and underrepresented?

Appendix E

Worksheet 3

Analyst's Notes While Reading a Case Report of the Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnership Multiple Case Study (Case Study #2 Principal Darlene – Student Advocacy High School)

Synopsis of Case: Principal Darlene (PD) is the Principal of Student Advocacy (SA) High School. Like Case Study #1, Darlene works directly with students with his Principal Advisory Council. I observed her at one of the PAC Meetings. She stated a number of times that "Kids are amazing." She builds student efficacy (relate to Hattie).
Case Findings: I. PD has a true belief in the work and belief in her students. II. PD points out that training and Professional Development are important. III. Leadership practice is to relinquish control to teachers and students (distributive, Democratic) IV. Student Advocacy students formed a group which extended into the community and was a diverse group (including marginalized) called Advocacy Student Diversity and Inclusion Council. V. Advocacy High School students advocated for African American Studies (find newspaper articles and website and social media). VI. Students from Principal's Advisory Council put Health & Wellness Info on Website (check with document/artifacts). VII. Barrier similar to Case #1 with teachers. Thus, we need to give teachers voice as well (Leadership practice). VIII. Started the SV process with a fun event with students at a Staff Meeting (p.5). IX. Stated "Interesting Question" regarding ACES Question (similar to Case #1). X. Stated the need to have a cohort of teachers (like Case #1) to begin the work. XI. Stated the need for teacher/staff training (like Case #1). XII. Stated creating structures and formalizing (similar to Case #1 with creating time). XIII. Students need for belonging to a community (p.6). XIV. Funding is support (p.6).

Uniqueness of Case Situation for High School Principal's Perception of SV and YAP:

PD has a true belief in her students.
SA students advocated for African American Studies Course as a Graduation Requirement. SA is the first district in the state to make this happen.
PD set up meetings for SA students to meet with District Curriculum Directors.
PD had students present at Staff Meetings.
PD supports her students in many social justice areas. He supported a forum with SAPD.
PD mentions teacher barrier similar to Case #1.

Professional Development from Quaglia helped that barrier.
Mentions Agency and Advocacy (4).

Relevance of the Case for Cross-Case Themes:

Theme 1 X Theme 2 X Theme 3 X Theme 4 X Theme 5 X

Possible Excerpts for Cross-Case Report:

Page 1 Page 1 Page 1 Page 1 Page 1 Page 2 Page 2 Page 2
Page 2 Page Page Page Page Page Page Page Page

PD1 Encourage - I think you foster student voice and youth adult partnerships number one it takes a belief in the work and a belief in students. I think what is important is those that are entrusted with the responsibility of interacting and working with students need to be provided with ideology and training in that regard on how to best allow students to express their voice and express their positions.

PD1 Encourage- It requires us to be able to relinquish some control so as a principal, one who fosters teacher leadership, we relinquish control to teachers at times. Essentially, we have to ask teachers to do the same thing - relinquish some control and allow for some unpredictable things to be discussed and stated with the understanding that we're going to hear what the kids are saying and respond to it.

PD1 Encourage- For me personally as principal, it's providing specific opportunities for kids to come in and express informally and to express ideals, positions, thoughts, reflections, and suggestions formally as well as with formalized groups and formalized needs. I think it is a combination but it begins with paradigms. I am hoping to affect the thinking of all of those entrusted and charged with working with kids.

PD1 Encourage - Kids are amazing. Kids are amazing. I got into this business because of my passion for young people. The beautiful thing about interacting and working with students is allowing them to develop their leadership capacities. I am inspired every day by working with the kids. But our kids have truly pushed for change. Our kids have pushed for change and I am speaking within the last year or so. I have a several student groups that I have been working with. (And PD supports their agency and advocacy).

PD1 Encourage- But it's permeated the community and has taken hold. This student group came together, some of my juniors, to form what is called the West Student Diversity and Inclusion Council. It is a diverse array of students who came together with the intentions of furthering community relations, having better coexistence with students of different student bodies within the school, advocating for more inclusive literature in the curriculum. The kids advocated for this African American studies course to be taught. The kids have advocated for diversity training for staff and several things.

PD2 Encourage- I put them with other teachers and allowed them to present at faculty meetings. We had the kids meet with our district's curriculum office and Directors of Curriculum.
PD2 Outcomes- They worked with students from High School East - most recently, the district has been in the news - they've gotten this African American studies course approved as a graduation requirement. We are the first district in the state to allow that to happen. That's all student voice. It's 100% student led initiatives.

PD2 Outcomes - I have another group, a principal's advisory Council, and that group consists of about 20 seniors. Those kids are broken into five subcommittees: health and wellness, restorative practice and discipline, and three other committees as well. I pair these guys with administrators throughout the building and they bring initiatives to me. So instead they put together a website with resources that was beyond anything that I could have expected. Kids! When you go on to our school's page, click on this health and wellness link. It is phenomenal, phenomenal work those young people had done!

