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A Study of the Articulated Leadership Practices of Principals in Relation to the Literature on the Characteristics of High Performing Principals

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A STUDY OF THE ARTICULATED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS

IN RELATION TO THE LITERATURE ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH

PERFORMING PRINCIPALS

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE ARTICULATED LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS
IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE LITERATURE ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF
HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS

In the modern world of education and 21st century school systems, improvements in student achievements are recognized as the foremost objective of school reforms and restructuring efforts. The criticism continues to spread across the country for public schools that fail to meet students' needs, especially in the urban areas where the achievement gap is widening. School communities and educational leaders continue to demand more accountability from principals as instructional leaders because of the decline in student achievement, as measured by states' standardized achievement tests. The trend in most school systems is that the school principal is required by the systemic authorities to improve student learning. School leaders who can develop positive relationships among teachers and students also may increase student achievement (Ewing, 2001).

The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. The intent of the study was to support school districts in training and developing principals to become effective instructional leaders and positive change agents in their schools. This study was also conducted in an effort to address concerns such as leadership style, school climate, teacher collective efficacy, collaboration, shared decision making, and student achievement in schools.

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"To God be the Glory for the things He has done!"

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my greatest accomplishment and blessing in life

My daughter

Jasmyne Raquel Grooms

Thank you for making me a better person and the woman I have become today.

Mommy loves you!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Background

Present society continues to focus on accountability systems for gains in student achievement for the urban school systems. Although it is evident that teacher quality and effectiveness are a critical factor in driving student achievement, the effects of quality leadership are essential for student achievement and positive school climate (Deal & Peterson, 1990). An analysis of those who develop their leadership capacity to stimulate and inspire others for higher levels of productivity is identified as *transformational leadership*. "Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality." (Burns, 1978). This study examined the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals.

In the modern world of education and 21st century school systems, improvements in student achievements are recognized as the foremost objective of school reforms and restructuring efforts. The trend in most school systems is that the school principal is required by the systemic authorities to improve student learning. The expectation is for a high level of accountability in developing a shared vision for motivating and energizing the teachers and students (Gamage, 1993, 1996, 2006; Mulford, 2003; Ross and Gray, 2006).

Literature and multiple research studies have established that the role of school leadership is among the most significant in enhancing school performance and student

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achievements (Cotton, 2003; Dinham, 2004; Fisher & Frey, 2002; Gamage, 2009; Gentilucci & Muto, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Janerrate & Sherretz; Kearney, 2005; Mulford, 2003; Walker &Stott, 2000). The literature suggests that effective leaders develop school climates and cultures that help motivate both the students and the teachers. Thus, the transformed school climates lead to the creation of better teaching and learning environments, which are more conducive to higher levels of student achievements.

In the concept of leadership, the core definition serves two purposes: providing direction and exercising influence. Both of these functions can be executed in multiple ways and distinguish the differences in many models of leadership. According to Yukl (1994), leadership influences "…the interpretation of events for followers, the choice of objectives for the group of organization, the organization of work activities to accomplish objectives, the motivation of followers to achieve the objectives, the maintenance of cooperative relationships and teamwork, and the enlistment of support and cooperation from people outside the group or organization" (p. 3). Utilization of the term *instructional leader* is the widely popularized term used as an example of the desired model for principals.

The idea of the leadership approach is related to the ability to influence and possess a degree of power. During the early 20th century, the "great man" theories developed around the notion that great leaders have innate qualities or characteristics and were born with these traits. This time period focused on determining the specific traits that differentiated followers from leaders (Bass 1990, Jago, 1982). The trait approach was challenged in the mid-20th century by research that questioned the findings on leadership

traits that are considered universal. The research of Stogdill (1948) suggested that in various situations there is no evidence of universal traits that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Given a particular situation, an individual that demonstrates leadership at one time may not necessarily demonstrate the same leadership in another time or in a different situation. Leadership was re-conceptualized in the context of a relationship between people versus a quality or trait within an individual. Researchers from the trait approach indentified a breadth of traits related to leadership. Since a differentiation in the number of traits appears in some survey studies and not in others, the five major traits that are central to trait research are the following: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability (Zaccaro, Kemp & Bader, 2004).

Hallinger's (1998) well-developed model specifies particular leadership practices and provides evidence of the impact of these practices on both organizations and students. This model consists of three sets of leadership dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate. A California study based on a survey, interviews, and documentary analyses at California elementary schools asserts that strong instructional leadership has consistently been described as a key factor in creating effective schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

In the low SES (socioeconomic status) schools, the principals tended to take a very directive role in the selection, development, and implementation of curriculum and instructional programs. In the high-SES schools, however, the principals tended to have less direct control over classroom instruction, respecting the autonomy of teachers with regard to instructional decision-making. The role of principals as instructional leaders in

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the low-SES schools tended to be more task-oriented, emphasizing one-way communication that focused on the completion of a given activity. Principals in the high-SES schools, however, promoted a stronger relationship orientation with staff with collegial working environments, emphasizing two-way communication, where the leader positively reinforced the efforts of followers to engage in desired activities (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

A review of the empirical literature as it relates to the effectiveness of principals during the 1980-1995 time period indicates significant activity in educational administration for policy, practice, and research (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Although various conceptual models were employed during this 15-year period, there were two major approaches that predominated in the study of principal effectiveness: transformational leadership and instructional leadership. Instructional leadership conceptualizations extrapolated from effective schools literature dominated studies from the early to late 1980s (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Biester, Kruse, Beyer, & Heller, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Jackson, 1982; Jones, 1987; Krug, 1986; O'Day, 1983; Scott & Teddlie, 1987). This review of the research indicated that although the definitions may have varied, 31 out of 41 studies conceptualized the principal's role in terms of school effectiveness as instructional leadership. The multiple dynamics of leadership are of great interest to this researcher as an influential area of focus for the principal's role in "turning around" schools and promoting effective changes.

From 1990 onward, researchers had begun to shift their focus to leadership models to be more consistent with educational reform trends such as shared leadership, empowerment, and organizational learning. Labeled as reflecting "second order" changes

(Leithwood, 1994), the evolution of the educational leadership role is primarily directed at changing the normative structure of an organization. The most frequently used model of this variety has been known as transformational leadership (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1993; Silins, 1994).

Several studies have shown that transformational leadership results in enhanced effectiveness and subordinate satisfaction (Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002). Jung and Avolio (1999) conducted an experiment in which individualists with a transactional leader generated more ideas in a brainstorming task, whereas collectivists generated more ideas with a transformational leader. Transformational leadership positively predicts subordinate extra effort and performance beyond expectations, along with higher levels of commitment, cohesion, potency, identification, trust, and satisfaction (Avolio, 2004). The research of Hater and Bass (1988) demonstrated that subordinates' ratings of transformational leadership differentiated top performing managers from ordinary managers. A study of transformational leadership, according to Schyns (2001), was positively related to followers' occupational self-efficacy.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) believed in transformational leadership; they studied 90 top leaders and asked basic questions, thus developing the four I's around four common strategies. First, a transforming leader must have a clear vision of the organization's future known as "Idealized Influence," where the leader becomes a role model. The second strategy is identified as "Inspirational Motivation," where the leader mobilizes people to accept a new group identity of team spirit that motivates and provides meaningful challenge or a new philosophy. "Intellectual Stimulation" is the third strategy, where the leader creates trust in the organization by making decisions and

standing by them. Last is "Individual Consideration" through positive self-regard. Leaders are aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses and use their strengths as a method of mentoring and instilling confidence and high expectations for the organization.

In a recent meta-analytic review of unpublished research on the nature and effects of transformational school leadership (TSL), Leithwood (2012) synthesized the results of 79 unpublished studies about the nature of transformational school leadership and its impact on the school organization, teachers, and students. This research associates TSL with 11 specific leadership practices and these practices as a whole have moderate positive effects on a wide range of consequential school conditions. They also were found to have moderately strong and positive effects on individual teacher's internal states, followed by their influence on teacher behaviors and collective teachers' internal states. TSL had small but significant positive effects on student achievement. This body of research has concluded that more attention by researchers and practitioners needs to be devoted to the impact of specific leadership practices and less to leadership models. The researcher is hopeful that this research study will add valuable data findings as it pertains to specific leadership practices and overall impact on school climate and student achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The criticism continues to spread across the country for public schools that fail to meet students' needs, especially in the urban areas where the achievement gap is widening. According to Braun, Sum, and Yamamoto (2007), the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) reported a decline in standardized test scores and expressed the

concern that the lack of academic preparation has resulted in students who do not possess the proficiency skills needed for success. Research regarding the failure of students has resulted in policy makers questioning whether substantial increases in school funding over the last decade have improved student achievement; this questioning has often focused on student instruction and school improvement (Ewing, 2001).

School communities and educational leaders continue to demand more accountability from principals as instructional leaders because of the decline in student achievement, as measured by states' standardized achievement tests. Successful leadership reform requires more flexibility and effectiveness from the leaders (Blanchard, Hambleton, Zigarmi, & Forsyth, 1987). School leaders who can develop positive relationships among teachers and students also may increase student achievement (Ewing, 2001). Teacher satisfaction is contingent upon the collaboration and support of school principals (Gordon, 2004).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

2. How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program?

3. What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. The intent of the study was to support school districts in training and developing principals to become effective instructional leaders and positive change agents in their schools. The researcher has a personal interest in this topic for after a decade of being at one school in the position of vice principal and principal, she was transferred to another school with only two weeks' notice prior to the start of the new academic school year. The concept of effective leadership indicates a sense of urgency to this researcher and is paramount in the 21st century for creating effective schools in this era of high accountability measures and whole school reform models.

Over the course of school organizational history, there has been an inflated reliance on a process of self-renewal whereby leadership acts as a conduit or facilitator to shape productive futures. (Senge et al., 1999, 2000). A leadership strategy that some principals utilize is to involve teachers in sustained dialogue and decision-making about educational matters. This is often an attempt to improve the school's academic performance and enlarge the leadership capacity. The principal's recognition of teachers as equal partners in this process and acknowledgment of their professionalism demonstrate the ability to capitalize on their knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Rowan, 1990).

In this study, qualitative data were collected to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. The sample was determined by getting permission from 12 principals selected out of 20 elementary schools with similar characteristics in multiple urban school districts. The urban district in which the researcher works as a principal was included in the qualitative study. The goal of the researcher was that the results from this body of work would be used for district-wide future planning to transform school culture and improve student performance. In addition, these research findings can be utilized as a springboard to similar studies, not only in urban settings but also in suburban and rural school settings.

Leadership Styles Background

In order to understand these conceptual frameworks, it is important to identify the background of key concepts in relation to setting the foundation of this study. Functioning as leaders, principals can serve to transform school cultures or to maintain them (Firestone & Louis, 1999; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Transformational, or charismatic, leadership is part of the New Leadership paradigm (Bryman, 1992), and centers more on the elements of leadership that are affective and charismatic. The popularity of this leadership approach may be due in part to its focus on the development of the followers and on intrinsic motivation (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transformational leadership provides intellectual direction and aims at innovating within the organization, while empowering and supporting teachers as partners in decision-making (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Leithwood, 1994). Leithwood and colleagues have described and assessed the effectiveness of transformational leadership

in schools (Leithwood, 1994, 1995; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1993; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1994; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). They have distinguished nine functions of transformational leadership clustering in three areas: (a) mission centered (developing a widely shared vision for the school, building consensus about school goals and priorities), (b) performance centered (holding high performance expectations, providing individualized support, supplying intellectual stimulation), and (c) culture centered (modeling organizational values, strengthening productive school culture, building collaborative cultures, and creating structures for participation in school decisions).

School Climate Background

A school with an effective learning climate has a clear mission. Teachers value the interchange of ideas with colleagues and strong values exist that support a safe and secure environment. There are high expectations of everyone, including teachers, and there is strong, not rigid, leadership (Deal & Peterson, 1990). The culture encourages teachers to work collaboratively with one another and with the administration to teach students so that they learn more (Fullan, 1993). It is a place where both teachers and students learn (Rosenholtz, 1989). The school climate also maintains the image of a "professional community," similar to the fields of law or medicine. Teachers pursue a clear, shared purpose, engage in collaborative activity, and accept a collective responsibility for student learning (Newman & Wehlage, 1995).

Collective Efficacy Background

The research of Ashton and Webb (1986) indicates that teachers who believe in their ability to address the learning needs of students are more resilient in challenging

situations and handle setbacks more readily They derive greater satisfaction from the job of teaching than their peers who have a more limited sense of control over their work and are also less likely to be critical of students who make errors (Raudenbush, Rowan, & Cheong 1992). Thus, feelings of efficacy may shape teachers' willingness and preparedness to adopt reform strategies, share best practices with colleagues and take on more responsibility in the school.

Goddard and Goddard (2001) found that individual self-efficacy of the sample of teachers in a large urban district varied systematically among 47 elementary schools and that a sense of collective efficacy at the school level explained much of the variation among individuals, hence the emergence of the related concept in literature of "collective sense of responsibility." In this concept the emphasis is on teachers' belief that they not only have the capacity to influence student learning but the shared obligation to do so. Collective responsibility is often regarded as the outcome of collective efficacy. A study conducted by Lee, Dedrick, and Smith (1991) found that standard measures of efficacy ("I can affect student learning") were strongly related to measures indicating teachers' feeling that school members should work hard to increase student achievement.

<center>**Student Achievement**</center>

The research of Ross and Gray (2006) indicates that transformational leadership influences teachers' professional commitment to the school's vision, professional community, school norms of collegiality, collaboration, and community partnerships. Teachers who are more committed to organizational values are more likely to assist colleagues and work harder to achieve organizational goals and adopt instructional

practices encouraged by the organization, thereby contributing to higher levels of student achievement if the school goals are focused on academic achievements.

The Ross and Gray (2006) study identified how transformational leadership behaviors contribute to increased student achievement by building teachers' professional commitment and belief in their collective capacity and motivating them to go beyond self-interest to embrace organizational goals. In the data obtained from a Likert 1-6 scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," it was found that teachers' beliefs in their capacity and their professional commitment mediated the impact of principals on student achievements. These findings suggest that the principals who adopt a transformational leadership style have a positive impact on teacher beliefs in collective capacity and commitment to organizational values.

Limitations of the Study

This study was researched in New Jersey at 12 out of 20 elementary schools located in multiple urban school districts. The number of principals as subjects was limited to 12 principals who have been in their respective buildings for a minimum of two years for participation in the leadership study. The study was limited to the respondents' interpretations of the questions on the scale. An adapted version of the Principal Instructional Management Scale (PIMRS) in the form of an open-ended interview guide was the instrument that was used to measure the perceptions of the principal on his or her own behaviors. The researcher is a principal in the district in which the research was conducted; and due to the collegial and personal relationships between the researcher and some of the principals, there may have been some degree of bias within the interview responses.

According to the state of New Jersey, urban schools have the following characteristics: located in an urban area rather than a rural, small town, or suburban area; has a relatively high rate of poverty (as measured by free- and reduced-lunch data provided by the NYSED); has a relatively high proportion of students of color or Limited English Proficiency (LEP); and has a high proportion of students designated as high-need. Since the study was conducted only in urban school districts, the sample delimits the ability of the researcher to make generalizations or have comparative data about rural or suburban school districts.

Last, there were the limitations of the study with the Principal Instructional Management scale (PIMRS). The scale measures the perceptions of the principal on his or her own behaviors. The results varied due to the time of the school year when the adapted PIMRS was administered to the subjects and reflected their personal biases or educational experiences to date.

Definitions of Terms

Leadership Style. Leadership style is defined as what leaders do and how they act (Hersey, 1984).

Transformational Leadership. A process in which the leaders take actions to try to increase their associates' awareness of what is right and important in the school setting, to raise their associates' motivational maturity, and to move their associates to go beyond the associates' own self-interests for the good of the group, the organization, or society. Such leaders provide their associates with a sense of purpose that goes beyond a simple exchange of rewards for effort provided (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

School Climate. Teachers' and principals' perceptions of the school environment. It is more specifically a set of measureable properties of the work environment of teachers and administrators based on their collective perceptions (Hoy, 2007)

Collective Efficacy. Collective efficacy is a relatively new concept and is based on social cognition theory proposed by Bandura (1993, 1997). This emotion is conceptualized as the level of confidence a group of teachers feels about its ability to organize and implement whatever educational initiatives are required for students to reach high standards of achievement. Collective teacher efficacy refers to ''the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students'' (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, p. 480).

Student Achievement. The notion that students have learned something and that they have moved toward fulfilling some predetermined goal, meeting some standard of performance, or acquiring some desired knowledge. Student achievement is usually determined by comparing a student product to a desired outcome.

Elementary School. For the purpose of this research, the educational level that refers to Grades Pre-K through Grade 7.

Urban School. The characteristics of an urban school consist of a school that is located in an urban area rather than a rural, small town, or suburban area with a relatively high rate of poverty as measured by free- and reduced-lunch data. The population has a relatively high proportion of students of color and of students who are Limited English Proficient. The school has also been designated as "high-need."

School In Need of Improvement (SINI). According to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), schools that do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for

two consecutive years in the same content area (language arts literacy/mathematics) are designated as schools in need of improvement. (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

Organization of the Research

This research study will be organized into five chapters:

Chapter I, Introduction, provides the background information that covers: statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study, limitations of the study, and definition of terms.

Chapter II, Review of Relevant Research and Literature, discusses the most current and relevant work related to this study.

Chapter III, Methodology, defines the design of the study, subjects, selection of subjects, instrument, data collection, data processing, and analysis.

Chapter IV, Results and Findings, reports the findings of the methodology of the chapter. Analysis and descriptive summaries are included.

Chapter V, Conclusions and Recommendations, provides information on all of the chapters, including the summary of the purpose of this research, discussion of the findings, and recommendations for further research.

Summary

Leadership characteristics play an important role in promoting and managing school development by influencing subordinates both directly and indirectly. In today's 21st century schools, the standards of higher accountability for schools to demonstrate student achievement has become increasingly reliant on leadership to shape productive futures through professional development and positive school climate. This study

examined the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals.

School leaders who demonstrate effective leadership behaviors empower teachers to rise above their personal expectations and help create and encourage the belief in common goals. School leaders are constantly striving for three fundamental goals: helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative and professional school culture; fostering teacher development; and helping solve problems together more effectively. (Leithwood, 1994).

To enhance the research on an examination of leadership characteristics of principals and their impact on transforming school culture and student achievement for urban schools in need of improvement, the following factors were addressed: (a) leadership styles, (b) school climate, (c) collective efficacy, (d) student achievement, and (e) schools in need of improvement. This study can strengthen previous research results by finding similar relationships of how leadership factors contribute to transforming schools for improved school climate as it relates to successful student achievement.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical and empirical background of the broader scholarly literature relevant to the topic of articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. To provide a foundation related to the research questions of this study, the review of literature discusses the historical context of leadership to illustrate leadership evolution from the past to the 21st century. Following the historical examination is a review of the research that addresses leadership theories and models to identify the strengths and criticisms of their contributions to this body of literature. Next are the descriptions and research studies that support school climate, collaborative learning, shared decision-making, and teacher collective efficacy to enhance the vocabulary and supporting tenets of the study. Last, the summary and synthesis utilizes the literature to support the theoretical framework through analysis and inclusion or exclusion of research by articulating the important variables and phenomena relevant to the topic of leadership and the significance of the current study.

Historical Context of Leadership

Although leadership has existed for thousands of years, researchers are still unable to limit it to one single definition because it is continually evolving and has become more than what it seems to be, depending on one's individual viewpoint and the context in which it is being observed. In a review of literature on leadership research, Stogdill (1974) stated, "There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it. It is much like the words *democracy, love* and *peace.*

Although each of us intuitively knows what we mean by such words, the words can have different meanings for different people. As soon as we try to define leadership, we discover that leadership has many different meanings" (p. 7).

Historically, leadership skills have been examined from a variety of perspectives by numerous researchers. In the early analyses of leadership, from the 1900s to the 1950s, the focus was on differentiation between leader and follower characteristics. During these decades, the findings demonstrated that no single trait or combination of traits fully explained leaders' abilities. Following this, researchers began to examine the influence of the situation on leaders' skills and behaviors. Subsequent leadership studies attempted to distinguish between effective and non-effective leaders by examining leadership behaviors and the connection between personal traits, situational variables, and leader effectiveness. In the 1970s and 1980s leadership studies focused on the individual characteristics of leaders which influence their effectiveness and the success of their organizations. These investigations led to the conclusion that although leaders and leadership are crucial but an additional component is the make-up and structure of an organization. (Méndez-Morse, 1992).

During the 19th century, the "great man" theory of leadership became very popular. The famous historian Thomas Carlyle was deeply involved with this great man theory of leadership and had even stated that the history of this world was basically the combined biographies of these great men. Thomas Carlyle (1840) believed that effective leaders were a package of Godly motivation, the right personality, and an innate ability of being born to lead. The theory was formulated by analyzing the behaviors of mainly military figures of the time. In the 1800s, authoritative positions were held solely by men

and were typically passed on from father to son. Based on this tradition, it is not a coincidence that the theory was named the "great man" theory," as there were not any women that were given the opportunity to rise to leadership when the occasion presented itself.

Herbert Spencer, the famous sociologist, argued against the great man theory (1891). Spencer believed that great leaders were only products of the times and society in which they worked and lived. In other words, society was shaping these great men as opposed to them shaping society (1891). Studies were used to try to determine what universal traits are common to all great leaders. Similar to the "great man" theory, it was assumed that these traits, such as intelligence, honesty, sociableness, and the like, were inherited.

In the 1950s, Ralph Stogdill compared the results of several traits studies and found them to be contradictory and inconclusive. The initial conclusion from studies of leadership traits was that there were no universal traits that consistently separated effective leaders from other individuals. In his review of the leadership literature, Ralph Stogdill (1948) concluded that the existing research had not demonstrated the utility of the trait approach. First, measurement theory at the time was not highly sophisticated and little was known about the psychometric properties of the measures used to operationalize traits. As a result, different studies were likely to use different measures to assess the same construct, which made it very difficult to replicate findings. In addition, many of the trait studies relied on samples of teenagers or lower-level managers.

Conceptual Development of Group Theories

Social scientists studying leadership in the 1930s developed "group" theory.

In this study researchers analyzed how the development of small groups acted as catalysts for leadership to emerge. The data yielded the results of leadership as something that could be learned by an individual. In 1939, a group of researchers led by psychologist Kurt Lewin set out to identify different styles of leadership. In Kurt Lewin's study (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939), schoolchildren were assigned to one of three groups with an authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire leader. The children were then led in an arts and crafts project while researchers observed the behavior of children in response to the different styles of leadership. Lewin's study (1939) found that participative leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is generally the most effective leadership style. Researchers found that children under delegate leadership, also known as laissez-faire leadership, were the least productive of all three groups. The children in this group also made more demands on the leader, showed little cooperation, and were unable to work independently.

While further research has identified more specific types of leadership, this early study was very influential and established major leadership styles in three areas: (1) laissez-faire, (2) authoritarian, and (3) democratic (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). A leader that demonstrates a laissez-faire style does not participate in role assigning and allows the subordinates to determine their own individual roles or work related responsibilities and expectations independent of the leader. This leadership style is successful only if the subordinates are highly and intrinsically motivated with a superior work ethic or skill levels.

A leader that demonstrates an authoritarian style does not collaborate with other group members or seek feedback or input from the subordinates. The autocratic leader

makes decisions in isolation and excludes the opportunity for input from group members. Once the goal or task has been created and scheduled to a time line for completion, the autocrat will then ask for feedback or criticisms from the group members. This style is the least effective for the individual group member and creates a climate of passive resistance. The autocratic leader must give continuous pressure and support for the subordinates to be productive and meet planned goals and objectives for the organization.

The democratic leader maintains overall control of the group but collaborates with the subordinates to make decisions on goals and objectives. The team is given the autonomy to make decisions on the action steps, timelines, and individual responsibilities for each member of a specific task. The group members are motivated by the democratic leadership style and empowered to feel like valuable contributors to the organization's success.

Style Approach of Leadership

In the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, the focus on the key behaviors that result in leadership changed. This change was to stop focusing on characteristics or attributes and instead to focus on the actions of leaders. This theory was different from the trait approach because it determined that the leaders' behavior and personality characteristics are most important and that a person can learn how to be a leader through observation and teaching. Two groundbreaking behavioral leadership studies that set the foundation for hundreds of other studies are the University of Michigan study and the Ohio State University study (Stogdill, 1962).