PD2 Advantages - They have identified topics and they are tough topics. They want talk about antireligious sentiments. They want to talk about antiracism. They want talk about gender equality. They want to talk about police reform, social justice, and things along those lines. It is awesome. It really is awesome work.

PD2 Advantages - But our kids are amazing. Our kids that we have an opportunity to work with, they are informed, they are intelligent, they are amazing kids. And if we listen to them and act on what they're saying, I think we will be surprised at some of the things that we can do and some of the changes we can make.

PD3 Barriers - Early on when I would try to ask students for their thoughts on things, they are not accustomed to being asked. They are accustomed to following what adults tell them. So, we were talking about creating any change I can make to the school eight years ago that would meet your needs. I asked, "What would you want me to do?" I had about half a dozen kids and they said, "Whatever you want us to do, would be that would be great. You're smart. You have good ideas." That was exactly what I was not looking for from the kids. So, we have learned how to work with the kids to give them agency and allow them to be an advocate for themselves. They did not do that early on.
PD3 Barriers - The other piece of it is working with faculty and staff. We have about 193 staff members in total here in our building, about 145 instructional staff. Some staff members are not accustomed to giving students this sense of agency and

advocacy, and believe that children need to listen to what we were asking them to do and I need to just comply. Teachers asked, “What about our voice? Teacher voice is more important than student voice.”

PD3 Sustain - I think is important to embed opportunities for students to express voice and for them to engage. I have a number of student committees that run. I have the Principal's Advisory Committee that I started several years ago. I have the student Diversity Committee. We at we interact we meet. My Principal’s Advisory Committee meets biweekly. The Diversity Council meets about biweekly as well. I have five assistant principals. Each of the Assistant Principals are required to maintain their own Student Advisory Committee as well.

PD4 Leadership - Just because something is what it appears to be now doesn't mean it has to be that way as we move forward. The idea of advocacy is important. It is very, very important. The idea of challenging thoughts or challenging the norms that may exist, not a negative sense, but submitting other ideas and other information is very important. Something that is critically important is the idea of collaboration, and how we collaborate with others in a manner to hear their voice and hear what they are saying. I have 20 kids I work with but I didn’t mention they represent different areas of the school and different interests of the school. Their responsibility is to go out and engage with their “stakeholders” and talk to them about ideas that were discussing and then bring them back to the whole group and we work through them. We get all the ideas out and all the information out and work through them to try to make the best decisions possible. This idea of collaborating with others, finding out what others desire, and getting their thoughts are very important.

PD4 Leadership - I believe that leaders are the servants of the people we work for. Everything is under the umbrella of servant leadership. We start out with the premise of servant leadership. You serve the student body. You are in this role not for prestige but you serve the student body so that is a huge theme for me.

PD4 Leadership - I see my role as a person who helps to facilitate. I use my ability to make connections with our district manager. I facilitate arranging meetings (Food service example). I try to give them agency to talk, to speak, and share.

PD5 Buy-In - I truly believe at the core of this that teachers get into the business of education because this is a service industry. You want to serve and you love children I think if we are able to bridge that gap, it brings people together. We understand that we are on common ground.

PD5 Buy-In - One of the greatest things I had done during the first year we started this process was that I brought several kids to a faculty meeting. At the faculty meeting, I made it into a fun event. How well do you know your teachers? Then the kids begin to talk about their work.

PD5 ACES - Interesting question. I think that's what it does. Exactly what it does. If

you do it right and he allow children to have the sense of agency and understand how they fit into the community, understand their role the understanding, then they are understanding that they are important within the community as citizens of the building. It places a different level of engagement. It creates a different level of engagement for our kids. I think if you do student voice right and you allow it, even if you start small and begins to expand, and expand, and expand, it accomplishes all those things that that you mentioned. Kids are incredible. Our kids are absolutely amazing. Even kids that may be challenged at times. If you give them an opportunity and provide them support, they can deliver. They can deliver and now they will show you what they are capable of. I truly, truly, believe in kids.

PD5 Advice - Number one I would say, "Do it." As you move about move about entering into this partnership, you want to acquire as much information as possible. Administratively, you want to understand that you can't do it alone. I think you need a cohort of teachers who believe in this as well. Teachers and faculty members because they'll help you to sell this to the rest of their peers. I think that you probably want to go through a common training or read material or interact with people that have knowledge of student voice work.

PD5 Advice - Then I like to formalize things. I want to operationalize thing and put it into place by creating structures that allow them to take place. I told you about these advisory councils that we put together and the other leadership groups. Whatever it is that you want the kids to work on, I think they have to be formalized.

PD5 Engaged - Engaging students in his manner allows them to have an understanding that they are agents of change. They have the ability to make a difference. You talk about a sense of self-efficacy, sense of self-worth, as you know with stressing the greatest thing we see with adolescents is the need for belonging, having a sense of belonging to a community. If I'm in this community and I'm valued and my voice matters and I have an opportunity to affect change, I belong here!

Situational Influences:
African American Studies Course in response to social and racial injustice and George Floyd Social unrest and justice (example of police forum on page 2)

Commentary:
Principal Darlene had a true belief in her students. Her letter to the community mentions closely watching students discover their voices and growing into strong young adults ready and capable of tackling whatever challenges lie ahead. Her students advocated for an African American Studies course which was approved by the BOE as the first school in the state to make this course a graduation requirement. Principal Darlene allows her students to advocate for many social justice causes.

Appendix F

Worksheet 4

Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme

W = highly unusual situation, U = somewhat unusual situation, blank = ordinary situation
M = high manifestation, m = some manifestation, blank = almost no manifestation

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6
Ordinariness of this Case's Situation:						
Original Multicase Themes:						
Theme 1						
What are high school principals' perceptions and experience with SV and YAP?	H	H	M	H	H	H
Theme 2						
What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	H	H	H	H	H	H
Theme 3						
What are the challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	H	H	H	H	H	H
Theme 4						
How have principals fostered SV and YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?	M	H	M	M	H	M
Theme 5						
How have principals fostered SV and YAP in their students who are marginalized?	H	H	L	M	H	H

High manifestation means that the Theme is prominent in this particular study.
A highly unusual situation (far from ordinary) is one that is expected to challenge the generality of Themes.
As indicated, the original Themes can be augmented by additional Themes even as late as the beginning of the Cross-Case Analysis. The paragraphs on each Theme should be attached to the matrix so that the basis for estimates can be readily examined.

W = highly unusual situation, U = somewhat unusual situation, blank = ordinary situation
M = high manifestation, m = some manifestation, blank = almost no manifestation

	Case 7	Case 8	Case 9	Case 10
Ordinariness of this Case's Situation:				
Original Multicase Themes:				
Theme 1				
What are high school principals' perceptions and experience with SV and YAP?	H	H	H	M
Theme 2				
What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	H	H	H	M
Theme 3				
What are the challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	H	H	H	M
Theme 4				
How have principals fostered SV and YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?	H	H	H	M
Theme 5				
How have principals fostered SV and YAP in their students who are marginalized?	H	H	M	M

High manifestation means that the Theme is prominent in this particular study.
A highly unusual situation (far from ordinary) is one that is expected to challenge the generality of Themes.
As indicated, the original Themes can be augmented by additional Themes even as late as the beginning of the Cross-Case Analysis. The paragraphs on each Theme should be attached to the matrix so that the basis for estimates can be readily examined.

Appendix G

Worksheet 5

A Map on Which to Make Assertions for the Final Report

Case 1	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**4**	**((5))**
Finding the critical group/mass of adults – 1	H	M	H	M	M
Students run the Leadership Council – 2	M	H	M	H	M
Students present at Faculty Meetings – 3	M	H	M	H	M
Partner with Quaglia – 4	H	M	H	M	M
SV is a Priority – 5	H	M	H	M	H
Schools are a safe place for students to practice – 6	H	H	M	H	H
Stated that you "have to walk the walk." – 7	H	M	M	M	M
English Learners Parent Association – 8	M	M	M	H	H
Had an African American male group – 9	M	H	M	H	H
Case 2	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**((4))**	**((5))**
Has a true belief in the work and belief in his students – 1	H	M	M	H	H
Training and PD are important – 2	H	M	H	H	M
Leadership practice is to relinquish control to teachers and students – 3	H	H	H	M	M
Students formed a group which extended into the community and was a diverse group (including marginalized) called West Student Diversity and Inclusion Council – 4	M	M	M	H	H
Students advocated for African American Studies – 5	M	H	M	H	H
Gives teachers voice – 6	H	M	H	M	M
Started the SV process with a fun event with students at a Staff Meeting – 7	M	M	H	M	M
Creating structures and formalizing – 8	H	M	H	M	H

A high mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the Theme.

Case 3	**1**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**4**	**5**
Time within schedule with Collab Twos – 1	H	H	M	M	H
Leadership Classes are part of the Curriculum – 2	H	H	M	M	H
Sustained by letting students work on important projects – 3	H	H	M	H	H
No success with Hispanic population – 4	M	H	M	M	H
Case 4	**((1))**	**((2))**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
Reached out to community with Creating Sustainable Communities Course – 1	H	M	M	H	M
Situated high school work within the local community – 2	H	M	M	H	M
Believes in Democratizing schools – 3	H	M	M	H	H
Inquiry-Based approach to teaching and learning – 4	H	M	H	H	H
Barrier is teachers with a fixed mindset – 5	M	M	H	M	M
BOE & Super strongly supportive – 6	H	M	M	M	M
Truly wants to put students in charge – 7	H	H	M	H	H
Case 5	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**((4))**	**((5))**
Partnered with Rowan U and Dr. Zion – 1	H	M	H	H	H
Superintendent put together a group called Courageous Conversations – 2	H	M	H	H	H
MA was vulnerable and opened up to his students (Leadership) – 3	M	M	M	M	H
MA mentions the challenge of dealing with the veteran staff similar to other cases. – 4	M	M	H	M	M
Small group of staff to begin the SV and YAP process – 5	H	M	H	M	M
Creates structures by crafting time. – 6	H	M	H	M	M
Courageous Conversations led to a group of 20-25 students being involved – 7	H	H	H	H	H
Case 6	**(1)**	**((2))**	**(3)**	**4**	**((5))**
Wanted to partner with Quaglia – 1	H	M	H	M	H
Advisories like other cases – 2	H	M	H	H	H
NC states some educators are barriers – 3	M	M	H	M	M
PD led by students including ELL – 4	H	M	H	H	H
Distributed Leadership – 5	M	M	H	M	M
Staff Training and PD – 6	H	H	H	H	M