The Ohio State study used the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) by administering it to samples of people in the military, business, student

leaders, and college administrators (Halpin & Winer, 1957). The LBDQ instrument was used to determine if common leader behaviors emerged across samples by factor-analyses of answers to the questionnaire. The data concluded that there were two distinct aspects of leadership that describe how leaders carry out their role. The terms *consideration* and *initiating structure* were two factors that consistently appeared. The definition of consideration for the purpose of this study indicates "providing for the welfare of a subordinates and demonstrating concern, support and recognition of one's accomplishments" (Hemphill & Coons, 1957). The term *initiating structure*, also known as *task-oriented behavior*, which entails giving a great deal of support to subordinates for their work through planning, organizing, and coordinating their efforts.

The researcher Rensis Likert (1967) conducted the Michigan leadership studies. The focus of the Michigan studies was to determine the principles and methods of leadership that led to productivity and job satisfaction. The studies resulted in two general leadership behaviors or orientations: an employee orientation and a production orientation. The leaders that demonstrated employee orientation showed genuine concern for interpersonal relations, while those with a production orientation focused on the task or technical aspects of the job. The Michigan studies concluded that an employee orientation with general supervision instead of close supervision yielded better results. Likert (1967) eventually developed four systems of management based on these studies, which included the most participatory set of leader behaviors and resulted in the most positive outcomes.

The Transformational Model of Leadership

J. V. Downton (1973) initially coined the term *transformational leadership (*1973), but James MacGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the concept during his study of political leadership. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is not described as a set of specific behaviors but rather an ongoing process by which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20). Transformational leaders offer a purpose that transcends short-term goals and focuses on higher order intrinsic needs. Transformational leaders raise the bar by appealing to higher ideals and values of followers. In doing so, they may model the values themselves and use charismatic methods to attract people to the values and to the leader (Burns, 1978).

Burns was influenced by Abraham Maslow's Theory of Human Needs (1954). Maslow's theory recognizes that people have a range of needs, and the extent to which they will perform effectively in the workplace will be affected by the extent to which these needs are satisfied. His theories parallel many other theories of human developmental psychology, all of which focus on describing the stages of growth in humans. Maslow used the terms Physiology, Safety, Belongingness and Love, Esteem, and Self-Actualization needs to describe the patterns through which human motivations generally move. Transformational leadership fits into the higher levels, as it requires a high level of self-esteem and self-actualization to successfully be an authentic transformational leader.

Bass (1985) built on Burns' (1978) work and described transformational leadership in terms of the impact that it has on followers; they feel trust, admiration, and loyalty towards the leader who encourages them to perform beyond expectations. Bass

(1985) asserts that these leaders motivate followers by appealing to strong emotions, regardless of the ultimate effects on the followers and do not necessarily attend to positive moral values.

Bass (1960, 1985, 1997) has researched four interrelated components that are essential for leaders in order to move followers into transformational style. The first component is Idealized Influence (II). In this component, Bass determined that genuine trust must be built between leaders and followers. "If the leadership is truly transformational, its charisma or idealized influence is characterized by high moral or ethical standards" (Bass, 1960, 1985, 1997). The followers of a leader must desire to emulate him or her and see through the eyes of trust, respect, and admiration. The trust for both leader and follower is built on a solid moral and ethical foundation. A leader that displays charismatic qualities shows conviction and appeals to followers on an emotional level. This is about the leader having a clear set of values and demonstrating he or she will do the right thing by providing a role model for his or her followers with high standards for moral and ethical conduct.

The second component is identified as Inspirational Motivation (IM). When followers are inspired and motivated to work by transformational leaders, it gives a sense of purposeful meaning and challenges them to work together with enthusiasm and team spirit. Followers of a leader need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act. It is exceptionally important that this visionary aspect of leadership is supported by proper communication skills. The leader must be able to articulate his or her vision with powerful preciseness in a compelling and persuasive way.

The third component is identified as Intellectual Stimulation (IS). In this component the notion of creativity is encouraged. The followers are not publicly criticized for making mistakes and are included in the collaborative process for new ideas, and finding solutions to address problems. When the leader takes risks and challenges assumptions, his or her vision provides the framework for followers to see how they connect to the leader, the organization, one another, and the intended goals. Once a follower has the big picture in view and is allowed freedom of input into the organization, he or she can creatively overcome any obstacles in the way of the mission.

The fourth and last component is identified as Individual Consideration (IC). In this component the leader will mentor each follower to reach his or her highest level of potential for maximum success in the organization. This approach fulfills an individual's need for self-actualization, self-fulfillment, and self-worth and educates the next generation of leaders for the future. It is important for the leader of the team to celebrate and respect the individuality of the follower, and these individual contributions create diversity and strength for an organization. The concept of MBWA or "management by walking around" is utilized for more personal communications between leader and follower. This concept allows the leader the opportunities to not only listen to the followers but to mentor, coach/support, and make necessary adjustments for meeting the goals and objectives of the organization.

Contingency Theories Framework

There are a variety of contingency theories of leadership that are supported by select theory and research. During the time period of the 1960s and 1970s, leadership studies looked at which behaviors succeeded in specific situations identified as

contingency or situational. Fiedler (1967) developed a contingency model which is comprised of leadership theory of industrial and organizational psychology. As a result of the interaction of two factors--leadership style and situational favorableness (or situational control)--Fiedler's (1967) contingency model determined that a leader's effectiveness is based on situational contingency. He developed the "least preferred co-worker" (LPC) scale and contended that the LPC scale measures whether a leader has a task-oriented style or relationship-oriented style. Fiedler (1967) believed that leaders tended to have a preferred style of either people-oriented or task-orientated. The task of the leader was to find the best context that would produce the best results from a follower.

Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) studied over 1,300 leaders by interviewing leaders about leadership. They asked what people did when they were at their "personal best" in leading others. From their research, the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership was developed and this model is widely used throughout the world and in many types of organizations. Their five practices are as follows: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The Kouzes and Posner model (1987, 2002) recommends what people need to do in order to become effective leaders and asserts that the model is not about personality but rather more about practice. These researchers also developed the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The LPI consists of 30 questions and is a 360 degree leadership assessment tool that evaluates individual leadership competencies.

Strengths and Criticisms of the Contingency Theories

Contingency theory has several major strengths. Prior to the development of contingency theory, the focus of leadership theories was on whether there was a single or best type of leadership (i.e., trait approach). However, in contingency theory the emphasis is placed on the relationship within the demands of various situations and the leader's style. The LPC instrument (Fiedler, 1967) provides data to determine the probability of success for a given person in a given situation, thus providing predictive power for contingency theory in contrast to other leadership theories. Contingency theory allows for flexibility; and if the leader is in the wrong situation, the work variables should be altered or the leader must make changes in positioning to ensure success. The data from LPC scores can also be useful for organizations in developing leadership profiles for personnel planning and determining how employees would best fit in and meet the needs of the organization to make it successful.

In contrast, although research studies support the validity of contingency theory, it has also demonstrated a multitude of criticisms for further analysis. Fiedler (1993) identified a "black box problem," which relates to why relationship-motivated leaders are good in moderately favorable settings while task-motivated leaders are good in extreme settings, which still remains a mystery for further exploration. Contingency theory is also criticized because the validity of the LPC does not correlate with other standard leadership measures and is not easy to complete correctly. The instructions on the LPC scale are not clear in explaining how the respondent selects the least preferred coworker (Fiedler, 1993). The LPC asks a person to characterize another person's behavior as a basis for measuring his or her leadership style. Because individual perceptions and

opinions can skew the responses, it does not seem sensible to measure one's own style by evaluating someone else's.

Situational Theories Framework

Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard (1977) developed the *situational leadership* model. The premise of this model is centered on four leadership-styles with four levels of follower-development. In this concept it was determined that it is up to the leader to assess the situation and to adapt their approach to fit the situation. The leader has the understanding that there is not just one ideal leadership style. Situational leadership is constructed around the idea that employees will move backward and forward on the developmental continuum. This continuum represents the commitment and competency of subordinates. It is essential for effective leaders to determine where subordinates are on the developmental continuum. This determination will direct leaders how to adapt their leadership styles so that they directly align their style to the development level of subordinates. The four leadership styles in the model are identified as delegating, supporting, coaching, and directing (Blanchard, 1985).

Strengths and Limitations of the Situational Theories

Practitioners have identified several strengths of the situational theory approach. This type of leadership is well known and utilized for training leaders of numerous Fortune 500 companies (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). The situational leadership approach is straightforward, easily utilized, and practical for application in a variety of situations such as work, school, and home settings. In contrast to other leadership theories that are descriptive in nature, the situational theory approach is prescriptive in that it tells an

organization what to do through a set of guidelines to enhance and promote effective leadership for various contexts.

Although situational theory approach has been extensively utilized for leadership training by organizations, researchers have identified limitations and criticisms. The body of research is weak and raises questions on the theoretical validity of this approach (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Graeff, 1997; Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002; Vecchio, Bullis, & Brazil, 2006). Multiple doctoral dissertations have notated dimensions of situational leadership but remain unpublished; therefore, it does not add up to a favorable comparison with other leadership approaches and the impact on subordinates in an organization. The validity of the model also raises questions with respect to the relationship of subordinates' development level matching the leadership style.

Vecchio (1987) conducted a study with principals of 300+ high school teachers. The study was implemented to determine the validity of the prescriptions suggested by the Hersey and Blanchard approach (1993). Vecchio (1987) determined that experienced teachers' performance was unrelated to the principal's style, whereas newly hired non-tenured teachers performed better and were more satisfied under principals that had highly structured leadership styles. This study was replicated on two separate occasions with university employees (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997) and with U.S. military academy cadets (Vecchio, Bullis & Brazil, 2006). The findings of both studies found evidence, though weak, to support the original situation leadership model with its basic prescriptions. Last, the model does not address how demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, experience, and education) affect an employee's preference for leadership. A study demonstrated that job experience and education level were not related to supportive

leadership and were inversely related to directive leadership (Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002).

Many different versions of instruments have been developed to measure situational leadership, but most of them have been constructed similarly in the format of questionnaires with approximately 12-20 work-related situations or scenarios. The situations mirror the four quadrants of the leadership styles model, and respondents are asked to select their preferred style for each situation from four choices. A wide range of feedback can be attained through these questionnaires on a respondent's leadership style, and it broadens the opportunities to make comparisons between the respondents' own views of leadership and the way others in an organization see them in a leadership role.

Instructional Leadership Models

With increasing demands for demonstration of consistent student achievement of adequate yearly progress as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, the premise that principals should be prepared and trained to adequately meet instructional leadership roles emerged (Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2003). The model most frequently used in empirical investigations (Hallinger & Heck, 1996) proposes three dimensions for the instructional leadership role of the principal: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger, 2001; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), and these three dimensions are further delineated into ten instructional leadership functions.

The research of Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) identified several studies which demonstrated evidence of student outcomes that had been influenced by effective leadership practices. Their analysis posits that the most critical leadership practices are

setting direction for teachers through a clearly identified vision, with set goals and expectations, as well as supporting and modeling for teachers to help them individually. It is also necessary to redesign the organization to foster collaboration and engage families and community and to redesign organizational management within a school for providing organizational resources and support.

Another example in this body of literature is the research of Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003), which focuses on balanced leadership and is symbiotic with the Leithwood and Jantzi research for identifying significant relationships between effective leadership practices on school transformations and student achievement outcomes. This study identifies 21 effective leadership responsibilities which add measures of mediating effects that include whole group and individual collective teacher development and engagement. The conclusion of this research indicated that the related factors of student (motivation), teacher (instruction and curriculum) and school (curriculum, goals, parental involvement, orderly environment and collegiality) are most influenced by effective leadership and therefore are the most influential with respect to student achievement.

Summary of Leadership Theories

The multitude of scholarly leadership studies suggests that each separate and distinct theoretical era contains elements of former and current theories or studies. It also suggests that to explain the complexities of the leadership process, there are expansive varieties of different theoretical approaches. As the research continues on what makes a good leader, how to motivate people, etc., in spite of the differences between theories, most share these common ideas: (1) There is leadership potential in everyone, (2) Authority should be shared and distributed throughout an organization, (3) A common

language of organizational purpose and vision rather than power, (4) Focus on transformational language, attitudes, practices, and values, (5) Leaders should model the way, motivate, and work as a team, (6) Reciprocal relationships and empowerment of followers is essential.

School Climate (Culture)

Schein (1992) is a longtime leading expert in the field of organizational culture, and states that espoused values, group norms, habits of thinking and acting, and personal behavior are among the more readily understood elements that represent the organization's culture. Schein (1992) describes culture as a relatively stable pattern of organizational behavior that lies outside the immediate awareness of the organization's members and reflects the shared behavioral, emotional, and cognitive learning the group has undergone over time. As an organization evolves, the behaviors of the organization develop a consistent pattern based upon the shared assumptions of the organization. These patterns not only evolve over time, they also are shared or handed down over time to succeeding generations within an organization. If the cultural norms are congruent with the mission of the organization, the organization flourishes. If the cultural norms are incongruent or even toxic, the organization cannot flourish (Schein, 1992).

Many researchers have provided formal definitions of school or organizational culture. Culture is both product and process. As product, it embodies the accumulated wisdom of previous members of the organization. As process, it is continually renewed and recreated as new members are taught the old ways and eventually become teachers themselves (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 250). Culture is an informal understanding of the "way we do things around here." Culture is a strategic body of learned behaviors that

give both meaning and reality to its participants (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p. 20). According to Barth (2002), culture is a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, ceremonies, traditions, and myths that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization. Culture is the historically transmitted pattern of meaning that wields astonishing power in shaping what people think and how they act (Barth, 2002, p. 7). In summary, organizational climate is a set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one organization from another and influences the behavior of organizational members. More specific, school climate is a relatively enduring quality of the entire school that is experienced by participants, describes their collective perceptions of behavior, and affects their attitudes and behavior in the school (Hoy & Miskel, 1996).

Collaborative Learning

The development and growth of a professional learning community (PLC) is inextricably linked to organizational culture (Louis & Marks, 1996; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996), the norms and values, rituals, history, and traditions shared by group members (Schein, 1992). Elements of organizational culture shape the group's thinking, perceiving, and behavior (Schein, 1992). A cultural climate that promotes professional inquiry, risk taking among teachers, and rethinking leadership provides a fertile environment for a professional learning community (Louis, Kruse, et al., 1996).

According to Louis, Marks, et al. (1996), characteristics distinctive of and critical to a professional learning community include the following: (1) shared norms and values of collectively agreed-on professional beliefs (e.g., all students can learn at reasonable levels), (2) evidence of support and sustained successful professional practice with a focus on student learning, (3) establishing students' intellectual growth as a prime

professional goal is characteristic of professional communities, (4) reflective dialogue evidenced by teachers reflecting on and evaluating their professional practice through conversations with colleagues, (5) a deprivatization of practice with continuous reflection on and improvement of practice requires interaction with and feedback from colleagues, and (6) in addition to sharing expertise, working collaboratively sustains reflective dialogue and deprivatization of practice.

Shared Decision Making

Research indicates the importance of a professional learning community, mainly because of the scaffolding evidence that it is related to both improved instruction and to student achievement (King & Newmann, 2001; Louis & Marks, 1998; Smylie & Wenzel, 2003; Tighe, Wang, & Foley, 2002). Supportive interactions among teachers in school wide culture embedded in professional learning communities enable them to assume various roles with one another as mentor, mentee, coach, specialist, advisor, facilitator, and so on.

However, a professional learning community is more than just support; it includes shared values, a common focus on student learning, collaboration in the development of curriculum and instruction, the sharing of practices, and reflective dialogue (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1995; see also Hord & Sommers, 2008; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). In a functioning professional community these elements are so deeply embedded that teachers are often not aware of them; it is the culture of the school and just the way that things are done. For example, having reflective dialogue with colleagues or inviting a peer in to observe a lesson would be normal, desired, and expected (Little, 2003).

Teacher Collective Efficacy

Over decades, researchers have established strong links between teacher efficacy and teacher behaviors that foster student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Bandura's (1986, 1997) social cognitive theory is useful in this regard. The theory is anchored in human agency—the ways individuals exercise some level of control over their lives. Central to the exercise of control is a sense of self-efficacy: "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute a course of action required to produce a given attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). There are only a few studies of collective efficacy and student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

In his groundbreaking study of collective efficacy and student achievement, Bandura (1993) reached two important conclusions: (a) Student achievement (aggregated to the school level) is significantly and positively related to collective efficacy, and (b) collective efficacy has a greater effect on student achievement than does student SES (aggregated to the school level). Similarly, Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk Hoy (2000) used multilevel modeling to find that collective efficacy was positively related to differences among schools in student mathematics and reading achievement. Both studies provide strong evidence that collective efficacy influences student achievement.

Summary and Synthesis of the Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter was to review and examine the literature as it pertains to the main constructs of leadership for this study. The review of past decades of the aforementioned leadership theories provides a grounded theory foundation for the framework in understanding the historical evolution of instructional leadership to its

present day phenomenon. The researcher conceptually utilized the underpinnings of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in order to systematically methodize the theory behind leadership characteristics and their impact on school improvement from data collection, coding and categorizing similar concepts for explanations on the subject. Educational leadership theory has evolved during the last fifty years (Griffiths, 1988), and leadership in schools continues to evolve as the social and political climates influence the organization of education.

This researcher finds this topic intriguing and of great interest, and the review of the literature was eye-opening. During the researcher's twelve-year tenure as a school administrator, the role has changed significantly with a greater emphasis on instructional leadership, but still coupled with the expectation for managerial duties in tandem. Long days and hours on the job to meet the instructional demands and managerial expectations have become the norm for the researcher of this study. Research indicates that elementary principals work an average of 62 hours per week (Groff, 2001), while their colleagues at the secondary level spend even greater amounts of time on the job (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Although it has been determined what the major components of the principal's job are, "we know much less about how principals carry out these functions on a daily basis" (Lashway, 2002a, p. 2). It was the researcher's desire to study the behaviors of principals for effectiveness and impact on schools for making comparisons that would identify trends and patterns in the data for grounded theory and a correlation to the theoretical framework.

The theoretical framework of this study is based upon Hallinger's (1998) well developed model, which specifies particular leadership practices and provides evidence

of the impact of these practices on both organizations and students. This model consists of three sets of leadership dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate. In the study which was performed in California elementary schools, Hallinger asserted that strong instructional leadership has consistently been described as a key factor in creating effective schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). The study was based on a survey, interviews, and documentary analyses and indicated that in the high-SES effective schools, the principals tended to have less direct control over classroom instruction, respecting the autonomy of teachers with regard to instructional decision-making.

However, in the low SES schools, the principals tended to take a very directive role in the selection, development, and implementation of curriculum and instructional programs. The role of principals as instructional leaders in low-SES effective schools tended to be more task-oriented with one-way communication that focused on the completion of a given activity. The principals in the high-SES effective schools promoted a stronger relationship orientation with staff by emphasizing two-way communication, where the leader positively reinforced the efforts of followers to engage in desired activities (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

The PIMRS tool has proven to be a reliable and valuable data instrument, consisting of 10 subscales and 50 items (Hallinger, 1990). For each item in the instrument, the rater assesses the frequency with which the principal enacts a behavior or practice associated with that particular instructional leadership function ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always).* The outcome results in data that are specific to the perceptions of principal performance on each of the 10 instructional leadership functions.

Three parallel forms of the instrument have been developed and tested by individual role groups of the principal, teacher, or supervisor.   The items that compose each form are identical, with the exception of the stems that change based on the different perspectives of the roles in the groups. With permission from Dr. Hallinger, the researcher created an adapted questionnaire version of the original PlMRS instrument that was used in this study and distributed to the sample of principals for self-assessment of leadership style, characteristics, and effectiveness.

The leadership models described within the literature review include a combination of theoretical and empirically based studies to support the framework of the study. The review of literature has identified leadership as a major determinant of overall positive school growth and student outcomes. In the first half of the twentieth century, the literature sought to differentiate the characteristics of leader and follower, thus determining that a leader's abilities cannot be explained by a single trait or combination thereof. This body of research, formulated during the period of the great man theory of leadership, indicates that leaders do not demonstrate universal effective characteristics or demonstrate a style that is laissez-faire, authoritarian, or democratic. The researcher posits that the results of these studies were most often contradictory or inconclusive due to the lack of highly sophisticated measurement theory, which led to inconsistencies for replication of the leadership findings.

These early empirical studies have been identified to support the historical context and evolution of leadership from past to present; but due to the fact that they mainly focus on leaders having the right personality or being born to lead, they will be excluded from supporting the theoretical framework of this study (Carlyle, 1840; Spencer, 1891;

Lewin, 1939). A review of the empirical research of the past twenty years indicates that principal leadership can make a difference in student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). In reality, among school factors, the effect of principals is considered second only to that of teachers with respect to the facilitation of student learning according to research (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

Through the review of the literature on leadership that is attributed to the style approach, the researcher has justified these empirical studies for inclusion to support the study. In this approach, the behavior of the leader is emphasized in contrast to the personality characteristics of the leader. With the inception of the style approach, leadership theory shifted toward what leaders do and how they act in various contexts. Researchers investigating the style approach determined that two types of behaviors are associated with leadership: relationship behaviors and task behaviors. The relationship behaviors correlate to the school climate background addressed in Chapter 1 and making team members feel comfortable individually and with the group for any given situation. The task behavior is identified as setting and accomplishing goals under the direction of the leader and facilitating those who follow to be comfortable enough to achieve them.

The Ohio State University study is based on the findings of Stogdill's (1948) work. This study was significant to the body of literature on leadership because its purpose was to analyze how people acted when they were leading a group or organization. Thus, the creation of the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire resulted (Hemphill & Coons, 1957). The LBDQ consisted of 150 questions that were administered to samples in the fields of education, the military, and industrial businesses to prove that certain clusters of behaviors were typical of leaders. The core results

indicated overall leaders provide structure for their followers and then nurture them in return.

While this research was being conducted at Ohio State University, researchers at the University of Michigan were also exploring leadership behaviors (Likert, 1967). This study determined that two general leadership behaviors or orientations existed: an employee orientation and a production orientation. The employee orientation, which is very similar to the cluster of behaviors in the Ohio study, shows that for leaders there is a genuine concern for interpersonal relations with a value on personal needs and individuality. The production orientation focused on the task or technical aspects of the job, where workers are viewed as a means for getting the work done (Bowers & Seashore, 1966).

These variables of both studies are relevant to the main constructs of this study because one of the questions that the researcher sought to answer was to identify the effective characteristics that instructional leaders utilized to influence a school's learning climate through direct and indirect ways. As referenced previously in Chapter 1 on the concept of collective efficacy, teachers must have the confidence instilled in them by the principal for the belief that they have the ability to successfully accomplish a specified task. To further synthesize this research into this study on leadership, in order for a principal to accomplish this task, he or she has to be internally self-confident in order to set the same tone for the teachers. According to research, leaders who have confidence are more likely to be motivated to succeed, to welcome and challenge and to be persistent when addressing obstacles that arise (Bandura, 1997; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Many present-day leadership training and development programs throughout the country are structured in alignment with the style approach. The Ohio and Michigan studies determined that essential tasks such as organizing and structuring work essentially have to be coupled to include camaraderie, respect, trust, and a reciprocal liking of leader and follower. Although the findings of these studies were significant, further research would be warranted to gain new perspectives on the value of being both highly task-oriented and relationship-oriented in all situations. (Misumi, 1985). Since the researcher works in a school setting, life experiences have taught that certain situations call for different leadership styles; i.e., the more complex situations need high-task behavior, and simple situations call for more supportive behavior. Overall, the preponderance of evidence for these areas of both studies was unclear, inconclusive, or contradictory in nature.

Great emphasis is placed on labeling leaders as effective when they demonstrate the ability to change or transform a school for the better. The concept of transformational leadership emerged during Burns (1978) study of political leadership which was influenced by Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs (1954). Bass (1985) and other researchers have described transformational leadership as going beyond individual needs, focusing on a common purpose, addressing intrinsic rewards and higher psychological needs such as self actualization, and developing commitment with and in the followers (AASA, 1986; Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Coleman & La Roque, 1990; Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992; Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Leithwood & Steinbach, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1989; 1990).