A high mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the Theme.

Case 6 (continued)	**(1)**	**((2))**	**(3)**	**4**	**((5))**
School and SV as a safe place – 7	H	H	M	M	M
ACES referring to response after George Floyd – 8	H	M	M	H	H
Case 7	**((1))**	**((2))**	**(3)**	**((4))**	**(5)**
CL creates a structure of actionable SV – 1	H	M	M	M	H
System and structure as part of his pedagogical framework – 2	H	M	M	H	M
CL focuses on breaking down the power dynamic between students and staff – 3	H	M	H	H	H
SLA has a 4-Year Advisory Program – 4	H	H	H	H	H
CL focuses on creating safe spaces in school for kids to have actionable voice! – 5	H	M	H	M	H
Inquiry as a foundation to SV – 6	H	M	M	M	M
CL is Listener-In-Chief and models what he wants teachers to do with their students – 7	H	H	H	M	M
CL mentions agency a number of times – 8	H	H	M	H	H
Preparing kids for the world is our work – 9	H	H	M	H	H
Case 8	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**((4))**	**((5))**
Intentional about setting up structures for SV and YAP – 1	H	M	M	H	H
High School is a place to practice SV on the way to becoming citizens – 2	H	M	M	H	H
Has a full-time Restorative Justice Coordinator – 3	H	M	H	H	H
Calls her group of interested staff "bench of people" – 4	H	M	H	M	M
Group pilots initiatives relating to SV – 5	M	H	M	M	M
TK is a big believer in Advisories – 6	H	M	H	H	H
Has Podcasts and Town Hall Meetings around politics and social justice (especially after George Floyd) – 7	M	H	H	H	H

A high mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the Theme.

Case 9	((1))	((2))	(3)	((4))	5
Emphasizes partnership in the community & working on real-world adult problems – 1	H	M	M	H	H
Provides many examples of courses within the curriculum as identifying community needs – 2	M	H	M	H	M
Emphasizes YAPs within many areas of the curriculum and community work – 3	H	M	M	H	H
Has a Racial Justice Class within the curriculum – 4	H	M	M	H	M
Had a statewide conference on racism at his high school – 5	H	M	M	H	M
Believes in professional development in SV and YAP – 6	H	M	M	M	M
Situates the high school within the needs of the community – 7	H	H	M	H	M
EH case represents the most discussion of YAPs – 8	H	H	M	H	H
Has a senior capstone mentoring project – 9	H	M	M	H	M
Has a Director of Career and Workforce – 10	H	M	M	H	M
Case 10	**1**	**2**	**3**	**(4)**	**5**
Set up structures for student feedback and involvement – 1	M	M	H	M	M
Reached out to non-leaders for feedback – 2	H	M	M	M	H
Endorses Distributed Leadership – 3	H	M	H	H	M
Teaches leadership skills directly – 4	H	H	H	M	M
Models SV and YAP with staff – 5	M	M	M	M	M
Mentions old guard staff – 6	M	H	H	M	M
Set up structures for ACES with student led Equity Committee – 7	H	H	H	H	H
Mentions being a caring principal – 8	H	M	H	M	M
Does not have an IO or University Partner – 9	H	H	H	H	H

A high mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the Theme.

Appendix H

Worksheet 6

Multicase Assertions for the Final Report

#	Final Assertions	Evidence in Which Cases
Final Assertion #1	Identifying a small group of interested staff and partnering with outside organizations were strategies used by high school principals in this study to foster SV and YAP.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #2	Working directly with leadership and advisory councils, listening to student and teacher voices, and creating partnerships to solve real-world community problems were actions principals took to support SV and YAP.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #3	Identifying barriers to SV and YAP and leading a paradigm shift to overcome them were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #4	Creating structures to support SV and YAP through the curriculum, master schedule, and professional development were part of the experience of all of the principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
Final Assertion #5	Creating meaningful, relevant, inquiry-based, and project-based learning experiences enabled principals in this study to promote and sustain SV and YAP.	4,7,9
Final Assertion #6	Instituting shared, distributed, caring, and democratic leadership practices which support SV and YAP was a common theme among principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #7	Realizing the outcomes and advantages outweigh the challenges and barriers kept principals in this study committed to fostering SV and YAP in their schools.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Assertion #8	Viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP and a place to prepare them to be citizens in our communities and democracy was an approach shared by high school principals in this study.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

Appendix I

Worksheet 7

Planning the SV & YAP Multicase Final Report

Main Topics	Case #1	Case #2	Case #3	Case #4	Case #5
Quintain	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 1 What are high school principals' perception and experiences with SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 3 What are the challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 4 How have high school principals fostered SV and YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 5 How have principals fostered SV and YAP with their students who are marginalized?	X	X	X	X	X

Main Topics	Case #6	Case #7	Case #8	Case #9	Case #10
Quintain	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 1 What are high school principals' perception and experiences with SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 3 What are the challenges and barriers for high school principals in fostering SV and YAP?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 4 How have high school principals fostered SV and YAP relating to equity, social justice, and school reform?	X	X	X	X	X
Theme 5 How have principals fostered SV and YAP with their students who are marginalized?	X	X	X	X	X
Main Topics	**Case #1**	**Case #2**	**Case #3**	**Case #4**	**Case #5**
Final Assertion #1 Identifying a small group of interested staff and partnering with outside organizations were strategies used by high school principals in this study to foster SV and YAP.	X	X	X	X	X

Main Topics	Case #1	Case #2	Case #3	Case #4	Case #5
Final Assertion #2 Working directly with leadership and advisory councils, listening to student and teacher voices, and creating partnerships to solve real-world community problems were actions principals took to support SV and YAP.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #3 Identifying barriers to SV and YAP and leading a paradigm shift to overcome them were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #4 Creating structures to support SV and YAP through the curriculum, master schedule, and professional development were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #5 Creating meaningful, relevant, inquiry-based, and project-based learning experiences enabled principals in this study to promote and sustain SV and YAP.				X	
Final Assertion #6 Instituting shared, distributed, caring, and democratic leadership practices which support SV and YAP was a common theme among principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #7 Realizing the outcomes and advantages outweigh the challenges and barriers kept principals in this study committed to fostering SV and YAP in their schools.	X	X	X	X	X

Main Topics	Case #1	Case #2	Case #3	Case #4	Case #5
Final Assertion #8 Viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP and a place to prepare them to be citizens in our communities and democracy was an approach shared by high school principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Main Topics	**Case #6**	**Case #7**	**Case #8**	**Case #9**	**Case #10**
Final Assertion #1 Identifying a small group of interested staff and partnering with outside organizations were strategies used by high school principals in this study to foster SV and YAP.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #2 Working directly with leadership and advisory councils, listening to student and teacher voices, and creating partnerships to solve real-world community problems were actions principals took to support SV and YAP.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #3 Identifying barriers to SV and YAP and leading a paradigm shift to overcome them were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #4 Creating structures to support SV and YAP through the curriculum, master schedule, and professional development were part of the experience of all principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	

Main Topics	Case #6	Case #7	Case #8	Case #9	Case #10
Final Assertion #5 Creating meaningful, relevant, inquiry-based, and project-based learning experiences enabled principals in this study to promote and sustain SV and YAP.		X		X	
Final Assertion #6 Instituting shared, distributed, caring, and democratic leadership practices which support SV and YAP was a common theme among principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #7 Realizing the outcomes and advantages outweigh the challenges and barriers kept principals in this study committed to fostering SV and YAP in their schools.	X	X	X	X	X
Final Assertion #8 Viewing high schools as a safe place for students to practice SV and YAP and a place to prepare them to be citizens in our communities and democracy was an approach shared by high school principals in this study.	X	X	X	X	X

Appendix J

Key Information and Consent to Take Part in a Research Study– Adult Consent Form for Social and Behavioral Research

TITLE OF STUDY: High School Principal's Perceptions and Experience with Student Voice and Youth-Adult Partnerships
Principal Investigator: Cecile H. Sam, Ph.D.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide key information that will help you decide whether you wish to volunteer for this research study.

Please carefully read the key information provided in questions 1-9 and 14 below. The purpose behind those questions is to provide clear information about the purpose of the study, study specific information about what will happen in the course of the study, what are the anticipated risks and benefits, and what alternatives are available to you if you do not wish to participate in this research study.

The study team will explain the study to you and they will answer any question you might have before volunteering to take part in this study. It is important that you take your time to make your decision. You may take this consent form with you to ask a family member or anyone else before agreeing to participate in the study.

If you have questions at any time during the research study, you should feel free to ask the study team and should expect to be given answers that you completely understand.

After all of your questions have been answered, if you still wish to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this informed consent form.

You are not giving up any of your legal rights by volunteering for this research study or by signing this consent form.

After all of your questions have been answered, if you still wish to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this informed consent form.