Bass (1960, 1985, 1997) has researched four interrelated components that are essential for leaders to move followers into transformational style: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration. At the core of transformational leadership is the need for principals, teachers, and students to continually adapt and change. The authoritarian and autocratic leader is not the norm anymore, and principals are expected to create professional learning communities that collaborate and share best practices. Teachers are expected to be included in the decision-making process, where the principal listens and is responsive to not only their needs but also the needs of all the stakeholders in the school.

The significance and advantages of transformational leadership as it pertains to this study is that is provides a better understanding for the reform and restructuring of schools in today's world. This researcher has questioned whether the transfer of a principal from one building to another due to restructuring really creates the desired effects that a district is expecting or in most cases "hoping" for. Do districts comparatively and analytically examine all the underlying factors of a school's success or lack of improvement before and after the merry-go-round dance of principals from one location to another? Although the body of literature in this area justifies its inclusion in looking at the big picture for the researcher's study on leadership characteristics and their impact on transforming schools, future research needs to have a more varied perspective and broader approach. More focus needs to given to the process in addition to looking at the outcomes of transformational leadership. The researcher sought to determine the process for principals with respect to conducting observations for teachers. In the age of tenure reform and student performance included as a measure for principal and teacher

summative performances, it would be useful to the field of education to longitudinally examine the impact of leadership development on followers by having more transformational leaders as their instructional building-based models.

In Fiedler's (1967) contingency model, which is comprised of leadership theory of industrial and organizational psychology, he determined that a leader's effectiveness is based on situational contingency as a result of the interaction of two factors: leadership style and situational favorableness (or situational control). He created the least preferred co-worker (LPC) scale as a measurement tool and contended that the LPC scale measures whether a leader has a task-oriented style or relationship-oriented style. The research of Fielder enabled the field to move from the research of traits and personal characteristics of leaders to leadership styles and behaviors.

In a study of interviewing leaders about leadership, Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) created the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, which is widely used in many types of organizations throughout the world. The synthesis of this research to the current study is that it is supported and grounded in empirical research and many researchers have tested it and determined that it is a valid and reliable approach for explaining how an individual can accomplish leadership that is effective (Peters, Hartke, & Pohlman, 1985; Strube & Garcia, 1981). The variable in this study for future claims of investigative research is that the contingency theory does not support an organization in determining the next steps for a leader incorrectly placed against a situation in the workplace. More research is warranted to support future decision making in supporting leaders to adapt their styles for various situations, since situations are not always easily adaptable. This weakness in the methodology led the researcher to ask the question: what does the

research show for professionally developing principals to become more effective with respect to school improvement in lieu of corrective action that results in a transfer?

The situational theories framework is widely recognized through the research of Hersey and Blanchard (1969a). They created a situational leadership model under four dynamics or quadrants of leadership styles: delegating, supporting, coaching, and directing. This body of work indicates that leadership is comprised of both a supportive and directive dimension, which the leader has to apply appropriately in any given situation. This theory is very similar to that of the aforementioned Michigan study in that leaders who want to meet the needs of followers should change from directive or supportive given the circumstances at the time.

In the professional experiences of this researcher, there is no shortage of opportunity for using situational leadership. In synthesizing the research for relevance to this study, the fluidity of this approach supports the researcher's questions in the study as it pertains to the three leadership dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate as the focus areas for principal behaviors. The situational approach allows principals to apply this concept as they progress, and in some cases regress, with staff or students in various projects or situations in the school environment. This approach demonstrates flexibility and emphasizes that for leaders to be most effective, they must adapt or change their styles to meet the needs of the subordinates and the requirements of a given task. Each subordinate must be treated differently to become more confident and skillful in the organization (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Yukl, 1998).

In conclusion of this section on the summary and the synthesis of the literature review, the researcher has the following question: What does the research tell us about effective leadership and shared decision making for school transformation and improvement? As stated previously, the principal's role has experienced an evolution from school manager to instructional leader (Stronge, 2008). Although a plethora of research has been cited for inclusion in this study by the researcher, there are three predominant empirical models--Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003--of instructional leadership previously discussed in which three distinct similarities emerged.

All three models indicated the importance of instructional leaders defining and communicating goals, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and promoting and emphasizing the importance of professional development. Much of the reviewed literature points to constructs contained in these three models that are similar to those proven effective in business and in schools undergoing large scale change or reorganization. The researcher also posits that based on the literature, the conclusion can be supported that the best leadership model fits the context in which it operates and that the current context in schools is accountability-driven change.

The synthesis of this literature review was considered through the common themes and empirically-based influences on this study. The constructs of leadership and its influence on followers and the organization were reviewed, as they are believed to contribute to the transformation of a school climate and student achievement. While the aforementioned leadership theories provide a framework for the historical evolution of instructional leadership, the researcher posits that the instructional leadership construct

amalgamates an inclusion of all of the following: style, transformation, instruction, situation, and contingency theories. Although the needs of schools may vary, the need for different types of leadership in different contexts that promote safe and positive school climates will always remain critical to school success.

The primary focus for the review of this body of literature was to analyze and synthesize the comprehensive research on the impact of leadership characteristics in schools. A substantial amount of theoretical and empirical research documents this phenomenon with respect to the effects on school culture and student achievement. With a specific emphasis on the empirical models of instructional leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003) which appear to validate the concept that the effects of "quality leadership" are essential for student achievement and positive school climate (Deal & Peterson, 1990).

The main constructs of this study and the theoretical framework are based on Hallinger's (1998) model of leadership practices and the impact of these practices on both school organizations and students. The three sets of leadership dimensions-- Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate--are directly aligned with the researcher's study, for this model provides a pathway to qualitatively use grounded theory as the premise to frame, collect, and analyze the data. The following chapter outlines the methodology and design of the study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. This chapter describes the procedures that were used to collect, organize, and analyze the data. The methodology of this study was divided into five sections: (a) research questions, (b) population of the study, (c) instrument, (d) data collection, (e) data processes and analysis.

The dynamics of leadership characteristics in the 21st century are of particular interest to this researcher who is currently a principal facing the challenges of restructuring for improved student performance and achievement. Bass's theory of transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1988) and Podsakoff 's et al. (1990) dimensions to define transformational leadership include the following: (1) identifies and articulates a vision, (2) conveys high performance expectations, (3) fosters acceptance of group goals, (4) provides appropriate models, (5) provides intellectual stimulation, and (6) provides individualized support.

This study was conducted in an effort to address concerns such as leadership style, school climate, teacher collective efficacy, collaboration, shared decision making and student achievement in urban schools in need of improvement. This study can strengthen previous research results by finding similar relationships of how leadership factors contribute to transforming schools for improved school climate as it relates to successful student achievement.

Research Design

The present era of education demands more than ever that principals are strong instructional leaders. Research indicates that principals are highly unlikely to be such unless certain conditions are met (Hallinger & Murphy, 1982, 1985; Murphy et al., 1985). First, the decision makers within a district have to lessen the barriers that keep principals from performing their leadership roles. Second, instructional leadership should be defined by the observable practices and behaviors that principals can implement. Third, the methods of assessment must generate valid and reliable data on instructional leadership behavior and provide information that principals can use for their own professional development. School districts should provide these conditions as they plan professional development and evaluation programs.

The theoretical framework of this study is based upon Hallinger's (1998) well-developed model, which specifies particular leadership practices and provides evidence of the impact of these practices on both organizations and students. This comparative study identified which of the 10 instructional leadership functions identified by Hallinger's 1983 Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) were being demonstrated by a sample of New Jersey elementary school principals as perceived by their own self-assessment in these schools. The grounded theory approach sets the premise for this qualitative study and the tenets underlying the PIMRS instrument. The PIMRS assesses three dimensions of instructional leadership (see Figure 1): Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

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┌─────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Defining the School │    │   Managing the      │    │  Developing the School   │
│                     │    │   Instructional     │    │  Learnina Climate Proaram│
└─────────────────────┘    └─────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────┘

  Frames the School's       Coordinates the            Protects Instructional
  Goals                     Curiculum                  Time

  Communicates the          Supervises and             Provides Incentives for
  School's Goals            Evaluates Instruction       Learning

                            Monitors Student           Promotes Professional
                            Progress                   Development

                                                       Maintains High
                                                       Visibility
```
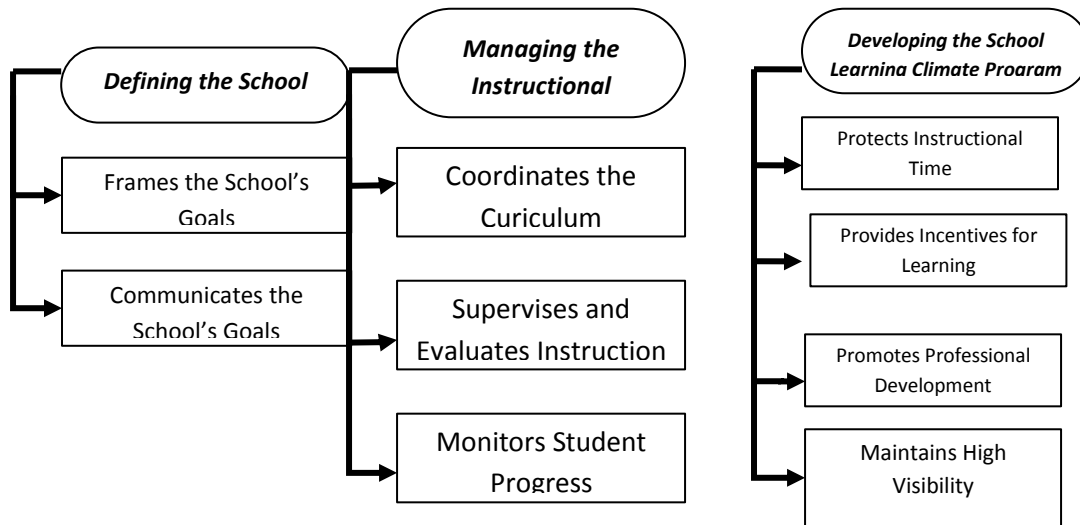
Figure 1

Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale Framework

There are three main dimensions: (1) defining the school's mission, (2) managing the instructional program, and (3) developing the school learning climate. These are further delineated into 10 leadership functions: (a) frames the school's goals, (b) communicates the school's goals, (c) coordinates the curriculum, (d) supervises and evaluates instruction, (e) monitors student progress, (f) protects instructional time, (g) provides incentives for teachers, (h) provides incentives for learning, (i) promotes professional development, and (j) maintains high visibility.

In-depth individual interviews consisted of a one-on-one format. The data were recorded in a variety of ways, including audio recording and written notes. The purpose of the interviews was to probe the ideas of the interviewees about the topic of interest. Phenomenology is sometimes considered a philosophical perspective as well as an approach to qualitative methodology. It has a long history in several social research disciplines including psychology, sociology, and social work. Phenomenology is a school of thought that emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations

of the world. That is, the phenomenologist wants to understand how the world appears to others.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher should spend ample time collecting data, coupled with looking for variations in the understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Patton (2002) states that the credibility of the data rests partially on the researcher's integrity, and one approach used to address this issue is to look for data that support alternative explanations. Some researchers suggest taking it a step further where the researcher in a study should purposefully look for data that disconfirms or challenges their expectations or emerging findings. The researcher made initial contact with the sample of principals at the selected schools via email with a letter to request participation in the study. Upon receiving a reply, the researcher reached out to the principals and created a schedule of interviews and confirmed the appointments the day before with a confirmation phone call.

This researcher took the role of interviewer in the study. Eleven of the interviews were conducted at the schools in the principal's office or conference room with the exception of one principal who wanted to be interviewed at home due to scheduling conflicts. This researcher was very flexible and willing to accommodate the principals for scheduling interviews with the time and location most convenient for their professional and personal schedules. The attitude of the researcher was very empathetic with the busy schedules of the principals and was grateful and appreciative of the time given to grant the interviews for the study.

Relevant to the integrity of the qualitative researcher is the researcher's position or what is referred to as reflexivity: "the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the human as instrument" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 183). It is important for the researcher to explain his or her biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research study to be investigated (Merriam, 2009). When the researcher clarifies his or her position, it ensures external validity by allowing the reader to better understand how the researcher arrived at the interpretation of the data.

The researcher is employed in the field of education; more specifically, in one of the urban districts included in this study. She is employed as a principal in an elementary school and has been in this position for nine years. Prior to her tenure as principal, she was an elementary vice-principal in the same urban district for three years with one year as a high school vice-principal in another school district that was suburban and unrelated to this study. The researcher began her educational career as a substitute teacher and then as a teacher in an urban school district unrelated to this study. The researcher has a combined tenure of 22 years as a career educator. Due to this experience in education and as an elementary principal in an urban school, the researcher made every effort to remain neutral and impartial with respect to the findings and interpretations.

The researcher's assumption was that the leadership characteristics and behaviors of a principal would impact the culture of the schools, albeit it may not significantly or directly impact student achievement and growth outcomes. The researcher believed that principals indirectly impact student achievement because the teachers are always the first line of defense when it comes to teaching and learning. Research studies by Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) show that among school factors, the effect of principals is

considered second only to that of teachers with respect to the facilitation of student learning. Based on professional experience, the researcher made assumptions that other factors may significantly impact student achievement and could also be correlated to race and gender gaps, socioeconomic status, and parental involvement factors that must be taken into account when analyzing student growth outcomes for school academic growth and improvement.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

2. How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program?

3. What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

Population of the Study

In order to gain multiple perspectives in the area of leadership and school climate, the population of this study was limited to principals in a selected 12 out of 20 elementary schools with a combined population of approximately 5,646 students. The gender of the participants was heterogeneously mixed with 6 females and 6 males. The 12 participants were selected from 3 different urban districts. The cultural identity of the

participants consisted of 9 African Americans, 1 Hispanic, 1 Asian and 1 Caucasian ethnicity. This study utilized qualitative research methods and was conducted with principals of multiple urban school districts located in Union County of central New Jersey and Essex County of northern New Jersey. The participants were multiply divided between the 3 districts: District A – 6 participants, District B – 3 Participants and District C – 3 Participants. Access to information and standardized test data was assured and acquired through the NJ State Report Card of each participating school within the district.

To determine which elementary schools were in need of improvement, the researcher compiled, sorted, and filtered data from the NJ State Report Card from the AYP files obtained from the website of the New Jersey Department of Education for Grade 5 in the 2009 and 2010 school years. These schools also participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which is a federally assisted meal program that provides low-cost or free lunches to eligible students. The selected schools had to meet the criteria for the free/reduced-price lunch program where free lunches are offered to those students whose family income is at or below 130% of the poverty level and reduced-price lunches are offered to those students whose family incomes are between 130% and 185% of the poverty level.

A letter of solicitation was sent to each superintendent requesting the school district's participation in the study. Included in the superintendent's letter was information regarding the background of the researcher, the purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, and a statement of confidentiality and anonymity. For those superintendents who indicated a willingness to have their district participate, a formal letter of consent was solicited and obtained. The researcher's goal for sample size was to analyze the data and

characteristics from 20 elementary schools; based on the aforementioned criteria, the researcher obtained permission from the 12 selected schools and principals for the one-on-one interviews.

The individual school principals were contacted by an email letter. The researcher inquired as to their eligibility for the study; more specifically, had they been the principal of the school for at least two years prior to the 2012-2013 school years. Included in the principal's letter was information regarding the background of the researcher, the purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, and a statement of confidentiality and anonymity. As the instructional leaders of the building, they could with fidelity give insight into their leadership styles, effective practices, school climate, and the impact on student achievement. A confidential letter of understanding was distributed to all 12 schools to confirm agreement to participate in the study, including all data collection activities. It described the eligibility criteria and conditions for participation. There were six key focus areas: school goals, evaluation of instruction, curriculum, student progress (achievement), professional development, incentives for teachers and student learning.

Instruments

Instrumentation for the collection of data for this study included the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). Hallinger and Murphy (1985) developed the PIMRS to examine effective leadership behavior and practices to which principals serve as instructional managers. PIMRS also provides examples of each construct, which was used by the researcher to identify changes in her own practices and that of the subjects' practices. PIMRS focuses on several constructs, including the

dedicated use of time for improving instruction, coordinating curriculum, and evaluating instruction. (Leadingware, 2008).

Written permission was requested to use an adapted version of the PIMRS from Dr. Philip Hallinger, Chair Professor of Leadership and Change and Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. He is recognized internationally as an innovator in leadership development aimed at educational and organizational change, instructional leadership, and school improvement. The Principal Instructional Leadership Rating Scale (PIMRS) is one of the most widely used survey instruments in the world for measuring instructional leadership.

Limitations/Delimitations

According to the state of New Jersey, urban schools have the following characteristics: located in an urban area rather than a rural, small town, or suburban area, has a relatively high rate of poverty (as measured by free- and reduced-lunch data provided by the NYSED), has a relatively high proportion of students of color or Limited English Proficient students, and is designated as high-need. Since the study was conducted only in urban school districts, the sample delimits the ability of the researcher to make generalizations about rural or suburban school districts. Social desirability was a limitation to the study due to the absence of viewpoint of teachers and other stakeholders on the leadership practices of the principals. The participants self assessments were based on oral responses of their behavior which presents a limitation absent of the evidence. Due to limited or lack of evidence in the leadership dimensions oral responses can often be biased and were treated as such by the researcher. Also the study consisted of a small sample size of 12 principals limited to 3 different districts.

Data Collection and Analysis

A qualitative design was used to examine leadership characteristics and their impact on transforming school culture and student achievement for low performing urban schools. Following the approval by the superintendent of schools and principals the in-depth individual interviews consisting of a one-on-one format were conducted. During the course of the school year, all principal interviews were conducted with the adapted version of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) to determine the degree to which principals serve as instructional managers; and the sessions conducted were approximately 30 minutes in length. The location of the interview sessions were conducted in the principal's office, conference room or personal home. The urban district in which the researcher works was included in the qualitative study.

A qualitative approach through grounded theory was used to collect data through the following methodology: (a) informal interviews that involved principals from12 out of 20 elementary schools for one-on-one interviews with an adapted version of assessment questions obtained from the PIMRS, or Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985), and (b) review of the NJ State Report Card for analysis of school rank, test scores, and achievement levels to match elementary schools by similar characteristics. Each of the 12 elementary schools met the following criteria: (1) majority of the student population must meet low-income criteria as determined by the free- and reduced-lunch guidelines, (2) must have low test scores on the NJ ASK for fifth grade students in Language Arts Literacy for two consecutive years according to the schools-in-need-of-improvement state guidelines, (3) cannot be a charter or a magnet school or any other school with a special designation.

A qualitative approach is a general way of thinking about conducting qualitative research. It describes, either explicitly or implicitly, the purpose of the qualitative research, the role of the researcher, the stages of research, and the method of data analysis. Using a qualitative research design was beneficial for this research because qualitative methods allowed the researcher to listen to the views of the research participants while focusing on the natural setting or context, such as the school climate, in which participants expressed their views.

Qualitative research methods are unsurpassed for research problems where the variables are unknown and need to be explored (Creswell, 2005). Qualitative methods permit the researcher to approach the fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis, and allows the researcher to study the selected issue in depth and detail, which contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of the qualitative inquiry (Patton, 1990). Qualitative data are extremely varied in nature and include virtually any information that can be captured that is not numerical in nature.

The methodology of grounded theory originated in the studies conducted by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to aptly describe a new qualitative research method they used in their research. In the study, Glaser and Strauss (1967) continually utilized comparative analysis of data and implemented an investigative research method with no preconceived hypothesis. For this researcher's study of leadership, she also utilized comparative analysis by comparing one segment of the data gathered from the interviews to another segment to determine similarities and differences. The data that were similar were grouped together in a category for the identification of patterns that emerged. The

organization of these patterns was used to identify relationships, which established the building of grounded theory in the study.

Grounded theory study seeks not only to understand but also to build a substantive theory about the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 2009). In simpler terms, grounded theory suggests that theory emerges inductively from the data (Chesebro & Borisoff, 2007). The data in grounded theory can be gathered from interviews, observations and a vast array of documentary materials. The procedures for collecting data for a study under the tenets of this theory are guided by theoretical sampling in which "the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyzes…data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop…theory as it emerges" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45).

In the study results, the respondents' interview answers were coded to protect the anonymity of the schools and the respondents, and responses were not used to identify individual principals or schools. Every precaution was taken by the researcher to maintain the confidentiality of the subjects' responses. The data were analyzed using the NVivo software to identify trends or correlations in the research findings. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis computer software package produced by QSR International. It has been designed for qualitative researchers working with very rich text-based and/or multimedia information, where deep levels of analysis on volumes of data are required.

In conclusion, NVivo helped the researcher to facilitate the organization and analysis of this large volume of unstructured data. The software also allowed the researcher to classify, sort, and arrange information for examination of relationships and trends in the data by utilizing its search engine and query functions to build on the

grounded theory of the study. By utilizing NVivo, the researcher made observations in the software and built a body of evidence to support her study. The following chapter addresses the findings and results of the investigation.

Chapter IV

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. The data findings of this qualitative study were collected from semi-structured interviews with 12 elementary school principals, using an interview guide adapted from the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The PIMRS covers three main leadership dimensions: Defining the School's Mission; Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate. It also covers a number of specific job functions within each dimension. For the purpose of conducting interviews in the current research study, the original PIMRS job functions were modified to reflect the up-to-date educational context in which the principals operate.

In this chapter, the findings are reported in relation to the following main research questions of the study:

1. What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

2. How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program?

3. What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement.

The material from the interview transcripts was analyzed using grounded theory and NVivo qualitative analysis software to identify key themes and findings of relevance to these questions, and verbatim quotes were extracted to illustrate the findings in the research participants' own words.

Characteristics of the Sample

In order to gain multiple perspectives in the area of leadership and school climate, the population of this study was limited to principals in a selected 12 out of 20 elementary schools with a combined population of approximately 5,646 students. The gender of the participants was heterogeneously mixed with 6 females and 6 males. The cultural identity of the participants consisted of 9 African Americans, 1 Hispanic, 1 Asian and 1 Caucasian ethnicity. This study utilized qualitative research methods and was conducted with principals of multiple urban school districts located in Union County of central New Jersey and Essex County of northern New Jersey. The participants were multiply divided between the 3 districts: District A – 6 participants, District B – 3 Participants and District C – 3 Participants. All the urban elementary schools had been identified as schools in need of improvement, and access to information and standardized test data was assured and acquired through the NJ State Report Card of each participating school within the district.

The interview began with introductions and basic interview guidelines. The location of the interview sessions were conducted in the school principal's office,

conference room or personal home. The participants were informed that the interview

questions were designed to provide a profile of their individual leadership. It consisted of

20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors and was

intended for each individual to consider the question in terms of leadership over the past

school year. The interviewer remained silent while the participant responded to each

question. If the participant hesitated or requested clarification, a prompt was given by the

interviewer. No additional guidelines were outlined. All 12 principals interviewed were

professional, as well as reflective and forthright, with their responses. The principals

welcomed the invitation to participate and made certain that they had a clear

understanding of each question prior to giving their response.

From this group the researcher attempted to represent diverse settings to the

greatest extent that was possible. Three of the principals (including one vice-principal)

led elementary schools with a grade span of Pre-K to sixth grade. Three principals led a

grade span of Pre-K/K to seventh grade. Two principals led a grade span of Pre-K/K to

eighth grade. Four principals led a grade span of Pre-K/K to fifth grade. Participating

school size ranged from 280 to 630 enrolled students. There were six female participants

and six male participants.

All the research participants had been principal of their school for at least two

years prior to the 2012-2013 school year. Within the sample, there was a wide

distribution of experience, ranging from two to ten years as principal of their current

school, and from four to eleven total years experience as a principal. One participant held

the position of vice-principal and was serving as the acting principal in the absence of the

principal. Since this individual had been in the aforementioned position at the selected

school for ten years, the researcher concluded that the responses to the interview questions would be knowledge- based and informative.

The distribution of respondents by gender and numbers of years experience in these roles is shown in Table 1 and Figures 2 and 3.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Gender & Number of Years Experience

Participant & gender	Years as principal at current school	Total years as principal
Participant 1 - Female	5	7
Participant 2 - Male	2	7
Participant 3 - Male	6	10
Participant 4 - Male	3	4
Participant 5 - Female	2	6
Participant 6 - Male	4	8
Participant 7 - Female	6	11
Participant 8 - Female	8	9*
Participant 9 - Male	4	4

Participant 10 - Male	4	11
Participant 11 - Female	10	13*
Participant 12 - Female	5	5

* These participants included years as vice/assistant principal in total.
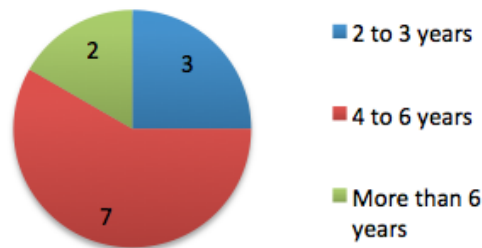
Figure 2. Years as Principal of Current School (n=12)
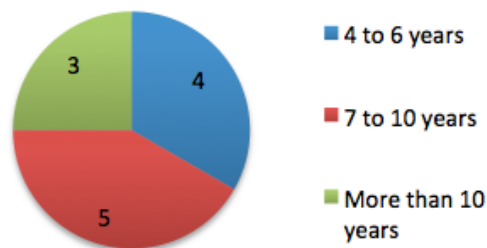
Figure 3. Total Years as Principal (n-12)

Analysis of Interview Questions in Relation to Leadership Practices

This section summarizes responses to each of the 20 questions and relates the responses to the three main dimensions: (1) defining the school's mission, (2) managing

the instructional program, and (3) developing the school learning climate. These are further delineated into 10 leadership functions: (a) frames the school's goals, (b) communicates the school's goals, (c) coordinates the curriculum, (d) supervises and evaluates instruction, (e) monitors student progress, (f) protects instructional time, (g) provides incentives for teachers, (h) provides incentives for learning, (i) promotes professional development, and (j) maintains high visibility.

Defining the School Mission and Goals

In the original PIMRS, defining the school mission was identified as one of the main leadership dimensions of the school principal's role. Effective practice in this area is known from previous research to include leading staff in developing school-wide goals as well as ensuring that these are communicated to the whole school community (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). The current study therefore investigated ways in which the school mission and goals are defined in the sample of urban schools in need of improvement in order to identify effective practice. The principals were first asked whether they have a set of annual school-wide goals and to explain these. Since goal development should ideally be evidence-based in order to drive improvements, they were also asked whether data on student performance are used in developing the school's academic goals.

School-Wide Goal Setting

Eleven of the school principals interviewed reported that they do have a set of annual school-wide goals; one said the school was in the process of putting together a school improvement plan including school-wide goals, but this was not yet in place.   It was clear that having school-wide goals is regarded as important by all the principals;

several mentioned that these are not just academic in focus but also cover other areas of school performance.

"The five areas are … academic learning, professional development, human resources as it relates to retaining good staff, school safety and family involvement" (Participant 1).

"Based on the data that we receive from our end of the year scores it is a mixture not only of the NJASK, but the attendance, the ELL population" (Participant 6).

All twelve of the principals indicated that they use student performance data for the purpose of setting their annual academic goals, specifically New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) data and in some schools the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) data. One (8.33%) principal reported that the school sets goals for teachers to achieve a 10% efficiency increase over the previous year, based on NJ ASK data. The majority of the participants described using this and other sources of data to identify specific areas for academic improvement at their school and to inform areas such as the professional development of teachers.

The distribution of respondents with respect to the specific indicated sources of data is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents with Respect to the Specific Sources of Data

Principal Participant	Academic & Instructional Focus	Standardized Testing & Assessments	Curriculum & Common Core State Standards Initiative	Human Resources & Staff Retention	Professional Development	Other Sources
1	X	X	X	X	X	
2	X	X				
3	X	X	X			
4		X				School Improvement Plan
5	X	X		X		Business Practices & Family Engagement
6		X				Attendance & Ethnic Subgroups
7	X	X				Safe School Environment
8	X	X				SMART Goals
9	X	X	X			
10	X	X			X	Community Goals & Ethnic Subgroups
11		X				Action Plan
12	X	X		X	X	Action Plan & New Teacher Evaluation

The respondents revealed their use of student performance data by stating and discussing some examples.

"We looked at our NJ ASK data and established that the areas [in] which we were deficient pretty much across the board … were reading and literacy and mathematics, and we looked more closely at literacy goals and realized that our kids are struggling readers … they still don't have the basic competencies attached to reading, particularly reading comprehension, so we've been focusing on reading comprehension strategies in terms of our explicit instruction, looking at things like non-fiction text … so that they can become really proficient" (Participant 3).

"We use the NJ ASK, we use our benchmark, we use study island data and we targeted those areas that the students were most challenged in. We were able to see that there were some areas across the board that the students were challenged in which then gave us data as to where we need to go with the professional development" (Participant 8).

"We take our NJ ASK data and … we formulate school-based goals in regard to that and set up services in regard to that as well … We look at that data and we come up with um, more creative goals that are more intimate to our school" (Participant 12)

Examples of effective practice were reported in the integration of school, grade, and teacher-level goals based on NJ ASK scores and also in the alignment of these with district-level goals. The effective practices addressed by principals referenced the use of strategic planning, creation of instructional focus calendars, and the organization of action or School Improvement Plans to align school, district, and state achievement goals.

"We looked at our NJ ASK data and the benchmark, the district benchmark data

from the previous year. Using that data we began to develop academic goals and

then based on the academic goals, we developed instructional goals that would

speak to or assist us in achieving those academic goals" (Participant 8).

"Our goals are aligned to the district goals, so once the district presents their goals

to us in August, we then come back to the school and work on framing our goals

around the district goals … We revise or decide that we're going to keep our

existing school vision, which includes the school goals and that is a collaborative

process between the administration and the staff" (Participant 9).

Once goals have been set, it is equally important to develop plans for achieving

them and for regular monitoring of progress toward meeting the goals. The purpose of the

action plan according to one participant is to establish the process for helping students

make improvements and performance growth on the NJ ASK test. The action plan is a

living document that is revisited and revised several times during the course of the school

year dependent upon the needs of the school. Some of the participants described the ways

in which this is addressed in their school.

"It is very important. We even, have the action plan, we look at the NJ ASK

scores for Grades, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Not only that, for the lower grades we look at,

we have the DRA test. It's Language Arts, you know, your leveled students

reading level, we look at that. We have beginning tests in September and then we

have the second round, third round. The second round is February; the third round

is at the end of the year. We look into the student's growth" (Participant 11).

"They assess the kids where they are in that reading, writing genre and then they have a plan in place of what they're going to do to bring up those kids. In January they retest them and they have to show me almost like a report with percentages and so forth as to where those students have come up" (Participant 12).

The effectiveness of this data-driven approach to goal-setting and planning was reflected in the comments of one of the principals who described drawing on multiple sources of data in a systematic planning process and noted that this had resulted in observable improvements in academic performance.

"We look at everything from Learnia, to NJASK, to DRA's, SRA's--whatever data we have, including teacher-driven and also teacher-made … So we take all of that stuff monthly, we look at it and we develop a plan in order to tackle it. Now last year our test scores went from doing this to about the 35th percentile to the 60th percentile. So we were pretty happy with that" (Participant10).

However, this type of process is not without its challenges. Some of the principals noted the difficulties of ensuring that busy teachers actually use performance data in developing their own instructional practices and had developed strategies to help address this challenge. One principal strategy mentioned to address this challenge, for example, was that their school has a professional development team focused on the use of data, with a team member assigned to each grade level. Another strategy utilized stressed the importance of interpreting the statistics at an administrative level to reduce the burden on individual teachers.

"We actually spoon-feed them the data. I tell them exactly what I want them to do. We've gotta give them everything in its simplest form because if we make

them work any harder than they have to work, then they're gonna shut down and

go back to doing what they were doing" (Participant 10).

Another reported challenges related to the tight timeframe for implementation of

plans for goal achievement. One of the principals highlighted the importance in this

context of focusing on a small number of specific goals each year, while another

emphasized that there is often a need to carry goals over from one year to the next

"We do spend a lot of time assessing students and collecting data, we do analyze

the data. The disconnect comes when there doesn't seem to be enough time once

the data have been collected and analyzed to use it to improve instruction before

the next assessment or benchmark or something comes along. So there needs to be

more time or we need to streamline that process and maybe identify two things"

(Participant 9).

"Each year we look at what we've done last year, the plans that we made and then

how we can improve or finish up or add to what we did the previous year"

(Participant 1).

Communicating the School Mission

Ten of the principals indicated that their main vehicle for disseminating

information about the school mission and goals to parents is the start of year "back to

school night," in which a review of progress against goals in the previous school year is

included. Three principals emphasized that they use several methods to communicate the

mission and goals most effectively to the school community, or do so several times

during the academic year to help keep them in the minds of school community members.

The participants described the ways in which this was addressed.

"Usually we do this on back to school night … when we are opening up and setting out our plan for the school year, we also have a presentation of what we accomplished last year and what our goals are for the next year" (Participant 1).

"Usually at our back to school night, we share it [the mission] with the parents. It is also on our website and in our newsletter that we send home in the beginning of the year" (Participant 7).

"We have Breakfast with the Principal. We have faculty meetings. We have Parent University …. We discuss our mission once a year and we also talk about the school level objective. That's once a year, and twice a year we talk about our NJ ASK scores and what our plan is" (Participant 10).

Two participants also reported using more indirect, subliminal techniques throughout the school year to consistently communicate the school vision or mission; for example, by incorporating this statement in all forms of written communications sent home to parents.

"The vision is placed on our letterhead that goes home on everything. So you know, every communication that we have with parents, you know our vision is on it. (Participant 9)

[In] anything communicated from school … we put … one of our school mantras where we're positive, productive, and proud" (Participant 2).

For faculty and PTO members, on the other hand, more direct methods of communication are generally used, such as formal presentations as well as taking every opportunity to introduce the school mission and goals into discussions.

"We have conversations with the faculty where we will present the data, basically using the protocols that we have learned from the professional learning communities …. The next step would be sharing that with the executive board for the PTO and then presenting it to the general body of the PTO. Even though we can't control what happens at home, we try to push it in and basically stress the things that parents can do at home" (Participant 6).

"Just making sure that I reference the school improvement plan goals for the current school year whenever we're having conversations about different matters within the school" (Participant 4).

"Constantly promoting the academic school goals from an instructional standpoint. When I'm doing my agendas for the staff meetings, everything that we do I align it to the school goals" (Participant 12).

The principals were also asked what steps they take to ensure that their academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school. There was a mix of responses to this. Eight of the principals reported well-established strategies for the visual display of these goals around the school; of this group, four shared that although they take steps to reflect their academic goals, more could be done in this area and that there was a need for improvement, while four principals admitted that they were not currently using media such as bulletin boards and posters.

Reports of effective practice included the prominent display of the school mission or goals around the school buildings, on the school website, and in literature disseminated to the school community, as well as displays of student work reflecting the goals

"At the end of this hallway we have a big huge banner … that has our mission and

see, under the door right there, our mission is in every classroom. It's in our

resource center that you saw when you were waiting outside, the parent resource

center, that's what that is with the pamphlets. It's in all the booklets, all the

brochures and whatnot" (Participant 12).

"We have a poster size display we keep in the hallway and we put it as a banner at

the bottom footer on … all our letterheads. So that's the way we communicate it;

there's more we can do in that area but that's what we do for now" (Participant 3).

"I would probably say our strongest support for ensuring the school's academic

goals are reflected would be in our bulletin boards and our work displays"

(Participant 5).

Two principals reported more creative methods of communicating their goals

visually, often developed with the purpose of improving performance in specific areas.

One principal reported that they encourage academic improvement among students by

displaying comparative performance data within classrooms, while another said they

were considering displaying administrative data (for example, relating to student

attendance) with the purpose of making this information more visible and encouraging

the development of improvement strategies.

"We began to develop data walls … We encouraged teachers to develop

classroom data walls so that the students could look and see where they are … the