The Principal Investigator, Cecile H. Sam, or another member of the study team will also be asked to sign this informed consent.

1. W*hat is the purpose of the study?*

The research is being conducted for the purposes of a dissertation at Rowan University's Global Learning and Partnerships program under the supervision of Dr.

Cecile Sam. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and experiences of high school principals in the areas of student voice and youth-adult partnerships.

2. **Why have you been asked to take part in this study?**
Twenty high school principals will be selected for this study based upon their experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships. The study will include a set of high school principals with demonstrated experience with student voice and youth-adult partnerships as well as a set of principals whose experiences is not known to the researcher.

3. **What will you be asked to do if you take part in this research study?**
The study involves two semi-structured interviews which will be conducted via Zoom lasting approximately one hour. Interview questions will be sent in advance to provide a foundation for the conversation. The first interview will be conducted at the beginning of the study. The second interview will be conducted as a follow-up session between two and six weeks from the initial interview.

This study also includes observations of participants via Zoom or in-person. Observations will be of meetings you are conducting or in which you are involved. This study includes observing a student voice or youth-adult partnership activity at your school if applicable.

Documents which are public will also be reviewed. For example, board of education policies, regulations, agendas, and minutes will be reviewed. School and district websites will be reviewed. School and district social media will be reviewed. Student Handbooks or Codes of Conduct will be reviewed.

4. **Who may take part in this research study? And who may not?**
This research study is open to high school principals in public, charter, and private high school.

5. **How long will the study take and where will the research study be conducted? This research study will take place**
The research study will be conducted via Zoom or in-person at the participant's high school during the spring and summer of 2021.

6. **How many visits may take to complete the study?**
There will be two interviews and one to two visits of meetings. Interviews and visits will be conducted via Zoom or in-person. If there is a student voice activity at the participant's school, a visit to observe may be scheduled.

7. **What are the risks and/or discomforts you might experience if you take part in this study?**

   Throughout the interview, I may ask follow-up questions or questions for clarification. You can choose to not answer any question and this is completely acceptable. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. Your interview will be videotaped using this feature in Zoom. However, you have the choice to decline this procedure. All information will be reported anonymously so that you, your school board, and school communities are not identified.

8. **Are there any benefits for you if you choose to take part in this research study?**
   This study will add to the research relating to high school principals' views of student voice and youth-adult partnerships. Recommendations will be made and implications for future research will be uncovered.

9. **What are the alternatives if you do not wish to participate in the study?**
   Participation in this study is voluntary. Your alternative is not to participate in the study.

10. **How many subjects will be enrolled in the study?**
    This study will include up to twenty high school principals.

11. **How will you know if new information is learned that may affect whether you are willing to stay in this research study?**
    During the course of the study, you will be updated about any new information that may affect whether you are willing to continue taking part in the study. If new information is learned that may affect you, you will be contacted.

12. **Will there be any cost to you to take part in this study?**
    There is no cost to the participant for taking part in this research study.

13. **Will you be paid to take part in this study?**
    Participants will receive a $25.00 gift card at the end of the second interview in the study. Personal information may be collected for tax reporting purposes related to compensation for participation in this study. Tax law requires the collection of personal information for IRS reporting purposes. You may be required to pay any tax that is due.

14. **Are you providing any identifiable private information as part of this research study?**
    Your identifiable information will not be used in this research study. Your identifiable information will not be used in any future research projects or disclosed to anyone outside of the research team.

15. How will information about you be kept private or confidential?

All efforts will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Your personal information may be given out, if required by law. Presentations and publications to the public and at scientific conferences and meetings will not use your name and other personal information. All data will be reported in aggregate and confidentiality will be protected. We will keep our data in a secure or in an encrypted and password protected environment with access limited to the study team.

16. What will happen if you do not wish to take part in the study or if you later decide not to stay in the study?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may change your mind at any time.

If you do not want to enter the study or decide to stop participating, your relationship with the study staff will not change, and you may do so without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also withdraw your consent for the use of data already collected about you, but you must do this in writing to Cecile H. Sam, Ph. D. College of Education, Rowan University, 201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, NJ 08028.

If you decide to withdraw from the study for any reason, you may be asked to participate in one meeting with the Principal Investigator.

17. Who can you call if you have any questions?

If you have any questions about taking part in this study or if you feel you may have suffered a research related injury, you can call the Principal Investigator:

Cecile H. Sam, Ph.D.
College of Education
856-256-4500 x53827

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you can call:

Office of Research Compliance
(856) 256-4058– Glassboro/CMSRU

18. What are your rights if you decide to take part in this research study?

You have the right to ask questions about any part of the study at any time. You should not sign this form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have been given answers to all of your questions.

You have already agreed to participate in a research study conducted by Cecile H. Sam, Ph.D. We are asking for your permission to allow us to videotape you using Zoom as part of that research study. You do not have to agree to be recorded in order to participate in the main part of the study.

The recording(s) will be used for analysis by the research team.