data was to be displayed in a way that the students wouldn't be embarrassed, so

there weren't any names attached to it. It was the overall classroom data and

where they measured" (Participant 8).

"One of those goals was to put up actual data, like attendance data, from this year to last year at this point in the school year to see if we've gotten better, worse, or actually stayed the same" (Participant 4).

Participants utilized direct approaches to address the school vision/mission or goals with the following examples: Back to School night, parent presentations; PD alignment, visual displays; professional learning communities; newsletters, daily announcements, and "learning walks." The responses to indirect approaches referenced the following: agendas, marquees, school letterhead, budget alignment, and student field trips or activities. The ranges of participant responses with direct or indirect approaches to communicate the school vision/mission or goals are shown in Figures 4, 4a, and 4b.
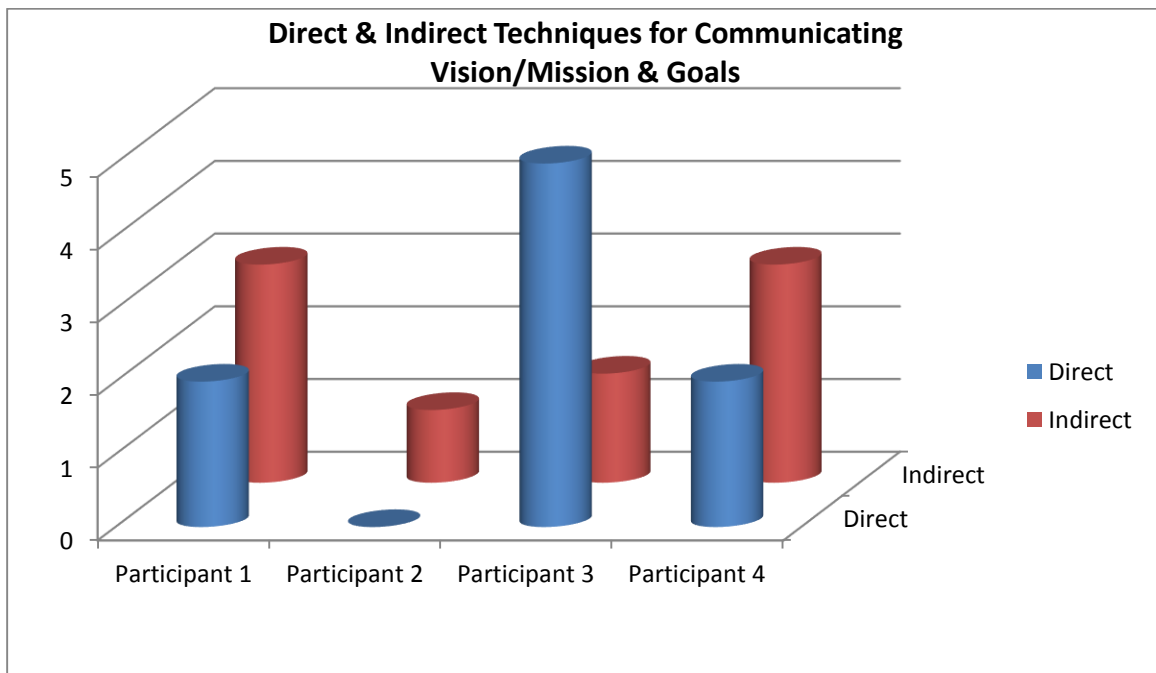
Figure 4. Direct and Indirect Techniques for Participants 1-4.
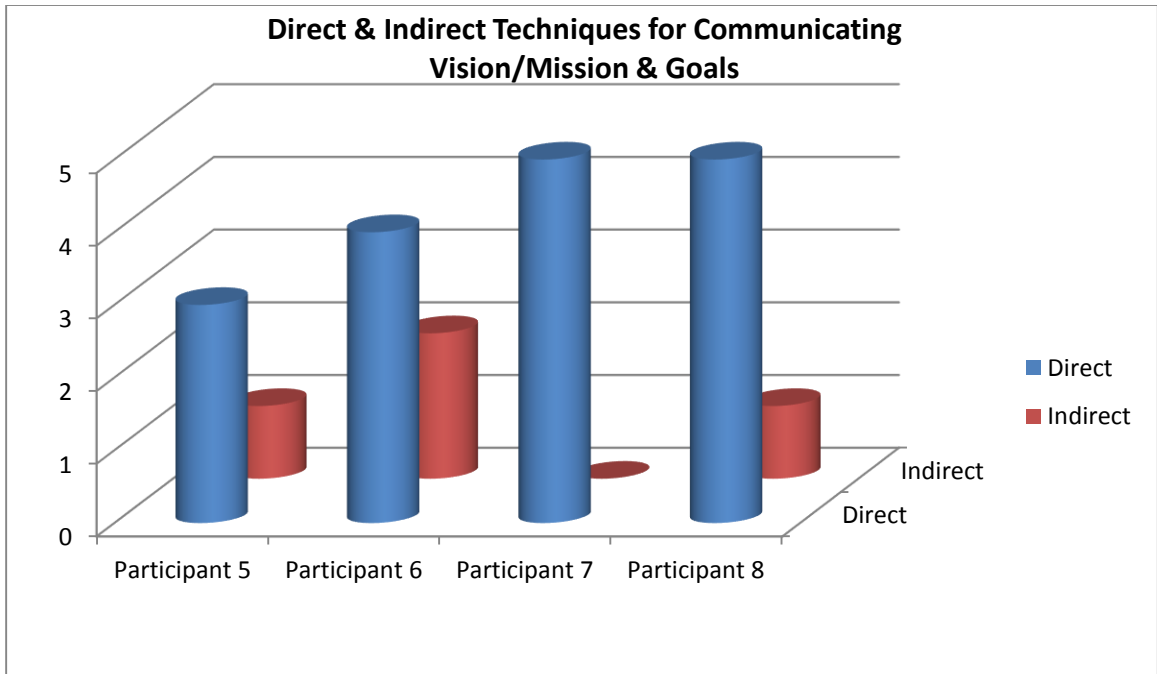
Figure 4a. Direct and Indirect Techniques for Participants 5-8.
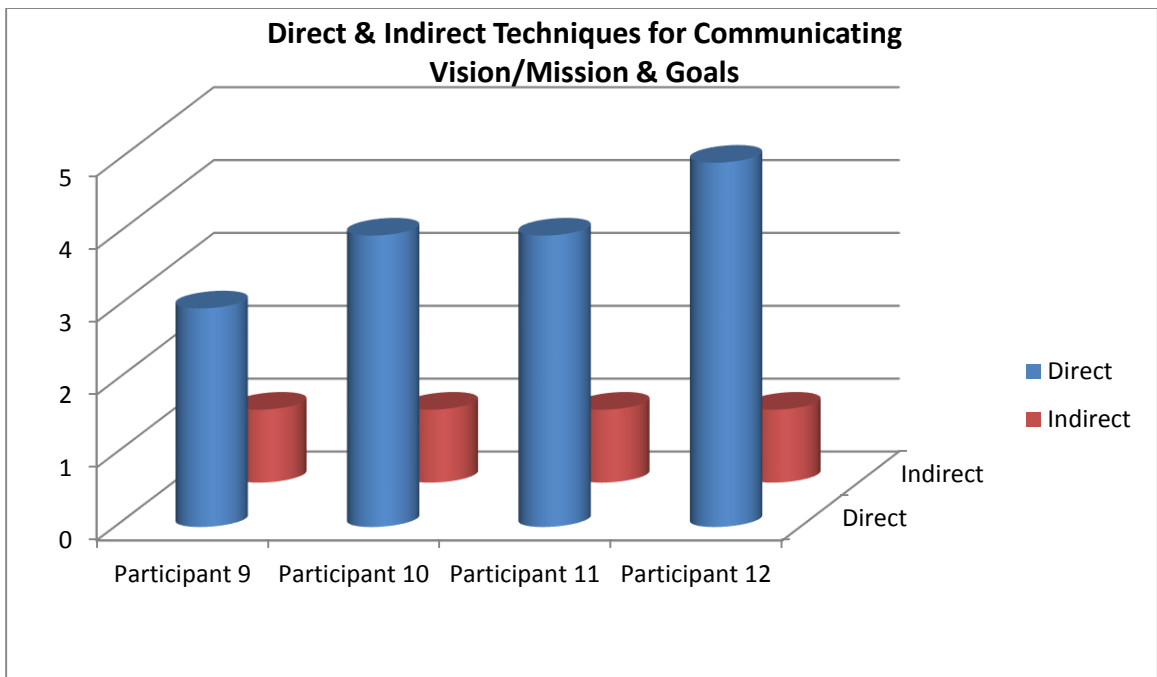
Figure 4b. Direct and Indirect Techniques for Participants 9-12

Managing the Instructional/Curriculum Program

The research also explored the ways in which principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the curriculum and instructional program. Hallinger & Murphy (1987) noted that although instructional management by principals is traditionally associated with supervision and evaluation of instruction, empirical research indicates that two additional functions are at least as important: coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress. All three of these areas were therefore investigated in the current study when interviewing the sample of principals of urban schools in need of improvement.

Supervising and Evaluating Curriculum and Instruction

To explore the ways in which the principals manage the instructional program through supervision and evaluation, they were first asked to describe their process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis.

Virtually all twelve of the research participants reported that they use "learning walks" or something similar, which involve regular visits to classrooms to observe teachers and students at work. The specific approaches to this varied considerably among the principals interviewed, however, especially the extent to which a systematic observation procedure was being used. A small number of two participants indicated that their visits are usually very informal and used mainly to gauge the general atmosphere in the school and observe the types of activities going on in classrooms.

> "I don't have a process because that would involve following something pretty regimented. I look at when I have time in my schedule and I will pop in on classrooms" (Participant 3).

"As a rule every morning after the morning announcements, I make a sweep of the building. First as a security measure and second to visually take the temperature of the school, to look into the classrooms and see what's going on. And then systematically, I try to spend a little more time in the different grade levels on a weekly basis … I like to spend a little more time during my walk throughs in the morning … to see what's going on in the classrooms throughout the building. To get a feel for instruction, the classroom environments, ah, how the children are actually, you know, ah, performing in the classroom and do they seem engaged … Nothing written because I feel as an instructional leader, ah my purpose is to try and facilitate growth and improvement amongst teachers" (Participant 2).

More typically, however, participants reported using more systematic methods and techniques for observing teaching and classroom activities and recording their observations in a notebook or on a computer for the purpose of providing post-observation feedback. The specific purposes of these visits included monitoring the extent to which lesson plans were being followed, evaluating the effectiveness of teaching practices, and observing students' work.

"I'm looking to see what the teachers are doing. Are they connecting what they're doing to their lesson plans? Usually, lesson plans are asked to be out visible on the desk so a lot of times I'll walk in the classroom and I'll see what they're doing and then I'll look at the lesson plan and I'll see whether they're on track" (Participant 1).

"There are other times when I've started creating observation logs where I would go in the classroom with a specific focus, so for example on Monday I would, I might be focusing on lesson plans and objectives. On Tuesday I might be focusing on classroom management. On Wednesday I might be focusing on questioning strategies." (Participant 3).

"I have an informal walkthrough sheet and at the bottom of the sheet I have five areas to look at in the classroom and so I take those goals and divide them between five days of the week; and to keep myself organized, I'll say on Monday I'll look just at student's work. I'll make that a goal for Monday and then Tuesday, I'll just try to look at student's response to instruction" (Participant 5).

Post Observation Feedback

The research participants were also asked about the methods they use for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback. Two of the participants indicated that they make a point of providing immediate feedback in some form, generally to reinforce positive practices that they have observed.

"I walk with my stickies, my sticky pads, and when I see things that are really working nicely in the class, I'll write the teachers a little note and just leave it on their desks … I think it's kind of like when we give kids little stickers, you know that they're doing a good job and the teachers appreciate that" (Participant 8).

"I'll bring my lap top into a classroom and I'll stay 40, 45 minutes and I'll typically send an email before I leave, I'll typically pick about three or four areas

to look at and then I'll comment on all of them and send an email to the teacher"

(Participant 4).

However, classroom observations were also being used for the purpose of

professional development planning, and the observation criteria and feedback methods

were then generally determined in advance with the teachers. In some cases, particular

tools such as the Danielson model were being used; all twelve of the principals just

recorded their own notes for discussion with the teachers in post-observation conferences.

"Most of the time I come back to pre-observations so we all agree on what I'm

going to look into. You know if you want me to look at something you're

practicing, you want feedback, so we pinpoint where I want to look, the areas. So

after the observation, we sit together and talk about where are the strengths and

where it's not the strengths" (Participant 11).

"The observation tool we've been using for three years now has been the

Danielson model … it is a very powerful tool because it simplifies things from an

administrative standpoint where observations in the past were guided by a

different format and some of it was subjective and this is very specific with a

rubric and everything that goes along with it …. The feedback that we provide in

a post conference is based right out of that tool. So if there were areas that were

basic or unsatisfactory or areas that were commendable, we would definitely start

with the strengths first and then if there were areas of concern um where maybe

you could have gotten a little more out of your lesson if you tried this, this, and

this" (Participant 9).

"In the Charlotte Danielson model that we use for evaluation, there's a self-assessment form that I have the teachers use … In the post conference, depending on what I've observed during the lesson, we will talk about it and talk about strategies" (Participant 1).

"In post observation feedback, that's where it's very formalized as far as I'm concerned and suggestions for improvement are noted on the evaluation document itself. It's followed up by conversations with myself and the teacher and usually followed by some sort of plan for improvement" (Participant 2).

Seven of the participants highlighted the importance of initially exploring the teacher's own perspectives on the classroom session, rather than just imposing their own views on them, since this was found to be a more constructive and effective way of identifying required changes and how to achieve these.

"I'll ask what they liked about the lesson, what they didn't like about the lesson, and you know once I get them to talk about something that they didn't like about the lesson, I use that as my intro point and segue from there into some of the observations that I've made" (Participant 3).

"First thing I like to do is I sit them down and I ask them how do you think that went. Share with me your thoughts. Tell me what do you think? If there is anything that you would change in that lesson, what would you change? What would you do differently? And usually they pinpoint exactly what I saw in most cases" (Participant 8).

"We'll talk about how they felt about the particular lesson, that particular day, give them an opportunity to talk about some of the strengths and the areas that

they could have probably improved for that particular lesson. And then I will give feedback as far as what I've observed and give them suggestions as to how they possibly can improve or get increased performance in some of the um tasks or assignments or for that particular skill that was taught that day" (Participant 4).

Coordinating the Curriculum

To investigate examples of effective practice in their co-ordination of the curriculum, principals were first asked whether they draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions. Only one interview respondent reported using a detailed, systematic procedure for developing the curriculum and instructional strategies based on school- and district-wide data.

"I use reading level data and district benchmark assessments to develop school-wide plans. I review PD hours accrued, another data resource, under specific language arts strategies to determine, make decisions, and I look at classroom performance data to make decisions related to teacher assignment" (Participant 3).

Three of the interviewees indicated that they have little or no control over the curriculum since this is determined at district level.

"For us, the curriculum is rolled out from central office ... unfortunately, we don't often get to have any input on whatever programs you know we are using … we don't really have an opportunity to select or even say, well I don't know if that really is a good fit, or my kids don't really need that" (Participant 8).

However, within the constraints of this district-level control, three participants reported that they had developed strategies for setting the instructional focus, designing lesson plans, or developing supplementary materials to meet the specific needs of their

school. These behaviors were often based on performance data or other sources of information.

> "As a priority school, we had to adopt the model curriculum … however we still do utilize how the students are performing in certain areas to assist in identifying different resources that can help address those areas" (Participant 4).

> "We look at the tests over the summer when the results come back, and basically that drives what we decide to do as far as any special programs, any after school programs, any particular software we want to use as far as technology" (Participant 7).

According to five principals, effective practice typically involves creative ways of using performance data to tailor the district-level curriculum to the school goals and student needs.

> "We take some liberties … we make sure we incorporate writing into science and social studies … I mean, the truth of the matter is I don't think a fifth grader needs five days of an hour a day of science … I want writing, reading and writing. We look at weaknesses and we try to incorporate all of that in science and social studies plus language arts" (Participant 10).

> "There is one program out there called [Shurley] for English … I have teachers piloting it as a supplemental thing. So it's not like the thing that we're used to throughout the district. But the teachers who wanted to pilot it loved it so much that they asked if they could keep it as a supplemental thing to use with the existing curriculum" (Participant 12).

"Principals do not make curricular decisions, period. Those decisions are made at the district level,\; we can even face some resistance if we bring in additional supplemental materials … but sometimes supplements are needed; those are the only curricular decisions I make and I do that, not only with the grade level teachers and content area teachers but our coaches and master teachers, and then I do try to involve a director at the district level so I have a little more leverage at with that" (Participant 9).

Two of the principals noted that they did not feel it was appropriate to use school-level data to inform the curriculum for specific grades or classes and that more detailed student performance data were therefore used when planning the curriculum or instructional strategies.

"To look at, let's say, the fifth grade scores to make decisions for the whole school I don't think is appropriate … the data is usually more specific to grade levels and sometimes curricular decisions are made based on that information" (Participant 2).

"We draw upon it, but then again not emphasizing a whole lot on it. 'Cause … each building is unique, each classroom is unique … looking at the makeup of the room, that's basically where our conversations are at, knowing that this is where we have to go, how do we plan on getting there?" (Participant 6).

Active Participation in Review of Curricular Materials

The most commonly used method for participating in review of curricular materials reported by the principals was through committees or grade level meetings to discuss curricular material generally focused on specific subject areas.

The overall impression was of a systematic process of committees and meetings, both at district and school level, that the principals generally made an effort to be involved in. The processes involved include both reviewing curricular materials and forward planning, taking into account performance data and other relevant factors for nine principals. These patterns that the researcher found were displayed by the following responses:

"We have superintendent meetings and curriculum and instruction meetings. We as administrators meet monthly to talk about curriculum and instruction. That's where we do the brainstorming of what's working, what's not working, what can we tweak, what are you not doing? We talk solely on curriculum, we look at articles, we talk about trends and what's new down the pike" (Participant 12).

"We recently adopted a new math series, so I was involved with that. I was on that committee. We recently adopted a new writing series. We never had one so I was involved in that committee. Currently I'm on the new reading committee so any time I get the chance to, you know, give my input, I do it." (Participant 10).

"District-wide, I sat on the curriculum committee about a year ago and we were able to look at various textbooks and things like that" (Participant 5).

"As a vice-principal, also I hold horizontal meetings. I will chair the third grade teachers on different after-schools; and for one hour we talk about, okay, third grade curriculum, math, and language arts" (Participant 11).

With regard to district and school level curriculum decision-making, the participants indicated that the trial and evaluation of resources plays an important role in

the curriculum decision-making process. Four participants mentioned the ways in which they participate or lead this process.

"We follow the model curriculum … So we're going to be looking at three different Social Studies things, and as administrators we may be broken out into little groups and then may have to come back and give feedback. One or two of our schools, one school may pilot each ... We want your feedback administratively, we want the teacher's feedback, we want to, you know, come with exemplars, student work, you know, assessment, you know, things like that and then the district makes the final decision on what will be purchased" (Participant 9).

"Whenever a company sends me a sample, I'll thumb through it; but I'll give it to one of the teachers on that particular grade level and ask them to utilize it as supplemental and then tell what you think about it, if it's something that's worth us looking at" (Participant 5).

"With the NJ Common Core Standards - now everyone's looking and scrambling for what can I use to teach these standards? So my teachers have been very proactive, and they've been finding materials and been bringing them to me in our professional learning communities. And so we'll discuss them at the professional learning communities or I may see a website or somebody may share a website with me and then I'll blast it to the staff for them to take a look at" (Participant 1).

"Sometimes I get a small panel of competent people that I trust that have academic acumen, who are tech savvy and who have the classroom experience to give me feedback. And it doesn't mean you have to have X number years of

experience, and I look at people who implement new strategies, who implement new techniques. Often I'll bring them into this room or the conference room, and we'll try to put something on the smart board so we can all see it at the same time. Bring our laptops and play around with the website and play around with the resource and play around with it and have a sense of it, we'll give it to one, two, or three of the teachers and let them play around with it and observe them playing around with it and get their feedback" (Participant 3).

Three of the principals indicated that they have little to no involvement with district level curriculum decision-making and that principals have very little autonomy in this area.

"I don't participate, ah, as much as I probably would like to. Overall, curriculum is decided at the district level. As far as the school is concerned, suggestions are made after having feedback with teachers during their grade level meetings about maybe ways that, you know, ways that we can achieve our objectives, but um, instructional objectives. But for curriculum as a general, that's usually made at a district level. It's usually a district level decision" (Participant 2).

"Last year I sat on the, um, the mathematics textbook committee; however, I've never sat on an actual curriculum, I've never had written curriculum before or sat in on a curriculum review committee or anything like that, so other than what we do at the school site, which is very little, then that's it" (Participant 4).

"Well, there is a um, a curriculum committee and um, I know that to my knowledge, I don't know of any of the principals that necessarily sit on that committee. Um, I'm assuming that there should be or there probably is. I know

our curriculum department, they're the ones who actually, um, do. I will say that actually before we began with our Read 180 program this year, at the end of last year, they did bring it to us and they had a consultant come in and they said, well what do you guys thinks about this, and it's working here and there. You know, and we were a little like, hmm, but the next thing we were told, create your list; you're getting Read 180. It was kind of, like, how do you like it? Like it or not, you're getting Read 180. And um, not to speak down and, you know, I do understand they're going on what's research-based and, you know, what has shown success in other districts" (Participant 8).

Monitoring Student Progress

To explore practices relating to monitoring the school's academic progress, the principals were asked how and when they inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form, such as in a memo or newsletter, and also how they go about informing students of the school's academic progress.

In response, all twelve of the principals indicated that the school performance results would generally be disseminated to teachers in advance of or at the first staff meeting of the academic year and would be a focus of discussion at this meeting. Together, they would analyze the results and use them to plan areas of focus for the year ahead.

"We do that in the beginning of the school year … that's probably the first thing we talk about, either at the professional development or the first professional learning community as a staff in the beginning of the school year. We look at our,

um, results and we analyze them and then we kinda compare what we've done over maybe a three-year period" (Participant1).

"Generally, the first day we come back to school, or the first full staff meeting, we'll talk about and share the results of the past year. And sometimes I'll actually break it out by individual class performance, you know, like Mr. X, this percent of your kids passed the NJ ASK in literacy, this percentage of your kids passed the NJ ASK in Math" (Participant 3).

"Standardized assessments, those are usually presented to staff at the beginning of the next year … all grade levels are presented for the staff to review and help with our planning for the upcoming year. And then individual grade levels are disseminated to the teachers, um, where they can plan for instruction for that upcoming year as well" (Participant 2).

Three of the principals also indicated that they would provide the performance results pertaining to particular subject areas in written form to the individual teachers responsible for these areas, for discussion either at the staff meeting or in one-to-one discussions for the purpose of personal development planning.

"I give the teachers a copy of their performance results; it's usually in the form of a memo, and we go over them during our first staff meeting" (Participant 7).

"I usually have private closed-door meetings, so I will set up a meeting with each teacher …. Then I have a meeting with my testing grade level to discuss how they're doing and we talk about like their ranking over a couple of years … We talk about their PDP's and how they're going to connect their professional

development plan, the results they're getting back from their test scores as well"

(Participant 12).

When asked about their methods for informing students of the school's academic

progress, four of the research participants indicated that they did not use a method to

inform them since elementary school students were not able to understand the data or had

little interest in it.

"Would I tell a third-grade student exactly how they did on the NJ ASK exam?

Yeah, no, I never had to do that. I don't talk to the kids at all; I talk to the parents"

(Participant 10).

"I don't know how much they can absorb that. I told them so many times their

own score … you tell them once, they forget" (Participant 11).

In one case, the principal noted that although individual-level feedback was being

provided to students, they did not feel that the current format of this was appropriate or

meaningful to them.

"Well, I don't like it, but the teachers provided formal and informal feedback.

They receive report cards that have been changed a number of times already that,

to me, I don't think provide them with feedback that they can understand. … The

standards are written for educators. They don't understand that the report card

should also be feedback for the students. … So I think we lack in giving the

positive feedback that kids need when it comes to their grade" (Participant 12).

Three other principals reported more effective methods for conveying general

messages to students about the performance results and their implications, especially for

the purpose of motivating and encouraging high standards of performance

"In the beginning of the school year we're always celebrating … We have all of the pictures up of the students who scored Advanced Proficient on particular areas--math, science, and literacy … We highlight them in the assembly program and we let the school know, including students and staff, what we did as a school" (Participant1).

"Informing students of the school's academic progress is not as specific as maybe, informing parents or staff. With students it's just a matter of providing them with a sense of urgency as far as areas that we need help in. For example, our school particularly, we need help in literacy. We need increased performance in literacy, so a statement as general as that might be shared with the students at the beginning of the year" (Participant 2).

"During the first week of school, I meet with different grade levels and we just talk about an overview of the test scores. What the results were, what the expectation is for the upcoming year" (Participant 7).

Effective practices were also highlighted by three principals for discussing results at individual level with students and using these to identify areas for increased focus and improvement.

"We've never informed the students as a whole on how the school is doing. It's always been individual; the teachers take the individual students' reports and they meet with each student about how well they did and where they are, what to do next; they have the students sign, and we also at the Fall parent-teacher conferences when they come in, that's one of the things they review with the parents when they come in" (Participant 4).

"We would have data conferences with students where we actually take their

feedback from NJ ASK, sit with them and talk about what the goal number is and

where they are and the area that we need them to improve in" (Participant 5).

"Well, the teachers are supposed to have conferences with the students about their

academic performance based on the unit assessments … One of the first things the

students have to do at the beginning of the school year is they have to know their

NJ ASK score in Language Arts and Math and then collaboratively with the

content area teachers they have to say what areas they're going to work on based

on their area to improve their score" (Participant 9).

To further support the examples of effective practice for the participants the

researcher examined the frequency with which each of these areas were found in the

sample group of principals consistent with the Hallinger (1998) Leadership Model. The

model areas consist of three sets of leadership dimensions: Defining the School's

Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning

Climate. Table 4 indicates the frequency of participant behaviors within the leadership

dimensions.

Table 3

Principal Behaviors Consistent with the Hallinger Leadership Model

	Defining the School's Mission	Managing the Instructional Program	Promoting a Positive Learning Climate
Participant 1	7	20	10
Participant 2	2	8	16
Participant 3	7	16	17
Participant 4	4	16	15
Participant 5	3	14	15
Participant 6	5	17	17
Participant 7	4	13	17
Participant 8	7	17	15
Participant 9	8	25	24
Participant 10	6	20	22
Participant 11	7	21	10
Participant 12	7	22	27

Table 4

Frequency of Participant Behaviors within the Leadership Dimensions

Behavior Category Number Noted

Defining the School's Mission	**67**
Managing the Instructional Program	**213**
Promoting a Positive Learning Climate	**205**
Hallinger Model Total	**485**

Promoting a Positive Learning Climate

According to the PIMRS (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987), effective instructional leaders influence a school's learning climate in a number of direct and indirect ways. These include ensuring that instructional time is protected from interruption, being highly visible to both teachers and students, reinforcing and rewarding positive performance among teachers and students, and ensuring that teacher development is aligned with the school mission and goals. All these issues were explored in interviews with principals in the current study, and the types of effective practices that were identified are discussed in this section.

Protecting Instructional Time

All twelve of the principals indicated that they endeavor to limit administrative interruptions of instructional time, such as public announcements. In most of the schools, announcements were restricted to early mornings and afternoons so as not to disrupt learning time. Teachers were provided with cell phones or walkie-talkies so that they

could be contacted if essential to do so between these times. The researcher illustrated the patterns that she found by the following participant responses.

"After the morning announcements, unless there is a drill being called or an emergency situation concerning a student, for the most part there aren't any PA announcements until the afternoon announcements" (Participant 2).

"We have set a standard here: from 9 to 2 is sacred time; there are no announcements that are made" (Participant 6).

"Well, we totally limit announcements, unless it is an emergency and we can't reach a teacher. We have tons of phones in our building that we can call directly into a classroom as opposed to doing an announcement and disrupting the whole school … Typically announcements are made first thing in the morning and then announcements aren't made again until ten to three if there are any reminders" (Participant 9).

One principal who reported providing extra instructional time for students who scored below Proficient on test scores indicated that even assemblies were not allowed to interfere with these special teaching sessions.

"These kids come in the morning early, like 8:20. The basic skills teachers are working with these students in targeted groups in the area where they fell short on the NJ ASK. They work with them every morning from 8:30 to 9:00. I like for them to get the best bang for their buck. I'm not going to stop and have them wait for the flag, pledge, for this, for that, and interruptions" (Participant 12).

The principals also reported other approaches to protecting instructional time, such as encouraging teachers to deal with discipline within their classrooms rather than

sending students to the office and prohibiting parents' from talking to teachers during instructional time. One of the participants also stressed the importance of evaluating teacher requests for extra-curricular activities in terms of their impact on instructional time.

"When teachers want to do activities and things that are not directly aligned to the curriculum, directly aligned to instruction, cute plays and other activities and wanting to go outside, you know, I kinda want to get a sense of what is the value add of doing these activities … How much instructional time are we losing? Can we afford to do this activity at the expense of these kids who aren't performing?" (Participant 3).

Another important aspect of protecting instructional time consists of taking steps to reduce truancy and tardiness. The participants were therefore asked about their process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time.

Three principals did report that tardiness and unauthorized absence of students were problems facing their school; however, they struggled to deal with this at school level because parents were often believed to be responsible rather than the elementary students themselves.

"A lot a times our students are late because it's very convenient for the parent on their way to work to drop the child off ... It's usually the parent's issue" (Participant 5).

In extreme cases, other authorities had been called in to deal with the problem but with limited success.

"This is probably one of the most frustrating things of being an elementary principal. We have absolutely no recourse …. I had one kid that's been absent 60 times … It's a lot of instructional time, 60 times. I've called the police, I've called the parents, I've called DYFS, I even called the kids' pastor to talk to, and that didn't work" (Participant 10).

"There is no policy … it's just literally following up, reaching out, having the teachers reach out, having our I&RS meetings. We do send the truancy officer out, and calling DYFS and retaining. So there's not much else we can do" (Participant 12).

Four principals relied on the district attendance policy process for dealing with chronic tardy and truant students rather than tackling the problems at school level. This was generally found to be an effective process.

"Well, as a district, we have a truancy action plan, so there's a specific script as to what needs to be done for students beginning with being tardy 3 days or being absent 3 days. Letters are sent home, phone calls are made: and even after a certain amount of days, our district has gone so far as to take parents to court so we have a no-nonsense policy concerning attendance and truancy" (Participant 2).

However, five of the principals had successfully implemented school- level methods that had reduced at least the problems of tardiness at their school, such as providing free breakfast or having a morning all-school meeting as evidenced by:

[That] is why we started the morning meeting. I remember at one point we were locking the doors and wouldn't let anybody in out back and they had to walk all the way around the entire building and come to the front and they were quite

97

upset, but we were seeing you know 200 kids, 135 kids, 60 kids late on a daily

basis …. when you held them out and inconvenienced them and made them stand

outside, and parents standing outside, as much as I got cursed at, fussed at, and

cussed at, um, it did bring the numbers down dramatically to where we had 10 or

15 kids late in the day …. We also see this same problem during evening events,

concerts, and band, parents rolling in anytime. They come late, so we're trying to

be in the habit of starting ourselves on time to set the standard and then when

parents come in late, we don't let them come in and take a seat; we make them

wait until there's a break in the performance … These things I think are helping to

set a culture … I think this is about acculturating our kids so that they understand

the importance of being prompt because those bad habits can be hard to break"

Maintaining High Visibility

Principals can help ensure that they are highly visible and accessible to teachers

and student both by mingling informally with them during non-instructional time and by

attending or participating in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Research

indicates that principals indirectly contribute to school effectiveness and student

achievement by the actions that they take to influence school and classroom conditions

(Bell et al., 2003; Cheng, 1994; Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b; Kleine-Kracht, 1993;

Leithwood et al., 2004, 2006; Southworth, 2003).

The participants in the current study were first asked whether they take the time to

talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks. In general, all twelve

(100%) of the principals indicated that they make proactive efforts not only to be visible

and accessible to teachers and students, but also to cultivate the types of personal

connections that are believed to promote positive outcomes for the school. This pattern

of behavior was determined by the researcher based on the following participant

responses.

> "We have to understand that we're in the people business. We work with
>
> personalities; we work with children; we work with adults all day. We're in the
>
> same building and those interpersonal relationships are very important, so it is
>
> worth the effort to cultivate those so that you get, you know, better attendance,
>
> better performance, better buy-in" (Participant 3).

This was being achieved by various methods such as having an open-door policy,

actively encouraging casual conversation with the principal and--in the case of students--

being present and chatting with them informally during meal breaks or in the hallways.

> "I have an open-door policy, and the teachers know they can email me things …
>
> they email me about anything and everything. We have that open relationship"
>
> (Participant 12).

> "A lot of ways I find out about information is just being casual and one of my
>
> favorite sayings is 'Let's walk and talk.' So yeah, it's an effective way of feeling
>
> the pulse of the school, doing things like that" (Participant 2).

> "I invite students in for lunch. I have conversations in the hallway at lunchtime …
>
> Every opportunity that I get to talk to them, that's one of the parts that I do that I
>
> really enjoy … I like talking to the little ones a lot, and I ask them what they're
>
> reading, what's going on, what did they do yesterday" (Participant 5).

"In the morning if I'm not bogged down with a teacher or a parent more so than the teacher, I usually go into the room where the kids have breakfast and I'll walk around in there and see how they're doing. And they give me my hugs and, you know, we wish each other a good day" (Participant 8).

"I'm always going down to just see the kids informally or when they're leaving or when I know the parents are coming to pick them up. I'm a very visible principal. I spend more time out there than I do in my office" (Participant 1).

The importance of achieving a delicate balance in informal communications with teachers was highlighted. On the one hand, principals regarded it as important not to impose on teachers during their break times. On the other hand, they reported that it was more often the case that teachers wanted to use these times to discuss issues with the principal that would be more appropriately dealt with by using formal communications.