The recording(s) will include name and facial video on the Zoom platform. However, you have

the option of turning off your camera feature for the recording.

The recording(s) will be stored in a secure or in an encrypted and password protected environment with access limited to the study team. Recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

Your signature on this form grants the investigator named above permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced study. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE
I have read the entire information about the research study, research risks, benefits and the alternatives, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been discussed.

All of my questions about this form or this study have been answered and I agree to volunteer to participate in the study.

Subject Name:_____

Subject Signature:_____ Date:_____

Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:
To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed the full contents of the study including all of the information contained in this consent form. All questions of the research subject and those of his/her parent or legal guardian have been accurately answered.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent:_____

Signature: _____ Date_____

Appendix K

Individual Case Report – Case #1 – Principal Juan–-Student Leadership High School

Observation Description:

I observed Principal Juan at a School Site Council Zoom Meeting followed directly by a School Leadership Council Meeting. Students facilitated the agenda and shared their screen. Presentations were made regarding the Title I Budget. Twenty-minutes into the thirty-minute meeting, Principal Juan has not spoken yet! A student asked for a motion to vote on the $802,000 budget. A teacher mentors the student regarding the procedures and language regarding asking for a vote.

The School Site Council Meeting is adjourned and it moves to the School Leadership Council Zoom Meeting. Principal Juan begins with a Principal's report followed by four student reports – one from each grade level.

Observation Findings:

I. There is an agenda item on the School Leadership Council called Student Voice.
Voice

- Student Voice continues with Advisory lessons, Classroom Engagement Strategies
- Ambassador Group needed – Student led to run program

II. A Student led Carnival of Knowledge was recently completed and shout outs were given
during the Student Voice segment of the meeting.

III. Teacher Representative mentioned several meetings with student groups regarding listening to what students need for the next school year.

IV. Teacher Representative mentioned Advisory as a place for students to get SEL, inspiration, and a sense of building hope.

Website/Document Analysis/Social Media Findings:
I. Vision & Mission Statement states: Students will acquire skills, confidence, and adopt a growth mindset necessary to be lifelong learners and positive contributors to their communities.

II. Student Learner Outcomes:

- Effective communicators who listen
- Critical thinkers
- Responsible community members who contribute their time and talents to improve their school, families, and community.

III. Principal Juan's message states: Our commitment to students which entails students getting involved in all facets of school and becoming well-rounded individuals.

IV. Vision and Mission also mention student-centered instruction and intrinsic project-based learning.

V. School Leadership Council is highlighted on the website. You can tell this council is a priority and a structure is set up with meetings set up in advance for the entire year. Students are an equal participant.

VI. School Site Council is also highlighted on the website with the priority and structure noted in the Leadership Council description above. Students are also valued members of the School Site Council.

Relevance of the Case for Cross-Case Themes:
Theme 1__X__ Theme 2_X__ Theme 3__X_ Theme 4_X__ Theme 5 _X__

Relevance to Final Assertions:
FA#1__X___ FA#2__X___ FA#3__X___ FA#4__X___ FA#5_____ FA#6__X___ FA#7__X___ FA#8__X___

Summary:

Principal Juan and Student Leadership High School work with the Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations. They have student representatives on the Leadership Council. Principal Juan fosters student voice and leadership in a variety of school-wide programs including having students run Back-To-School-Night. Principal Juan's message states: Our commitment to students which entails students getting involved in all facets of school and becoming well-rounded individuals.

Appendix L

Finding Strips

Has a true belief in the work and belief in her students **Case 2-1** **T1- XX** **T4- XXX** **T2-** **T5- XXX** **T3-** **T1**: (H)M **T2**: H(M) **T3**: H(M) **T4**: (H)M **T5**: (H)M	**Inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning** **Case 4-4** **T1- XXX** **T4- XX** **T2- XX** **T5- XX** **T3- XX** **T1**: (H)M **T2**: H(M) **T3**: (H)M **T4**: (H)M **T5**: (H)M
Preparing kids for the world is our work **Case 7-9** **T1- XXX** **T4- XXX** **T2- XXX** **T5-XX** **T3-** **T1**: (H)M **T2**: (H)M **T3**: H(M) **T4**: (H)M **T5**: (H)M	**Situates high school within the needs of the community** **Case 9-7** **T1- XXX** **T4- XXX** **T2- XXX** **T5-** **T3-** **T1**: (H)M **T2**: (H)M **T3**: H(M) **T4**: (H)M **T5**: H(M)

Note. Examples of strips for rating the utility and importance (high – H – or middling – M) of case findings for developing each of the five themes (T)

Appendix M

Listening to Student Voices

Principal	Listening to Student Voice Statement
Principal Rob	We can create that notion of really listening to kids it becomes super important and is at the heart and center of everything we do in a very authentic way. Their ideas, their vision, their needs, and their thoughts are at the center.
Principal Darlene	It's more than just listening to what the kids are saying. It is hearing what the kids are saying and responding to it. For me personally as principal, it's providing specific opportunities for kids to come in and express informally and to express ideals, positions, thoughts, reflections, and suggestions.
Principal Ingrid	I have always been big on hearing what students have to say. Not you're going to do this because I say so and I'm the principal. Really showing the kids that their voice matters and I am just going to be part of the circle and not just staying at the top.
Principal Marilyn	You're going to teach me as much as I teach you and my goal is to create structures and space for us to learn together.
Principal Ray	You're listening to multiple perspectives. I especially like making sure I get feedback from all of the different grade levels. Also, a big thing for me is getting feedback from students who struggle sometimes or are frequent flyers in the office for discipline or whatever.