"I do try not to talk to the teachers on their lunch time because I know they only get that 40 minutes, and I'm really particular about that … it may be flipped the other way around. Do teachers talk to me? Because usually everybody is trying to get to me and I have this saying, 'Well, you know we can talk if you're willing to walk and talk because I need to keep moving' … Teachers are always talking to me and sometimes if they ask me something where a decision has to be made, I'll say to them, 'That's not a hallway decision, so just shoot me an email,' and then we follow up" (Participant 1).

Two participants had instigated specific methods such as informal lunches or other social events with teachers to enable them to discuss issues or concerns with the principal in a relaxed setting.

"Lunch and learns we have …. During grade level meetings, I'll sit down and have lunch once or twice a year and we'll talk about things. It's an important venting session for them; sometimes they're a little frustrated ... I have a pretty good relationship with the teachers. They know I'll listen to them, but they know they better not come to me with nonsense because it's just too busy, but I am supportive" (Participant 10).

"And we have things through "Sunshine," that's our social group where every month we have a breakfast and quarterly we go out and have drinks, relax, you know, appetizers, have fun. I go in the beginning, but then I leave once people start getting happy because I want them to feel comfortable" (Participant 12).

The majority of participants, eleven, also indicated that they attend or participate in a high proportion of extra- and co-curricular activities, the main exception being one principal who lived more than 100 miles from school.

"Whenever possible, when I can go to basketball games, I'll go to basketball games. I think I've made every PATT event; we've had a lot of dances and meetings. We do have clubs that happen after school, and I'll occasionally walk in and see what they're doing" (Participant 5).

"For most of the evening events that we have, especially our school functions, I'm always here or I always open them up, you know. And our co-curricular activities, meaning like our basketball program and things like that when they have practice, I'm here for most of the time for practice. I don't usually stay for the whole time, but on Saturdays when they have their games, I try to make it to as many games as I can on a Saturday. And it's not just for the students, I think it just sends a

message to the parents also 'cause they often say you're the only principal that we

see out here, you know" (Participant 8).

I participate in all the extracurricular activities in the building. I'm present, every

single event that we have, I'm there" (Participant 9).

Provides Incentives for Teachers.

The research participants were asked whether they reinforce superior performance

by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, or memos. Eight principals did report that they

had strategies for rewarding high standards of performance. Five of the participants

mentioned the use of relatively formal rewards and recognition systems, such as teacher

of the year or teacher of the month.

"It's like the academy awards … at the end of the year party … it might be four

teachers up for a particular award and they get some real nice trophies and

plaques and crystal balls" (Participant 4)

"We have a teacher of the month every month. We are currently aligning the

criteria for our teacher of the month to Danielson. So making the criteria to be

selected as teacher of the month will be selected by your peers at team meetings.

And then the school management team will make the ultimate decision on who's

the teacher of the month" (Participant 9).

More innovative approaches were also found to be in use, such as rewarding

performance by allowing the teacher acknowledged to wear jeans for a day; allocating a

reserved parking space to the teacher of the year and encouraging superior performance

by a "pay it forward" system as illustrated by the following responses:

"The teacher goes out of their way and does something outstanding, we give them jean coupons, blue jeans, one day, or a lesson plan coupon so they can have one thing. Either they don't submit a lesson plan for the week or a jeans coupon" (Participant 10).

"We have a plaque out there for the teacher of the year, so her picture goes up there. She has a parking spot out there also ... Teacher of the year gets that parking spot for the whole year" (Participant 12).

"My school management team identified one staff member that they wanted to acknowledge and gave just like a piece of candy or candy bar … whoever received it had to pay it forward and acknowledge someone else" (Participant 8).

Outstanding achievements were also being acknowledged in ways more likely to benefit the grade or school as a whole, such as asking the teacher to share their experiences with others at the next staff meeting.

"I have a system that I actually use--better than me always highlighting them--and we call it 'sharing best practices.' And so when I see something that a teacher is doing really great or she's had really great results, I ask her, "would you be willing to share that with the staff ?" (Participant 1).

Among those principals who reported that they do acknowledge superior performance of teachers in writing, this most commonly took the form of a reference to their achievement in the weekly newsletter or other school communications. Two of the principals highlighted, however, the importance of being sensitive to whether or not individual teachers would welcome being in the limelight or not, and choosing the most

appropriate recognition method for them. In some cases, it was felt, a simple thank you to the teacher was acknowledgement enough.

"I email my teachers a 'week at a glance.' Every Monday I send out one with an overview of the week and we capture anything that may have happened in the previous week. If someone did something great, you know, I'll do a kudos to so and so" (Participant 7).

"There are times when I will write a memo to them letting them know that they did a great job, you know, and I don't just send it to them, I send it to the whole school, you know, just giving them kudos" (Participant 8)

"I'm always thinking about the people who go above and beyond, so I take the time to write up something informally and then they can put it in their resume or portfolio, wherever they may be in the future" (Participant 12).

"I try to recognize teachers in my 'news and notes' that I send out weekly. In commending them for different things, some teachers don't like the spotlight on them, so you know you try to be a little bit careful with that ... I know that teachers appreciate the public but just as many appreciate the private recognition or thanks" (Participant 3).

"Sometimes, most of the times, during lunch you walk up to the classroom and say, 'Thank you very much" (Participant 6)

Only two of the principals indicated that they acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files; but the majority, ten participants, indicated that they felt this was something they should do more often. Three of the

participants noted that exceptional achievements were more often recorded in writing when drafting the summative evaluation of teachers' performance at the end of the year.

"I write thank you notes, and a lot of times we make copies for their folders, so yes" (Participant 10).

"Some of them, they really deserve that. Probably when you're not too busy, sit down and do several" (Participant 11).

"That's something I definitely have to get better at. I've done it but not at the level that it could be done. Because I have a lot of teachers--well, staff members period--that really go above and beyond what they do, so typically in their results it would be shown in their summative evaluation where I reflect back and, you know, give them kudos for what they've done during the year" (Participant 4).

Promoting Professional Development

Another important way of promoting a positive learning climate is by ensuring that teachers are adequately trained and developed in ways that contribute to the school's academic mission and goals. To explore this in the sample of urban schools in need of improvement, the research participants were asked how they ensure that the in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals and whether they set time aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from these activities.

Overall, eleven of the principals demonstrated a range of effective practices in planning in-service activities to ensure these were aligned with the school goals and also delivered in the most appropriate way.

"I go to lengths to plan, co-plan, and take part in the planning process for all the

professional development that happens in our building … I love professional

development and I just look at what are the expected outcome to gain from that

and how does it fit into our vision and how does it fit into our annual school goals.

I make sure things map back to the school goals. So that comes pretty easy for

me, it makes sense to me, and it helps keep me focused between how to spend my

resources and how to commit my time and who to bring in as a consultant and as

a trainer, and even when I have staff members turnkey things or deliver

professional development to their peers" (Participant 3).

"The in-services and PD professional development that I control usually arise

from some sort of need, which means that we have done some sort of assessment

to determine that need" (Participant 2).

"When we send people to professional development, we will say, 'Oh, this is NJ

ASK-related a little, this is math related, and we're trying to get a writers'

workshop. Send the teachers to Columbia; that goes with our weakness in

writing" (Participant 11).

Three of the participants highlighted the fact that their in-service activities are

also planned at district level, and mostly this was seen as positive for the school.

"That's pretty easy. We have our school improvement plan. And we're part of the

priority schools initiative with NJEA and we do have a consultant that comes in

and works with our staff once a week. It's all tied to professional learning

communities, which is one of our … overarching goals. And anything else

someone puts in for--to go be a part of a workshop or conference--it has to

support what it is that we're trying to get better at; if not, we don't use school

funds to support that" (Participant 4).

"Well, one thing that we do district wide, we use my learning plan on line and if

the teachers want to attend PD, it has to go into my learning plan, which forces

me to read over it and review it to make sure that it's aligned before I approve it"

(Participant 7)

"For the most part, the in-service activities and professional development that are

offered are filtered out of the district office. So they're aligned with whatever the

districts goals are, and the district's goals are aligned with the direction that we're

going in as well" (Participant 8).

However, three of the principals expressed the view that the need to follow

district priorities and plans for in-service had sometimes been in conflict with the more

immediate needs of their school.

"Well, that goes along with our professional development plan, which we try

really hard to take seriously, our professional development planning. For example

this particular year we looked at our school goals. We planned accordingly with

the Common Core Standards and the use of technology, but because the state and

of course the district, we're going through the use of a particular evaluation

model. There's certain mandates that we have to abide by, and so I found myself

veering off from our plans of professional development to go with what is

mandated for us to do. So we hope to get back on track next year" (Participant 5).

"That comes from the curriculum office. I wanted to do a couple of things. I wouldn't mind because I would tell you exactly where I wanted to go with it, exactly what I would do, but they won't let me do it" (Participant 10).

"Most of the time I feel that ours is not in line all the time with our school goals. So I try and make my own professional development. Like one time we had the Kaggan group come in and do a training on cooperative learning and things like that. So I try to bring in my own" (Participant 12).

When asked whether they make time available at faculty meetings for teachers to share experiences of in-service activities, eleven of the principals reported the use of turn-keying. This is a systematic approach in which teachers attend workshops or other forms of professional development and are formally required to disseminate information from these to their peers.

"We have some teachers who go out to district workshops and they need to bring back information and we call that turn-keying … we use the professional learning community and we use staff meetings to do that as well" (Participant 1).

"Usually if I know a teacher has attended an in-service or if I've been in the class room and I've seen something really good that the teacher is doing, I'll ask them to share at the next staff meeting, so they are given the opportunities to share and actually they're required to turn-key when they attend" (Participant 7).

Four participants who were not formally using a turn-key approach did report that they allocated specific time in faculty meetings to share professional development experiences, or for their teachers to help one another with advice or guidance on particular aspects of teaching. One chose to allocate this time in grade-level meetings or

professional learning communities rather than in faculty meetings, on the basis that in-service training is usually grade-specific.

"At the beginning of the faculty meeting … if anybody has attended any professional development, you know, or anything that's working, they can talk about it" (Participant 10).

"The way our staff meetings are held, there are certain issues where I do open it up to staff to offer their suggestions, and I think we're at a point where staff feels comfortable offering suggestions. Say for instance just this last staff meeting, one of our newer teachers posed a question about how to organize some data concerning literacy, how to organize some student data. Two or three teachers took time to explain what they did or what they do to organize their student data; and the staff member, the teacher, found it very helpful" (Participant 2).

"There are times when teachers are afforded the opportunity to share ideas and participate in professional development activities. The bulk of these opportunities take place in their 80-minute grade level PLC's, which occur weekly" (Participant 4).

Learning from or with peers was reported to be given high emphasis in their schools by seven of the principals, one of whom reported that she encourages her teachers to observe their peers in the classroom and covers their own class to enable this to happen, while another was in the process of introducing a collaborative learning tool for the teachers.

"I have new teachers observe the other teachers … I go to their classroom or teach

their class sometimes. I said, 'I'll teach your class and then you go see another

teacher" (Participant 11).

"We have what you call the 'comprehension tool kit' and we're gonna spend the

next week in our grade levels … having them peer conference with each, open

these tool kits and have them talk about an activity or a lesson in there, debrief,

discuss it, collaborate, and implement it" (Participant 3).

Providing Incentives for Learning

The final dimension of promoting a positive learning culture, as conceptualized in

the PIMRS, is providing incentives for learning. To address this, the research participants

were asked whether they recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards

such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter.

All twelve of the participants reported having an honor roll or something similar

such as a Principal's Club or student of the month award. In most of the schools, students

that achieved an award were rewarded with something extrinsic and tangible, ranging

from a pen to a gift card or voucher, or by being invited to a luncheon or other social

event.

"Yes, we do honor roll every marking period. And not only do they get the

awards, but we have little pens that they get when they make honor roll. And then

this year I started having an honor roll luncheon so the kids now are looking

forward to being on honor roll so that they can get to come to the honor roll

luncheon because the food thing works, it just works" (Participant 1).

"We have an agreement with the community where they get this paper and if they present the paper, it has the business name and what they get that's free. So they get a free hamburger at McDonald's or a free pizza slice at this pizza place. So they get a lot of honor roll stuff" (Participant 12).

"I'll have 'lunch with the principal' for the kids; they love that … while they're in here, they get to call their parents while they have lunch in the principal's office. They tell them that they're in the principal's office for a good reason, and everyone always gets a kick out of that" (Participant 10).

All twelve of the principals reported having a formal awards ceremony as well as reporting achievements on the school website or in the newsletter; overall, there was evidence that the schools place a high emphasis on encouraging a positive learning climate through acknowledging and rewarding student achievement.

"Anyone that scored Proficient on the NJ ASK exam, we recognize in the morning over the PA system. An awards assembly, we have that as well. And we also have a school gram and we recognize the kids that do outstanding work in there. It's the newsletter; we highlight student work on the web, so we have highlighted students and every month a grade level has to submit stuff" (Participant 10).

Three of the principals pointed out that the students were rewarded in these ways, not just for outstanding academic achievements, but for other aspects of performance, such as improvement in particular subject areas or behavioral achievements.

"We have what they call the Principal's Club … I created this award for those children; for instance, behavioral improvement would be one of the categories, or went up one letter grade or two letter grades, or significant academic improvement in one particular area …. So I have a lot of criteria. We have an awards night. The teachers are allowed to pick one person per marking period. We have a little ice cream social for them. They get a certificate; they get a little pin. The parents come and they take pictures; we have a real nice time" (Participant 10).

"Every assembly program we do a 'caught in the act' and the 'caught in the act' is just random acts of kindness and we put on the music to the pink panther and two of my staff members will dress up as detectives and they use magnifying glasses to walk around. 'Is it you? Is it you? and then they make the announcement and they give them a certificate. They get so excited about that" (Participant 8).

"Student of the month is not all academic …. I pick the little Special Ed kid just because didn't have three fights today or because he's made progress, which improves his behavioral progress, which improves academics. But it's not stellar, he's not a superstar, but he made major a accomplishment to be acknowledged" (Participant 9).

Since much of the day-to-day recognition of student contributions and accomplishments occurs within classrooms, the principals were also asked how they support teachers actively in this area. Eight mentioned ways in which their own direct involvement in classroom-level initiatives is used to reward students.

"We also have 'I can read to the principal.' Once a kindergarten kid is ready to read, he or she gets sent down here and reads a book to me, and I give the child a button that says, 'I just read to the principal" (Participant 10).

"They have a whole bunch of things here … you know, not awards ceremonies but stars of the month club and stuff … a few teachers tdo it, and the kids get to pick a prize. And one of the prizes is hanging out with me for a day. So I'll do that as well, so whatever they ask me, I am usually pretty good with that" (Participant 10).

Two of the participants stressed that they do whatever they can to help the teachers in their reward and recognition of students when asked to do so.

"Of course, if the teachers tell me something that they need, then if I can get it for them, I will, so I think I actively support them in that way" (Participant 1).

"Ah, well, anytime a teacher wants to plan some sort of reward celebration or wants to provide some type of incentive or provide some type of award as a reward, they just have to bring it to my attention. I support it wholeheartedly 100%. You know, it's good to be recognized for your accomplishments, so anything that is positive and for the benefit of kids I support" (Participant 2).

Two principals indicated that they were rarely asked for this type of support by teachers and acknowledged that there was probably more they should be doing in this area. For one principal, a positive recent development was that their teachers had been bringing student achievements to his attention more and the principal had responded by visiting the classroom to acknowledge these in person, with obvious impact on the confidence and motivation of students. One respondent did not feel as though he actively

supported teachers as to recognition in the classroom and could improve in this area by not just leaving it solely up to the teacher.

> "This year has been the first year that my teachers have really shared, like come up to me and said you know … so and so went up 30 points in his lexile. So when they share it with me, and they're making a point to share it with me, I make it a point to go up into the class … I'll walk into the class and I'll say, 'I'm so sorry for the interruption, but I received a very important announcement that you know this one, this one, and this one went up in their benchmark by, you know, 30 points, or they moved with their lexile, so I just want to give them an award' … We had kids that emotionally knew they were low academically, so their confidence, you know, was going down and next thing I knew the kids were coming to tell me, 'Did you hear? Did you hear that I went up on my….' If they know that I'm watching and listening and celebrating with them, then maybe they're going to work harder to do it even more. So I got it, it may have taken me a minute, but I got it now. I got it" (Participant 8).

Summary

This chapter presents the overall findings from the principal interviews relevant to the three sets of leadership dimensions: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate. Within these leadership dimensions are areas of job functions known to be associated with effective instructional leadership. The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. This chapter attempted to answer the three research questions

that frame this study by presenting and analyzing qualitative data. The research questions investigated were the following:

1. What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

2. How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program?

3. What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement.

The researcher administered an interview guide adapted from the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The instrument was comprised of twenty behavioral statements divided into ten categorical functions. The data findings of this study are qualitative and were collected from semi-structured interviews with twelve elementary school principals. The interviews revealed a range of effective and innovative practices that are likely to contribute to the improvement of these urban schools.

To further support the examples of effective leadership practice, the researcher examined the frequency of occurrence in each leadership dimension to quantify and further support the correlation to the Hallinger (1998) Leadership Model. The principals all represented urban school districts, were heterogeneously grouped, and represented school sizes that ranged from small to medium and large student populations. Their

experience varied from three years in the position to longtime veterans. All participants had been in their present schools for a minimum of two years.

The participant responses to the questions were compared with the leadership behaviors (Hallinger, 1998) found in Table 1. The researcher conducted content analysis by themes to examine relationships and trends in the data and build a body of evidence to support the case study. The discussions led the researcher to determine that these individuals clearly practiced effective behaviors consistent with the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale. In fact, 485 of these cumulative behaviors were evidenced in this group.

The sections entitled Defining the School Mission and Goals and School-Wide Goal Setting provided data results to address Research Question 1: What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement? The principals indicated that it was paramount to use student performance data for the purpose of setting their annual academic goals. Participants described a myriad of sources of data to identify specific areas for academic improvement at their school and to inform areas such as the professional development of teachers, which included academic and instructional focus plans, use of standardized testing and benchmark assessments, alignment to the New Jersey curriculum and Common Core State Standards Initiative, human resources, school climate, and parent home/school connections.

A critical characteristic of instructional leadership is to be goal-oriented. In this era of educational reform and high academic accountability, principals have to lead the school instructionally by coordinating efforts toward increasing student achievement. The

participants indicated a sense of urgency in this leadership domain. For school leaders who wish to succeed in an environment of educational reform, the terms *vision*, *mission*, and *goals* have to be central to their leadership vocabulary. (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Hallinger & Heck, 2002). This behavior category yielded the lowest number for frequency of behaviors for a total of 67 that were evidenced out of this group.

The section entitled Managing the Instructional/Curriculum Program addressed participant responses to the leadership functions in the following areas: supervises and evaluates instruction, coordinates the curriculum, and monitors student progress. This dimension provided data results to address Research Question 2: How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program? In fact, this behavior category yielded the highest number for frequency of behaviors for a total of 213 cumulative behaviors that were evidenced out of this group.

Participants reported using systematic methods and techniques for observing teaching and learning in classroom activities. There is a standard procedural expectation for the recording of observations in an electronic template in alignment with a performance rubric and teacher evaluation model for the purpose of providing post-observation feedback.

The participants reported that they participated in a review of curricular materials through professional development committees, either district or school based, and through grade level/staff meetings to discuss curricular material, generally focused on specific subject areas. With regard to district and school level curriculum decision-making, the participants indicated that the trial and evaluation of resources plays an

important role in the curriculum decision-making process. However, an outlier in the data became apparent to the researcher when participants were asked whether they draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions to investigate examples of effective practice in their co-ordination of the curriculum.

Only one interview respondent out of 12 reported using a detailed, systematic procedure for developing the curriculum and instructional strategies based on school and district-wide data. The data also indicated that principals have little to no involvement with writing and organizing curriculum or district level curriculum decision-making; and for the most part, the principals have very little autonomy in this area. Research has found that teachers may be more knowledgeable than principals with curriculum since leadership responsibilities involving curriculum development are often performed well by teachers. (Heller &Firestone, 1995). If it is the principal's job to meet the school's leadership needs, the principal does not necessarily need to be an expert in the subject; but it is important to know curriculum and the principles and practices of curriculum improvement (Tanner, 2007).

The researcher explored practices through the data relating to monitoring the school's academic progress. In response, all twelve of the principals indicated that the school performance results would generally be disseminated to teachers in advance of or at the first staff meeting of the academic year, and would be a focus of ongoing discussion at staff or PLC meetings for the duration of the school year. Together, they would analyze the results and use them to plan areas of focus for the year ahead. The participants differed widely when asked about their methods for informing students of the school's academic progress. Either they used some process for student communication,

did not use a method at all, or made the assumption that teachers held data chats with students but without administrative follow up. The research findings in the analysis of effective practices for discussing results at an individual level with students may not be a direct factor in transforming school culture or increasing focus for improved student achievement.

In the final section of this chapter entitled Promoting a Positive Learning Climate, the researcher examined data on effective characteristics that instructional leaders utilized to influence a school's learning climate through direct and indirect ways. (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). This section yielded findings to address Research Question 3: What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement? This behavior category yielded the second highest number for frequency of behaviors for a total of 205 cumulative behaviors that were evidenced out of this group. The principals indicated that they endeavor to limit administrative interruptions of instructional time such as public announcements or non-emergency notifications that interrupt "sacred instructional time."

The researcher's review of the data examined an outlier in the behavior functions. This participant provided extra instructional time before the start of the instructional day with students who scored below Proficient on test scores and indicated that not even assemblies or the pledge of allegiance was allowed to interfere with these special teaching sessions. Teachers are encouraged to deal with discipline within their classrooms rather than sending students to the office. The goal of principals is to maintain being highly visible and accessible to teachers and students both by mingling informally

with them during non-instructional time and by attending or participating in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.

The data indicate teachers should be adequately trained and developed in ways that contribute to the school's academic mission and goals for promoting a positive learning climate. In addition, to further support the correlation to the Hallinger (1998) Leadership Model in providing incentives for learning, it was evident that the participants felt very strongly about recognizing behavioral and academic accomplishments of students with formal rewards such as honor roll assemblies, bulletin board recognition, principal's newsletter, and a multitude of extrinsic and tangible gifts or acknowledgements. These findings also yielded unexpected results for providing incentives for teachers with recognition of exemplar performance in writing by principals. There was disparity in the responses of the principals concerning whether they acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memoranda for their personnel files. The vast majority, 10 of the 12 participants, indicated that they felt this was something they should do more often and was an area in need of improvement. Instructionally effective schools develop a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards for student and staff are aligned with purposes and practices (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986)

The next chapter summarizes what the research has revealed about the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals and discusses the implications and significance of these findings.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Chapter I of this research study provided background information on leadership characteristics and concepts including the problem, research questions, purpose, and limitations of the study and definitions of the terms. In Chapter II, the researcher provided the literature review of leadership to discuss the historical and most current work related to the study. The literature reviewed leadership theories and models, school climate, collaborative learning, shared decision-making, teacher collective efficacy, and the Principal Instructional Management Scale. Chapter III reviewed the research design and instructional leadership dimensions. The method of data collection, instruments, limitations, and delimitations were also included. In Chapter IV, the researcher presented the findings for the three research questions.

In this final Chapter V, the purpose is to present a summary of the study and discussion of the findings. The summary includes a statement of the problem, a review of the methodology, and a summary of the results. The discussion is based on the responses to the three research questions that examined the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. Included in the discussion is the interpretation of the findings, relationship of the study to previous research, recommendations for practitioners, and suggestions for additional research.

Statement of the Problem

School communities and educational leaders continue to demand more accountability from principals as instructional leaders because of the decline in student achievement, as measured by states' standardized achievement tests. The research gathered over the last few decades clearly indicates there is an indirect relationship between student achievement and the quality of the principal. According to Hallinger and Heck (1996), "The effects of principal leadership will occur indirectly through the principal's efforts to influence those who come into more frequent direct contact with students" (p. 24). The basis of high quality instructional programs, school climate, and student achievement have been formulated by the roles that principals play in their professional responsibilities and duties.

National standards groups like the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) (1996), combined with many other efforts, have sought to define what is important to a principal in terms of their school success and to their role as the principal or instructional leader. Instructional leaders have to be goal-oriented and know the direction in which they are heading for leading their school. A principal that desires to succeed in the environment of educational reform must have the team's vision, mission, and goals engrained in his or her mind and professional vocabulary. (Hallinger & Heck, 2002).

The purpose of this study was to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. Specifically, this study investigated effective leadership characteristics of principals in relation to leadership style, school climate, teacher collective efficacy,

collaboration, shared decision-making, and student achievement in urban schools in need of improvement. Qualitative measures were used in this study to address the following research questions:

1. What are the examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

2. How do principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program?

3. What pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement?

Review of the Methodology

In order to gain multiple perspectives in the area of leadership and school climate, the data findings of this qualitative study were collected from semi-structured interviews with 12 elementary school principals located in three separate urban school districts. As the instructional leader of the school building, each principal could give insight to the researcher on his or her leadership styles, effective practices, school climate, and the impact on student achievement with fidelity. All the schools were identified as being in need of improvement, which was evidenced by the New Jersey State Report Card and AYP reports. All schools indicated low socioeconomic factors in accordance with the free- and reduced-lunch guidelines.

This comparative qualitative study identified which of the 10 instructional leadership functions identified by Hallinger's 1983 Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) were being demonstrated by a sample of New Jersey elementary school principals as perceived by their own self-assessment in these schools. The theoretical framework for this study was based on the conceptual framework underlying the PIMRS instrument. The PIMRS assesses three dimensions of instructional leadership: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) (see Figure 1). For the purpose of conducting interviews in the current research study, the original PIMRS job functions were modified to reflect the up-to-date educational context in which the principals operate, and the interview guide was adapted with permission from Dr. Philip Hallinger, Chair Professor of Leadership and Change and Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change at the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