Appendix N

Staff Resistance

Principal	Staff Resistance Statement
Principal Juan	We still have some veteran teachers who say, "this is going to pass. Juan doesn't know what he's talking about."
Principal Darlene	Some staff members are not accustomed to giving students this sense of agency and advocacy, and believe that children need to listen to what we are asking them to do and just comply. Fostering SV requires principals and teachers to also relinquish some control. In order to foster teacher leadership, I relinquish control to teachers at times. Essentially, we have to ask teachers to do the same thing.
Principal Ingrid	Some educators still believe that kids are there to be seen and not heard. These educators have the traditional mindset of believing they are here to their content areas like math and science. By doing all of this (listening to SV), they feel that I am derailing them from covering their standards. (Principal Ingrid)

Appendix O

Leading a Paradigm Shift

Principal	Paradigm Shift Statement
Principal Dawn	I had to contend with some adults and teachers in the building that had a fixed mindset about, "Well, I am the teacher." That shift in supporting and allowing students to be able to hold onto the steering wheel if I can use that analogy. Another shift would be those teachers who believe that their content matters more than anything. To me it's about the shift towards the skills and really embracing and honoring that adolescent development, and where the brain is at that time. Students are desperate for being able to have autonomy in their learning via their voice.
Principal Juan	We have a lot of wannabe sage-on-the-stage and want to take up all the time. Let the students discuss with you. Open it up. Keep it open-ended and hear what the students have to say.
Principal Rob	I think the other thing that is hard is that you have to give up command and control. It requires such a fundamental rethinking of the power dynamic of the classroom. The funny thing is, as I think any of my teachers would tell you, that the rewards for doing it as an educator are incredible. It is manifestly better work. I think that is really important. It is not the way we teach teachers right now. It is not school as we've always done it. So it can be difficult to shift that mindset. It also is harder. Negotiated space is harder. It is better. It's more meaningful. It's more empowering for everyone. It allows everyone to access their agency in real ways. But it is also, you don't get to say, "Because I said so."
Principal Nick	Be vulnerable. Acknowledge what you don't know. Be comfortable in the power of the student. They are powerful. As principals, we have to control that power and use it wisely. My fear is that it goes rogue. However, my advice would be to be confident in the students you have. You have solid kids. They are resilient, gritty, and resourceful. And trust that they know more and how to get things rolling than we even may. I think trusting their opinions on things and watch how they will blossom and how they will fly. Put them in a position to succeed and they will do it.

Principal	Paradigm Shift Statement
Principal Marilyn	If you are a champion of student voice, you have to be willing to let your students challenge you and contradict you or to question you. A lot of teachers, even if they come to work with values and mindsets that align with yours, our egos can get in the way. I find that our egos are the largest barrier to student voice sometimes.

Appendix P

Safe Place to Practice

Principal	Safe Place to Practice Citizenship Statement
Principal Ray	I want to be in the trenches with my students while I have them, helping them learn and deal with life. They are going to become the citizens who form the backbone of society. We want to make sure they have those leadership skills and abilities to go forward and create a better world for us.
Principal Ingrid	High school provides students with the opportunity to practice and to really find out what voice truly is so when they go out into the world, they can use that. School allows them to learn how to voice their opinions in a very effective manner.
Principal Juan	I want students to be able to speak up and say, "This is what we need." And if they can't do it here, in this safe environment that we've created for them, when they get out and into the big world, in the real world, it's going to be tough for them.
Principal Rob	I think it is important to understand that it is not just voice, it is action. How do you move from voice to action? I think the first thing is voice. Any child graduates from school and feels powerless has been failed by the system. Period. Full stop. So what are we doing in our school to make sure that kids understand their agency? And voice is a piece of agency. Maybe it's shorthand for agency. It is this idea that helping kids understand who they are and how they walked through the world and how they can be active fully realized citizens of this world is our work.
Principal Nick	High School is a function of society. I think it helps to prepare to have the conversations in the right way. I want my students to be prepared to engage in an intelligent and informed manner and not from a place of ignorance. That's the ultimate goal.
Principal John	They are learning that dialogue and listening can be tools to change their society for the better. They are learning a lot of citizenship lessons. I think some of this is through youth adult partnerships and some of it is just like treating young people as adults.