A letter of solicitation was sent to each superintendent requesting the school district's participation in the study; and upon receiving approval from the superintendent, a formal letter of consent was solicited and obtained. The individual school principals were contacted by an email letter. The researcher inquired as to their suitability for the study; specifically, that they had been principal of the school for at least two years prior to the 2012-2013 school year. Following principal consent, a letter of understanding was distributed to all 12 schools to confirm agreement to participate in the study, including all data collection activities. The next section summarizes and discusses the conclusions drawn from the study.

Summary and Discussion

This section summarizes the conclusions based on key findings and the conclusions drawn based on the research. Three areas relevant to leadership dimensions and based on principal interviews are included: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive Learning Climate. Within these leadership dimensions are areas of job functions known to be associated with effective instructional leadership.

The interview responses were grouped into three categories for analysis. The first category related to defining the school's mission as it relates to developing school-wide goals between the principal and teachers. This included responses to Survey Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. The second category related to managing the instructional program and the impact that principal leadership characteristics have on teacher evaluations, curriculum, student behavior, and progress. The responses to Survey Questions 5 through 10 were analyzed in relation to one another. The third category of responses related to promoting a positive learning climate, the characteristics that are exemplified by school principals, and how these characteristics affect teacher's collective efficacy. The responses to Survey Questions 11 through 20 were analyzed.

Defining the School's Mission

In defining the school's mission and goals, Research Question 1 asked for examples of effective leadership characteristics in defining the school's mission and goals based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement. The principal behaviors consistent with the Hallinger Leadership Model for this category yielded the least frequency in number for effective characteristics (see Table 4). The

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researcher posits that if a principal has not taken steps to identify his or her goals and the direction in which the school is heading, how can one determine whether one's efforts are in alignment with the vision. Furthermore, what is the plan for taking corrective action to reach that goal for all the stakeholders involved if it has not been clearly delineated from the onset? Research indicates that principals need to have a clear vision for their schools first and foremost (Manasse, 1985; Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). A clear pattern in responses emerged wherein the principals indicated that it was crucial to use student performance data for the purpose of setting their annual academic goals.

However, a discrepancy emerged between participant understanding of the mission and vision of a school and whether these terms were synonymous with each other or distinctly different definitions and terms. In addition, the participant responses indicated a variation of direct and indirect techniques for communication (see Figures 4a and 4b). Although the principals clearly demonstrated greater direct communication with teachers and parents through differentiated modalities, the researcher concluded that to be effective, a principal cannot assume a mission or goal is subliminally understood unless it is communicated and infused into the school climate through direct strategic planning, communication, and professional development. Furthermore, in support of the researcher's conclusion with respect to the role of the principal in building and sustaining the school's vision and goals, principals of high achieving schools communicate to all stakeholders that the school's most important mission is learning (Cotton, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005).

A distinctly strong pattern emerged within the data that indicated the use of student performance data for the purpose of setting annual academic goals. Multiple

sources of data were disaggregated from the research findings (see Table 2), specifically with regard to state standardized testing for the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) data or the district utilized Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) data. Current research supports that the effective school leader uses multiple forms of data to inform school planning towards goals and objectives (Cotton, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005; Shellard, 2005). The data indicate to the researcher that effective principal practices for improved student outcomes must and should include collaboration between the principal and teachers to review multiple forms and data and create strategies to address the learning needs through a tangible and measureable plan of action. Moving forward as a professional learning community does not occur by accident or happen-stance; it occurs through careful forethought, communication, organization, and planning.

Hence the importance of utilizing grade level, content area, or department planning meetings for professional development and continuous opportunities for staff to dialogue, analyze data, and look at student work or assessments. Establishing the foundation for this collaboration to occur must be put into place by the principal and then instilled in teachers for a sense of collective efficacy. The collaborative focus efforts should be directed toward the success of all students, where school principals instill and sustain these goals by promoting "within the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students." (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, p. 480).

Managing the Instructional Program

In the category of managing the instruction program, Research Question 2 inquired how principals in urban schools in need of improvement demonstrate and

identify examples of effective practice in managing the instructional/curriculum program. Under this category, the leadership functions in the following areas were addressed: supervises and evaluates instruction, and coordinates the curriculum and monitors student progress The principal behaviors consistent with the Hallinger Leadership Model for this category yielded the highest frequency of cumulative behaviors for effective leadership characteristics (see Table 4). A strong, distinct pattern emerged in the sample of principals leading to conclusive results.

All the principals indicated that there is a standard procedural expectation for the recording of observations in an electronic template in alignment with a performance rubric and teacher evaluation model for the purpose of providing post-observation feedback. All the participants reported using systematic methods and techniques for observing teaching and learning in classroom activities. Out of all the variables that are within the schools, the quality of the teacher's teaching has one of the most powerful effects on student learning (Mendro, 1998; Nye et al., 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2001; Wright, Horn, & Saunders, 1997). The purpose of teacher evaluation should be for the reasons of teacher improvement and teacher accountability (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). According to McGreal (1988), evaluations are used for multiple purposes and these purposes can be successfully accomplished if the system is seen as the component of a greater mission, which ultimately is to further the goals of an organization.

With regard to district and school level curriculum decision-making, the participants indicated that the trial and evaluation of resources plays an important role in the curriculum decision-making process. But the data also indicated that principals have

little to no involvement with writing and organizing curriculum or district level curriculum decision-making, and for the most part the principals have very little autonomy in this area. Although it is important for principals to monitor what is taught through the curriculum, it is equally important for them to participate in how it is developed (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). Principals gain valuable knowledge through the curriculum process and need to understand it themselves in order to ensure that the teachers understand the curriculum and the tools or resources necessary for its successful implementation.

The researcher explored practices through the data relating to monitoring the school's academic progress. There was no consistent overarching distinct pattern that emerged for the group of principals, leading to inconclusive results. All of the principals indicated that the school performance results would generally be disseminated to teachers in advance of or at the first staff meeting of the academic year and would be a focus of ongoing discussion at staff or PLC meetings for the duration of the school year. The data differed widely in respect to their methods for informing students of the school's academic progress. Either they used some process for student communication, did not use a method at all, or made the assumption that teachers had some type of process, but it was not followed up by the principal. Usdan, McCloud, and Podmostko (2000) summarized the crucial role that principals play in improving teaching and learning, "They must collect, analyze, and use data in ways that fuel excellence. They must rally students, teachers, parents, local health and social service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses, and other community residents, and partners around the common goal of raising student performance" (p. 2).

Promoting a Positive Learning Climate

This section sought to answer Research Question 3 concerning what pertinent examples of effective leadership characteristics in promoting a positive learning climate can be identified based on interviews with principals in urban schools in need of improvement. This behavior category yielded the second highest number for frequency of behaviors for a total of 205 cumulative behaviors that were evidenced out of this group (see Table 4). According to the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), effective instructional leaders influence a school's learning climate in various direct and indirect ways. These include ensuring that instructional time is protected from interruption, being highly visible to both teachers and students, reinforcing and rewarding positive performance among teachers and students, and ensuring that teacher development is aligned with the school mission and goals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987).

The climate of the school is considered the heart of the school and can often be determined by just walking through the door of a building and assessing the tone of the overall environment. According to Deal and Kennedy (1983), it is the school's collective personality or atmosphere. School affects teacher productivity, which directly correlates to the instructional quality that is received by the students (Villani, 1997). The principals indicated that they endeavor to limit administrative interruptions of instructional time such as public announcements or non-emergency notifications that interrupt "sacred instructional time." The participants also felt very strongly about recognizing behavioral and academic accomplishments of students with formal rewards, recognition, and extrinsic and tangible gifts or acknowledgments. A research study of school administrators in Cyprus confirmed the importance of positive parent and school relations

as one of ten factors evident in successful school leadership (Kythreotis & Pashiartis, 1998).

All the data indicate that being visible in the building during and after the instructional day shows that the principal is genuinely interested and involved in instruction and school activities. It is beneficial for the school leader to form interpersonal bonds with the stakeholders of the school community. Although the principals took great lengths to acknowledge students, they reported that there was limited action or no formal action of consistently acknowledging teacher performance such as providing formal commendations and documentation for personnel files. Often this was a direct result of limited time or just not making it a priority in the principal's schedule. Research indicates that school leadership has an indirect effect in relation to student achievement, but principals shape teachers' attitudes and influence students' opportunities to learn (Hallinger et al., 1996; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Limitations

This study attempted to utilize an instructional leadership model to examine the articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature on the characteristics of high performing principals. From the results of the study, the researcher cannot say with confidence that there is a direct relationship. In contrast, the researcher can conclude that leadership characteristics have an indirect effect on transforming the school climate and student achievement. In the reviews of principal leadership effects, Hallinger and Heck (1996a, 1996b) clearly identified that the effects of principal instructional leadership are indirect, not direct. To determine more conclusive results

would require a more sophisticated model of the ways and paths through which principals create more effective schools.

It is also limited by the many intervening factors that affect the transforming of school culture and student achievement over which the principal and the school have no control. Demographics, longevity, gender, experience of the principal and geographic location of the school are some of the variables. In the study the participants self assessments were based on oral responses of their behavior which presents a limitation for absence of the evidence. Due to limited or lack of evidence in the leadership dimensions, oral responses can often be biased and were treated as such by the researcher.

Finally, this study relied solely on the self-reporting of leadership practices by the principals themselves. Therefore social desirability was a limitation to the study due to the absence of viewpoint of teachers and other stakeholders on the leadership practices of the principals. Instructional leaders have a tendency to rate themselves more transformational than those following them would (Bass & Avolio, 1995). In contrast, Podsakoff et al. (1996) identifies that the followers of a leader can often skew the results of a study in either direction depending on their current relationship with the leader. With respect to utilization of the PIMRS, it has been suggested that teacher perceptions are the preferred source of data on the principal's instructional leadership for both research and evaluation purposes (Hallinger, 1983). However, the researcher determined that it would be more time effective to limit the sample to interviews of the principals.

<center>**Recommendations for Policy**</center>

Historically in education, the premise of failing schools that are not meeting proficiency standards in academics has been the focus of educators and policy makers for school improvement and restructuring goals. The unfortunate reality is that the turnaround efforts fail to meet the expectations for fixing at risk schools across urban school systems in America.

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act, which supports punitive sanctions directed at public schools and its underprivileged students (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). National and state education policy makers use standardized tests to support political agendas for school reform. People have been led to believe that tests such as the NJ ASK and other standardized tests are valid indictors of academic achievement. District and school administrators have placed teachers under pressure to teach to the test. Standardized tests have their limitations and have been widely misused. When teaching to the test becomes known as best practice, the test becomes the curriculum or at a minimum shapes the curriculum.

The researcher recommends that measures other than student achievement be used to measure principal leadership effectiveness and impact on schools, such as teacher surveys, student surveys, parent surveys, and central office surveys. It is also recommended that policy makers encourage the use of data to inform decisions and direct improvement, but discourage the labeling of schools and personnel based strictly on measures of student achievement and performance indicators.

Based on the data in this study, the researcher posits that policy makers focus efforts on ensuring that principals are properly trained in curriculum implementation and

included in its development at the local school levels. An eye-opening revelation to the researcher on the data indicated that principals have minimum level to non-existent involvement or autonomy with district level curriculum decision-making. The researcher also suggests that in lieu of closing and reopening schools and replacing the principal in the hope that school transformation will occur, more guidance be given to the school in need of improvement, whereby they receive support to design an improvement strategy of their own with a tangible and measureable strategic action plan. It is crucial that the state or contract with an outside agency provides consistent value added support to avoid the "principal swap dance" within schools and districts.

The researcher recommends that policy changes for the transformation of schools should facilitate them to become less bureaucratic and more communal, thus becoming more likely to revise their curricular and instructional practices (Shouse, 1998). The data of this study indicate principals clearly identified that promoting a positive learning climate was important to managing the instructional and curriculum program. Lee and Smith (1995) attempted to pull the social and technical dimensions of restructuring together in a single analytic framework. They viewed evidence of restructured practices as a shift toward more collegial, communal, and caring relationships. These practices were evidenced through the following: interdisciplinary teaching teams, more focus on cooperative learning, increased parent volunteers, and effective teacher common planning time.

The data yielded inconsistencies for the principals regarding the monitoring of the school's academic progress; the researcher recommends that boards of education and superintendents use quantitative and qualitative methodology to assess policy

effectiveness. Qualitative methodology would involve the collection of verbal or pictorial data in all schools in the district for comparison in a process call triangulation (Fowler, 2009). Types of data would consist of transcript interviews of district stakeholders, surveys, minutes from meetings, and official school or district reports. The use of internal and external committees to conduct a needs assessment and compile the findings could be cost effective in the long run when making plans for targeted professional development and the purchase of instructional programs or resources. The researcher also suggests that the advantages would offer insight into how piloting alternative school improvement strategies are working and whether they are a value add or of little significance for student growth and achievement.

Recommendations for Practitioners

The principal's job can be metaphorically compared to one standing on an island by him or herself, yet held responsible for the survival or extinction of all the inhabitants connected or related to the island. The researcher sums it up in one word: challenging. This study sought to examine effective leadership characteristics of principals in what they do. It is also essential to provide recommendations concerning how effectively principals do their work. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) developed national standards for school leaders (Murphy, 2003). The standards suggest that principals should promote student learning, collaborate, and ensure management of the organization.

Trust is an important factor for the success of any principal. Trust does not just happen; it involves relationships between people and must be cultivated (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The data indicate that an inordinate amount of time is spent in the area of

managing the instructional program for teacher observation and evaluation. The principal

has to set the tone for the school so that the school goals and vision are always centered

on student success in learning. The data in this study suggest that during post observation

conferences, principals should highlight the importance of initially exploring the

teacher's own perspectives on the classroom session, rather than just imposing their own

views on them, since this was found to be a more constructive and effective way of

identifying required changes and how to achieve these. Effective principals are honest

and fair, possess a high degree of integrity, and hold themselves to a high standard of

ethics (Lashway, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005).

Effective principals become and remain effective through professional

development and continued renewal by sharing best practices. Stanford University's

School of Education conducted a nationwide study of the pre and post in-service

professional development of school principals. Their findings indicated that "the best

principals attended professional development seminars and founded a support network"

(LaPointe & Davis, 2006, p. 8). Although the data findings in this study do not directly

address the use of professionally developing the principals themselves for more

effectiveness, the research findings do suggest that principals understand the importance

of developing their teaching staff.

To explore this in the sample of urban schools in need of improvement, the data

indicate that the principals ensure that the in-service activities attended by staff are

consistent with the school's goals and that they set time aside at faculty meetings and

grade level meetings for teachers to share ideas and turn-key information from these

activities for the most appropriate way of delivery. There were mixed results with

respect to whether in-service activities planned at the district were considered to be seen as a positive or a negative result for the school's alignment to goals and objectives. For professional development of principals, research indicates effective principals participate in various types of professional development, including observing their peers, networking, mentoring, and attending conferences (Drago-Severson, 2004; Fink & Resnick, 2001, LaPointe & Davis, 2006).

Suggestions for Additional Research

In the 21st century, the accountability measures and expectations for school administrators continue to increase. It is suggested that future studies address the following recommendations from the examination of articulated leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature for understanding the characteristics of high performing principals:

1. This study was conducted in urban districts formerly known as Abbot Districts. It would be interesting to administer the same leadership profile questionnaire to principals in suburban or rural school districts as well as those in other district factor groups to determine if the results would be the same. Another study could also compare leadership behaviors of newer principals with those of experienced veteran principals.

2. A mixed-methods study of principals' perceptions of effective leadership characteristics, the teacher's perception of the principal's leadership effectiveness, and the perceived impact the principal's leadership has on the staff would provide additional data for understanding leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature for understanding the characteristics

of high performing principals. Interviews of both teachers and principal would show whether the perceptions and logic stemming from the principal's behaviors in the three dimensions of instructional leadership--Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985)--are perceived the same by both the principal and the teachers.

3. To better understand the leadership practices of principals in relationship to the literature for understanding the characteristics of high performing principals, a study could utilize quantitative measures to compare small schools with large schools or urban with rural and suburban. From another perspective, the study could be conducted by comparing subgroup performance in like schools. Comparisons such as these could use t-tests or ANOVA procedures. From the qualitative standpoint, the researcher suggests it could be productive to organize the principals into focus groups to discuss their schools and leadership practices as opposed to one-on-one interviews.

4. Replication of this study using a different measure for effective leadership characteristics to determine if any other leadership characteristics or behaviors of principals on school climate and student achievement are more conclusive could be beneficial in contributing to the literature.

5. To better understand the impact of leadership characteristics on school culture and student achievement of urban schools in need of improvement, a more comprehensive, longitudinal study, with a larger sample population could be a study for further examination. From a leadership perspective, the

professional maturity level of school staff and the principal might be explored

qualitatively. Does leadership really transform a school or does it just improve

and structurally organize the school culture, thus yielding a climate conducive

to teaching and learning? How does leadership training and professional

development impact the effectiveness of principals and their capacity to lead

and manage? Does the principal that models lifelong learning thereby increase

his or her own capacity for leadership effectiveness?

The principal's role in student achievement remains the ultimate challenge for

school improvement and reform. As the definition of effective leadership continues to

evolve throughout the 21st century, the topic of school leadership in this evolving face of

education and the American school system continues to provide fertile ground for

continued educational research and contributions to the literature

Conclusion

This study was designed to examine leadership practices of principals in

relationship to the literature for understanding the characteristics of high performing

principals. School communities and educational leaders continue to demand more

accountability from principals as instructional leaders because of the decline in student

achievement as measured by states' standardized achievement tests. In today's 21st

century schools, the standards of higher accountability for schools to demonstrate student

achievement have become increasingly reliant on leadership to shape productive futures

through professional development, monitoring of students and positive school climate.

The researcher conducted this study with the intent of supporting school districts

in training and developing principals to become effective instructional leaders and

positive change agents in their schools. The supporting research of principal leadership effects clearly identified that the effects of principal instructional leadership are indirect (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). The PIMRS tool has also proven to be a reliable means of collecting data on principal instructional leadership for the elementary level; however, teacher perceptions continue to constitute the preferred source of data on the principal's instructional leadership for both research and evaluation purposes.

The data in this study clearly indicate that principals, who are constantly weighed down with the pressure of accountability-driven, high-stakes testing environments, are committed to doing whatever it takes to meet the needs of their ever-increasing job demands for demonstrating progress under NCLB. From the results of the study, the researcher can conclude that leadership characteristics have an indirect effect on transforming the school climate and student achievement. Furthermore, the researcher cannot say with confidence that there is a direct relationship of student achievement and effective leadership. Researchers studying this issue will need to use more creative and robust designs in order to further the literature findings for making an alignment of the school in need of improvement AYP status to the characteristics of the principal as effective or ineffective.

For this researcher, the study created an additional thought-provoking question: Are student achievement and test scores the only indicators that a school has truly been transformed for the better? Further additional study would need to be conducted with different populations and different methodologies before any reliable conclusions could be drawn as to what it actually looks like to "truly transform" a school as a result of effective leadership behaviors.

Finally, this researcher "walks the walk and talks the talk of the principal grind" on a daily basis during the school year. At the end of the day, the goal and mission must always be about the students. Sergiovanni (1984) considered leadership to be less about managing and more about norms, beliefs, and principles. It is important for leaders to have alignment between their intentions and actions. In other words, leaders must show integrity by "walking that talk," which relates to an alignment between what one does and what one says.

As a leader in these times of high accountability, it behooves individuals to use the experiences of daily life to grow personally and professionally (Houston & Sokolow, 2006). Every time a life lesson is learned, life will create a new one in a never-ending cycle. Nevertheless, a leader has to decide how to evaluate whatever comes his or her way. It can be seen as an opportunity to grow and learn or just as another problem on this swinging pendulum called education. This view on life does not mean that the problem is not frustrating, perplexing, or stressful. It simply means that there is a way to view or frame one's experiences as opportunities for growth as a professional.

As America moves forward, all the stakeholders in education must understand that the restructuring and transformation of schools as a leader requires behaving in a different way or making a change in order to effectively bring about a desired result. The researcher posits that it is necessary to consider that perhaps the demand for school reform is happening as a result of a message from the universe to grow and pose the question, "Is there something internal that needs to change?" It is important to realize that a leader is a participant and an observer in his or her life in order for the leader to gain a better perspective.

The researcher posits that in order to be successful in this global economy, the quest for the creation of the most effective schools, the most effective principals, and most effective education for our students must be at the forefront of importance in our world today. It truly does take a village to successfully educate a child, improve our schools, and prepare our students for college and 21st century career readiness. Everyone must turn his or her attention to improving our schools, and not just the ones that are failing, but *all* schools must have at their core an infusion of the substance of rigorous teaching and learning to transform the culture that makes student growth and achievement possible.

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Appendix A

Letter to Subjects in the Study

February 1, 2012

Dear Principal:

I am actively involved in a doctoral study for the Executive Ed.D. Program at Seton Hall University, in South Orange, New Jersey. The research for my study is scheduled to commence in winter 2012-2013 and the purpose of this study is to examine leadership characteristics and its impact on transforming school culture and student achievement for urban schools in need of improvement. The intent of the study is to support school districts in training and developing principals to become effective instructional leaders and positive change agents in their schools in this era of high accountability measures.

As a current elementary principal, I realize that your time is valuable. But I would greatly your assistance in this study by participating in a face-to-face interview as the principal of a select elementary school within your district. To accomplish this task I will utilize questions formulated from the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) to determine the degree to which principals serve as instructional managers. It will also be necessary to access NJASK standardized test data that will be acquired through the NJ State Report Card of each participating school within the district.

Following your requested approval for participation I will forward you a set of the interview questions for your review prior to the session. The interview process will be approximately 30 minutes in duration and your answers will be recorded on a listening device for transcription purposes. The school and interview answers will be coded to protect your anonymity. The data will be analyzed using the NVivo software to identify trends or correlations in the research findings. The data will be securely stored on a flash drive held in my possession at home and locked in a cabinet to ensure safety and security.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. Your response will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Further, your response will not be used to identify individual principals or schools in the results of the study. Every precaution will be taken to maintain the confidentiality of your response; however, there is always a minimal risk that the confidentiality of the data could be compromised due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the investigator. My handling of your data will be consistent with the standards in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects (Federal Register, 1991) and the Ethical

Principles in the Conduct of Research with Human Participants (APA, 1982). Data will be analyzed within the context of available data obtained from your school profile on the New Jersey Department of Education website, http://www.state.nj.us/education/. The end product will protect your confidentiality. Only the principal investigator will have access to the codes that match interview responses to data.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research study please do not hesitate to contact me at _____or via e-mail at _____. Attached to this letter is a reply form, which asks if you would agree to participate in the interview. Please return the completed reply form by_____. Your return will signify that you have read the information above and any question you may have has been answered to your satisfaction.

If you would like to receive a copy of my findings, please provide your e-mail address on the reply form. I will telephone you to arrange an appointment for the interview at your convenience and will make every effort to take a minimum amount of your precious time. Thank you for your assistance and attention to this matter and I look forward to your anticipated participation.

Sincerely,

Janet R. Grooms

Appendix B

Approval from IRB to Conduct Research

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION OR RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

<u>All material must be typed.</u>

PROJECT TITLE: <u>A STUDY OF LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS AND ITS IMPACT ON</u>

<u>TRANSFORMING SCHOOL CULTURE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR URBAN SCHOOLS IN NEED</u>

<u>OF IMPROVEMENT.</u>

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

In making **this application**, I(we) certify that I(we) have read and understand the University's policies and procedures governing research, development, and related activities involving human subjects. I (we) shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies. I(we) further acknowledge my(our) obligation to (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally-approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations, and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the subjects to the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079.

_____   1/8/13
Janet R. Grooms - RESEARCHER(S) OR PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)   DATE

**Please print or type out names of all researchers below signature.
Use separate sheet of paper, if necessary.**

My signature indicates that I have reviewed the attached materials and consider them to meet IRB standards.

_____   1/16/13
Dr. Daniel Gutmore, RESEARCHER'S ADVISOR   DATE

Please print or type out name below signature

The request for approval submitted by the above researcher(s) was considered by the IRB for Research Involving Human Subjects Research at the ᵢₓ ℱₑᵦ 2013 meeting.

The application was approved ✓ not approved ___ by the Committee. Special conditions were _____ were not ✓ set by the IRB. (Any special conditions are described on the reverse side.)

_____   2/27/13
DIRECTOR,   DATE
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Appendix C:

PIMRS Permission Letter

Dr. Philip Hallinger
Sarasota, FL 34243
hallinger@gmail.com

December 1, 2012
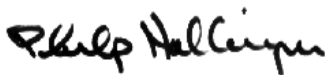
Dear Janet:

As copyright holder and publisher, you have my permission as publisher to use the *Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale* (*PIMRS*) in your research study. In using the scale, you may make unlimited copies of any of the three forms of the PIMRS.

Please note the following conditions of use:

1. This authorization extends only to the use of the PIMRS for research purposes, not for general school district use of the instrument for evaluation or staff development purposes;

2. *The user must include a reliability analysis in the study if suitable quantitative data has been collected;*

3. The user agrees to send a soft copy of the *completed study* to the publisher upon completion of the research.

4. The user agrees to send a soft copy of the *data set* and coding instructions to the publisher upon completion of the research in order to enable further instrument development.

5. The user has permission to adapt items as necessary for the research.
Please be advised that a separate *permission to publish* letter will be sent after the publisher receives a soft copy of the completed study and I have confirmed that you included a reliability analysis.

Sincerely,

Philip Hallinger

Professor Philip Hallinger

Appendix D:

Reply Form

A STUDY OF LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS AND ITS IMPACT ON

TRANSFORMING SCHOOL CULTURE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

FOR URBAN SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

Reply Form

Please complete the following:

_____ I agree to participate

Name: _____

School: _____

District: _____

Phone Number:

Home_____ Work _____ Cell _____

Email_____

Best Time of Day to be contacted: _____

_____I would like to receive a copy of the findings upon completion of the

study.

Please complete and e>mail back to: _____

Appendix E:

Consent Form

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent

The following information is provided in the doctoral research study conducted by Janet R. Grooms. The researcher is affiliated with Seton Hall University as a doctoral student in the Executive Ed.D. Program.

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine leadership characteristics and its impact on transforming school culture and student achievement for urban schools in need of improvement.

Procedures:
Participants will participate in an interview regarding principal leadership characteristics of approximately thirty minutes to one hour. The interview portion will be audio-recorded for transcription and content analysis of the responses by the researcher herself.

Instruments:
The interviews will be conducted with an adapted questionnaire version of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). It will consist of twenty behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behavior in terms of a profile of leadership over the past school year. A sample question will consist of the following: How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Voluntary Nature:
Participation in this study is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. You can refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

Anonymity:
There is no anonymity because face to face interviews with the researcher will be conducted but no names of the principal, school or district will be used.

Confidentiality
Every precaution will be taken to maintain the confidentiality of the subjects' responses. The interview answers will be coded for data analysis and responses will not be used to identify individual principals or schools names in the results of the study. The data will be securely stored on a flash drive USB memory key held in the researcher's possession at home and locked in a cabinet to ensure safety and security. Only the principal investigator and the dissertation committee will have access to the codes that match the survey to data. The data will be analyzed using the NVivo software to identify trends or correlations in the research findings and will consist of content analysis by themes. Following the completion of the study the USB memory key shall be kept on file in a

locked cabinet for a minimum of at least 3 years after project completion. The principal investigator shall be the only person with the key to the file cabinet.

Risks or Discomforts
There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study.

Benefits:
The benefit of this study will be the potential to support school districts in training and developing Principals to become effective instructional leaders and positive change agents in their schools.

Contact Information:
Any questions concerning this research or participation in the study may be directed to the researcher, Janet R. Grooms at janet.grooms@verizon.net or to the researcher's mentor, Dr. Daniel Gutmore at daniel.gutmore@shu.edu. Questions about your rights as a research participant may be directed to Dr. Mary Ruzicka, Director in the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board of Human Subjects Research at (973) 313-6314 or email irb@shu.edu.

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   **Date**

I hereby give consent to audio recording my interview.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   **Date**

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

FEB 27 2013

Approval Date

Expiration Date
FEB 27 2014

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THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

A. District Name: _____
B. Your School's Name: _____
C. Principal's Name: _____

D. How many years have you been principal at this school?

E. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.
2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?
4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5.   Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

6.   What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7.   Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?
8.   How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9.   How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)
10.   What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11.   What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)
12.   What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13.   Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?
14.   How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15.   Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or
memo's?
16.   Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing
memos for their personnel files?

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff
     are consistent with the school's goals?
18.   Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or
information
from in-service activities?

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an
honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

20.   Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of
student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Transcripts of Principal Interviews

**THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

F. Code Name: _____BP1_____

    A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

    I'm in my fifth year.

    B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

    At the end of this school year I will be a Principal for seven years.

XI. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

17. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

    Ok, so yes I have in fact, uh, we've been working on the school wide goals for a period of 4 years now and it's in 5 areas. And the 5 areas are learning - academic learning, professional development, human resources as it relates to retaining good staff, school safety and family involvement. And so those are the 5 areas and each year we look at what we've done last year, the plans that we made and then how we can improve or finish up or add to what we did the previous year.

18. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

    Absolutely, the umm, not only the school goals but even when it comes to teachers using data to drive their instruction. So what we do is we have instructional focus calendars. And so every month we look at what we've done in particular areas and where the need is and by grade level we then develop what the instructional focus is going to be for that grade level. And then in June we look at all the areas that we've focused on that year and then we look at our NJASK scores and decide what is the instructional focus need to be

for the school and then we have the school instructional focus and then the grade level instructional focus and then the teacher also has her instructional focus.

XII.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

19. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Usually we do this on back to school night. When the uh, parents and sometimes we get community members as well and when we are opening up and setting out our plan for the school year we also have a presentation of what we accomplished last year and then what our goals are for the next year so that usually happens on back to school night.

20. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Well, we need some work in that area. We used to have a marquee but unfortunately our marquee got destroyed by hurricane Sandy. We're umm definitely working on getting a new marquee but in terms of constantly promoting the academic school goals from and instructional stand point. When I'm doing my agendas for the staff meetings, everything that we do I align it to the school goals. So if you look through my agendas you will see whatever we're doing for that particular staff meeting. If we're looking at having a professional development then you'll see its goal #2. If we're doing something around school safety then you'll see that it's goal #3, #4. So I do that from the standpoint of agendas but really in terms of posters and bulletin boards we probably need to do a better job of that area.

XIII.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

21. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

So when I think about informal observations, I'm constantly doing that. I walk um around the school either with my IPAD or I have a daily book that I carry with me. And so, when I'm popping into classrooms regularly I'm looking to see what the teachers are doing. Are they connecting what they're doing to their lesson plans? Usually, Lesson plans are asked to be out visible on the desk so a lot of times I'll walk in the classroom and I'll see what they're doing and then I'll look at the lesson plan and I'll see whether they're on track. And like it says, sometimes I give written feedback and sometimes I just, well you

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know I was in your classroom today and I noticed that um there was a student who was using a calendar and he was using a calendar and he was on one particular activity and the rest of the class was doing something else. Can you explain that to me? So sometimes it's informal and then if it's something that I see repetitively, every time when I'm going into that classroom then I may mention it and then if I continue to see it then I might informally write it up.

22. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Well, umm in the Charlotte Danielson, ah, model that we use for evaluation, there's a self assessment form that I have the teachers use regardless of whether they're tenured or non tenured because we're always working on improvement. So I have them write that out for their own learning. And then when they come to the conference, we talk about some things that they may have written down. I don't take a copy of because I always let them know it's for your professional development. But it stimulates our conversation so that's the, that usually happens in the pre-conference. In the post conference, depending on what I've observed during the lesson, we will talk about it, and talk about strategies. And then I will indicate in the administrative comments on the tool that we use these strategies that we talked about for improvement and then we have a professional development plan. We may need to review the professional development plan that we did in June to include those things that they may be, that they may need to work on.

XIV. COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

23. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Yes, well like we talked about earlier in terms of looking at the NJASK scores to decide our instructional focus and also to focus for lesson plans and also for our intervention groups. Umm, we have, Aahh, probably……3 intervention specialists in the building. This is the 1st year. We have um 2 for math, one for grades K thru 2. And then…no….yes, grades K-2. And then we have one for grade 5 and 6. And so the data that came back for the 5 and 6, we use the NJASK scores to look at who should be in the intervention groups. For grades K-5 they actually took an assessment and based on those assessments we got the results. And then the intervention groups are planned from those results. And then teachers are constantly doing, um, data chats after assessments that they may be giving in the classrooms so their groupings are flexible. Like one week they may be teaching geometry. And there may be 4 students that really need work in that area so they'll pull those 4 students. And then the next week they may be focusing on ratios. So then she'll pull a group and then the intervention specialist will come in and support those intervention groups.

24. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Well, it's very easy in my school because my, especially with the NJ, um, the common core standards. Because now everyone's looking and scrambling for what can I use to teach these standards? So my teachers have been very proactive and they've been finding um materials and been bringing them to me in our, we have professional learning communities. And so we'll discuss them at the professional learning communities or I may see a website or somebody may share a website with me and then I'll blast it to the staff for them to take a look at that. So there's been a lot of sharing this year more so then ever because everyone has the same need, extra supplemental resources to teach the common core.

XV.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

25. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Umm, we do that in the beginning of the school year that's probably in our professional development when we come together, that's probably the first thing we talk about, either at the professional development or the first um, professional learning community as a staff in the beginning of the school year. We look at our um, results and we um, analyze them and then we kinda compare what we've done over maybe a 3 year period. Now, do I do this in written form for every individual teacher? No, teachers definitely know what their scores are and they get all of the data. Um, I may put a cover memo on it but it's not something that I'm consciously, oh I have to do this memo to connect it to the data because we're always talking about data. It's so much so that it's a part of our practice so that it would be kind of um, kind of strange for me to be thinking about oh I gotta do a memo for data. Because I would be doing memos all the time, because everything we do is based on data.

26. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

We uh have what we call data chats. Now the data chats inform the students of their individual progress and then every um, morning we have morning meeting where the whole school gets together and we start off the day together. But because I'm K to 8 it's broken up into two groups. We do um, K-4 in the cafetorium and we do 5-8 in the gym. And so uh, in the beginning of the school year we're always celebrating. And even if you'll notice we have all of the pictures up of the students who uh form and score advanced proficient on particular areas, math, science and literacy. Whatever they performed advance proficient on. We highlight them in the assembly program and we let the school know including students and staff what we did as a school.

XVI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

27. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities).

Well the morning meeting helps because we're all together so we don't have to get on the intercom. Once we leave the morning meeting everybody's ready and starting work so we limit the use of the intercom unless it is an emergency. Now there are times when a teacher's phone may not be working, because all the teachers have phones in their classrooms. So if we really need to get to one teacher you don't have to do a blast. If the phone's not working and there's no one to go to the classroom then we may get on the intercom for that. But the intercom usually is used twice a day. And the twice a day is in the morning, in mid-morning right before lunch starts if there is any um take home paraphernalia that we've received from central office that has to go home today. We'll say pardon the interruption, and we'll ask teachers to send down a monitor and then in the afternoon about 2:25 the bell rings at 2:35 we do after school announcements. Other than that we try to minimize the disruption of the instructional time.

28. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

None. None. We don't have um, late detention. We don't have, because, well first of all the morning meeting helps in terms of kids being um late. And since they started free breakfast for everyone, our lateness are the chronic people so for the chronic people we have a process because the process is built into the district attendance policy. So therefore we don't have to worry about a process of doing the attendance and doing the um the late passes because that process rolls very fluid.

XVII. MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

29. Do you take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Umm, do I take; let me, would you repeat that question again? Oh, yes I do try not to talk to the teachers on their lunch time because I know they only get that they only get that 40 minutes and I'm really particular about that. Um, and it may be flipped the other way around, do teachers talk to me, because usually everybody is trying to get to me and I have this saying, well you know we can talk if you're willing to walk and talk because I need to keep moving, um, and if a teacher has said to me well I need to talk to you, I'll just tell them to send me a email and if I see them in the hallway I may say I got that email from you is it something that you wanted to say? Teachers are always talking to me and sometimes if they ask me something where a decision has to be made, I'll say to them, that's not a hallway decision, so just shoot me an email and then we'll follow up. I do a lot of communication by email and texting all the time.

30. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Well, when the season comes for basketball um, I try to go to almost every game. I may have missed 1 or 2 but I'm always at the games and talking to uh both the cheerleading and basketball teams and then when their practicing I'll go down just so that they can see that I'm interested in some of the things that they'll doing. We used to have a chess club;

we don't have a chess club this year because the teacher who ran it left. But doing the chest club we had afterschool activities and I would pop in to see that. We have our 21st century program and I'm always going down to just to see the kinds informally or when they're leaving or when I know the parents are coming to pick them up. I'm a very visible Principal. I spend more time out there then I do in my office. And usually I spend more time in my office when it's quiet and everyone's gone and they're gone home and I'm in my office late at night. But I do try to keep myself visible and let students know that I'm very, very interested in what they're doing.

XVIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

31. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

Well, I know I need to do a better job on the memo piece of that, and this is the 2nd time I've said that so that's something I'm going to make a note of for this reflection for this interview. In terms of highlighting teachers um, I have a system that I actually use to kind of better than me always highlighting them and we call it sharing best practices. And so when I see something that a teacher is doing really great or she's had really great results, I ask her would you be willing to share that with the staff. And so in our Monday PLC's which is the regular Monday meeting which we try to make as much around professional development it's really more teacher driven then principal driven because I always try to, if they're not promoting something that they've done, then there may be something that I want to present to staff, but I'll ask a teacher how would you like to facilitate this? How would you like facilitate that? And then they, it's more receptive because you know they're more comfortable when they're interacting with their colleagues, just like students are more comfortable when they're interacting with each other. And by doing that people really get to see what other people are doing in their classrooms and then the other thing we have what we call a gallery walk. And so it's something I see that a lot of people are doing really great and I'll say why don't you bring those to the staff meeting? And then they'll bring them and then we'll put them out on the table, the artifacts and people can walk around and see them

32. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

No, but I need to do that, especially this um, there's this one teacher she started in 3rd grade when I first came to the school. And uh she gave me a hard time about the 3rd grade. She had never taught the 3rd grade, a veteran teacher and I said you're going to be really good at it. The last three years her test scores have really just gone up every year so I really need to put that in writing. So I need to do a better job of this writing.

XIX. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff

are consistent with the school's goals?

Well a lot of times its because I focus on what it is that the teachers need that's going to impact what they're doing in the classroom that should be connected to the school goals. And so just for an example we have a half day professional development day that's coming up on next Monday. And I just talked to the staff about this today. And was talking about the various things that we needed to do from a building perspective and everybody's doing something different but it's all related to a particular area that they have an interest in. And when they have an interest in it the chances are they are going to do it even more so. So I really try to do it based on need and when if the teachers need it then that means it's going to impact the student performance and the overall school goals.

19. Is there time set aside time at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Right well we kinda spoke on that in terms of um, using best practices, sharing best practices but the other piece to that is that we ah have some teachers who go out to district workshops and they need to bring back information and we call that turn keying. The professional development that they may have received elsewhere and we use the professional learning community and we use staff meetings to do that as well.

XX.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

20. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Yes, we do um honor roll every marking period. And we ah, not only do they get the awards but we have little pens that they um get when they make honor roll. And then this year, last year I started having an honor roll luncheon so the kids now are looking forward to being on honor roll so that they can get to come to the honor roll luncheon because the food thing works, it just works.

21. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Hmm, well my teachers, they, I know that they do this. Well, how do I support the teachers actively? Well, I think I support the teachers when I do something that their class is going to be rewarded for or students in their class are going to be rewarded for. That it might be a school wide something, Uh let me give an example. This morning we have a parent workshop that's coming up on January 12th, this Saturday. And so when I was first reminding, well actually I asked the students who can tell me what's going to happen on January 14 because we have half a day? And then one of the students got up and said parent workshop. And then I said oh, that's Saturday, but I'm glad you mentioned that because I was going to bring that up. So in the conversation I said to them, so the class that has the most turn out on the 12th will get a pizza party. And then I said you know what, no, let's take

that back, if you come, and I told them to tell their parents that there was going to be childcare, so if you come you don't have to worry about a baby sitter and you don't have to worry about childcare. Every child that comes with their parent on Saturday gets invited to a pizza party. Oh my goodness! See now everybody is going to get a reward that comes as opposed to if six people out of a class comes but the rest of the class comes and 12 out of another class than those 6 people wouldn't get. So I think that I actively would support teachers when I do something that the students can benefit from even if it's a school wide. And then of course if the teachers tell me something that they would need then if I can get it for them, I will so I think I actively support them in that way. But I'll look more closely um, as I move forward. That and the writing piece, the memos. See I'm not, I like writing but you know you gotta be still when you're writing and I'm always moving so I gotta do better with that. And I like the Principal's newsletter. I should probably do that. I should probably do that to in year six. That would be my goal for next year.

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: ___FP2_____

    A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

Umm, starting my 2nd year here at (blank) School

    B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

At the end of this school year, I would have been an, an Administrator for ah, eight years. A principal for seven.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

    I have not developed a focused set of annual school wide goals because our um goals change, uh yearly based upon the data so we don't have a set goal as per um student performance per say, but we do have an overall mission to improve student performance, if that makes any sense.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

    It is very important to use data because data informs um my teachers of how to proceed with their practice. And ah, data lets me know as the administrator, ah, what is actually taking place in the classroom, ah, through, ah, student performance.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Well, the school's mission is that what you asked? The school's mission is communicated, ah, subliminally through, ah, communications that are sent home through any communications that go home through the telephone service or anything communicated from school. We put our, you know, one of our school mantras where we're positive, productive and proud. For staff it's a little different, it's a little more direct, umm, you know when talking about the objectives that we want to accomplish on a yearly, monthly, quarterly basis. It's a direct target that, ah, we look to hit and that information comes from me directly and ah, is usually a numerical value.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Well, ah, part of our mission, or maybe part of my mission as a administrator/facilitator is I like to celebrate academic success. So, ah, that is reflected in almost anything that we do. Anything that we do as a school we try to tie it in to some part of, um, academic achievement which is as a school what we would like to improve. Ah, so case in point, ah, a behavior modifications programs and umm, student of the month boards, awards assemblies, ah, competition between classes, I mean everything that we try to do, ah, we try to relay it back to academics and the importance of academics and the importance of achieving, um, you know high academic expectations and standards.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Well, as a rule every morning after the morning announcements I make a sweep of the building. Ah, first as a security measure and secondly to visually take the temperature of the school, to look into the classrooms and see what's going on. Um, and then systematically, I try to spend a little more time in the different grade levels on a weekly basis. So one week I might spend a little more time in the kindergarten classes, the next week it might be the 5th grade classes. The next week the 4th grade classes so throughout the month I like to spend a little more time during my walk throughs in the morning, usually in the morning, um, to see what's going on in the classrooms throughout the building. To get a feel for instruction, the classroom environments, ah, how the children are actually, you know, ah, performing in the classroom and do they seem engaged. What type of student work is up, what type of student work is up in the hallways, so umm, those in my opinion count as my informal, um, observations. Umm, as far as feedback is

concerned I try to accentuate the positive as much as possible. If there's something that I have a concern with, then I invite the teacher in at a later time to discuss it very informally. Nothing written um, because I feel as a you know instructional leader, ah my purpose is to try and facilitate growth and improvement amongst teachers.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Well, in post observation feedback that's where it's very formalized as far as where I'm concerned and suggestions for improvement are noted on the evaluation document itself. And ah, it's followed up by conversations with myself and the teacher and um, usually followed by some sort of, um, plan for improvement, um, be it simple or more complex depending on the area of concern and it might even also, um, include, um, a suggestion for PD in a particular area.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Yes and no. Ah, school wide testing this being a K-5 school, um, I will say yes because we do look at, um, the district interim assessments as a means of providing feedback for what's going on in the classroom. But to look at let's say the 5th grade, ah, scores to make decisions for the whole school I don't think is appropriate. I don't know if I understand the question correctly, but um, the data is usually ah, more specific to grade levels and um, sometimes curricular decisions are made based on that information.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

I don't participate, ah, as much as I probably would like to. Overall, curriculum is decided at the district level. Um, as far as the school is concerned, um, suggestions are made after having feedback with teachers during their grade level meetings about maybe ways that you know ways that we can achieve our objectives, but um, instructional objectives. But for curriculum as a general that's usually made at a district level. It's usually a district level decision.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Ah, I don't do memo's or newsletters, as soon as the information is made available to me depending on what type of information, um, grade level information, grade level student data is sent to the teachers via email. Um, standardized assessments, um, those are usually presented to staff, um, at the beginning of the next year. Because we usually

receive that information in the summer time and then all that information, all grade levels are presented, um, for the staff to review and, um, you know help with our planning for the upcoming year. And then individual grade levels are disseminated to the teachers, um, where they can plan for instruction for that upcoming year as well.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

Well, informing student's of the school's academic progress is not as specific as maybe, um, informing parents or staff. Ah, with students it's just a matter of providing them with a sense of ah, urgency as far as areas that we need help in. For example our school particularly, um, we need help in literacy. We need increased performance in literacy, so a statement as general as that might be shared with the students, ah, at the beginning of the year. Welcome back conference or assembly. I didn't mean conference, I met assembly and um, letting the students know that you know we need to increase our performance in literacy and the teacher is gonna provide you with strategies around literacy. And When I come into the classrooms I want to see you guys writing and creating, so a more less formalized message is passed, but the message is passed and reinforced school wide.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Well, that's exactly what we do, um, after the morning announcements, um, unless there is a drill being called, or um, an emergency situation concerning a student, for the most part there aren't any PA announcements until the afternoon announcements. We um, as a school, um, we limit the amount of students that are sent to the office for any reason outside of ah, the student being injured or they're referred to the nurse. Um, the discipline I encourage the teachers to deal with discipline in their classrooms, um, unless it's a situation that I need to be involved in. So the whole idea is that the students, we try to maximize the best use of time that we have with the students in the building. So you won't see students in the hallway, students that are messing around. Students are in their classroom receiving instruction unless they're passing between classes or something of that nature.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

Well, as a district we have a truancy action plan, so there's a specific script, um, as to what needs to be done for student's beginning with ah, being tardy 3 days or being absent 3 days. Letters are sent home, um, phone calls are made and even after, um , a certain amount of days, ah, our district has gone so far as to take parents to court so we have a no nonsense policy concerning attendance and truancy.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

    As much as I can, yes I do. I think that's where, ah, I get a chance to meet students when they're relaxed. I can get a true sense of who they are. Um, I think the more students see me in these areas and come and talk with me, the more they'll be willing to see me and talk with me. Um, same thing with staff you know, ah, a lot of, my conversations with staff, a lot of way I find out about information is just being casual and one of my favorite sayings is let's walk and talk. Um, so yeah, that's, it's an effective way of feeling the pulse of the school, doing things like that.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

    As often as I can, I mean any event that's happening at night, um, shows or any type of programs that involves my students I am here, say for a family emergency. We currently have a school basketball team so if I am not called elsewhere I try to attend those activities as well. I think it's more important for my students to see that I support them.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

    Umm, no, not particularly, um, I do reinforce, um, I do identify and celebrate teachers whose classes have done well on particular instances or standardized tests. But, um, I haven't formalized it as far as putting it into a newsletter or anything of that nature.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

    Ah, I haven't gotten into the habit of doing that, I can't say that I have. I always acknowledge ah, teachers, students, staff, faculty verbally as often as possible. But I can't honestly say I put commendations in staff personnel files. But, I do commend staff as part of their evaluation. Um, there's a section in our evaluation tool that talks about professional responsibilities and staff that go above and beyond, it is noted on their evaluation tool.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Well in-service, ah, well the in-services and PD professional development that I control are usually arisen from some sort of need, which means that we have done some sort of assessment to determine that need. Ah, district wide which provides probably more of the PD that I do as an administrator, ah, that comes from an overall district need. Ah, and this is driven by student data.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Well, the way our staff meetings are held, um, there are certain issues where I do open it up to staff to offer their suggestions and um, I think we're at a point where staff feels comfortable um, offering suggestions. Say for instance just this last staff meeting one of our newer teachers posed a question about how to organize ah, some data concerning literacy, how to organize some student data. Two or three teachers took time to explain what they did or what they do to organize their student data and the staff member, the teacher found it very helpful. So we have that type of encouraging, um, community I think, of educators that are willing to support and share, um, their best practices with each other. Um, I think for the overall benefit of the school.

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Absolutely! Absolutely! Honor roll, ah, we have honor roll. Next marking period I'm going to change the high honor roll to Principal's honor roll. I want that for all A's because I'm going to try to step it up a notch, but we definitely do, we definitely do. Honor roll, high honor roll and we even have a student of the month board which usually celebrates those, it may not be their grades that got them there, it may be their high character. So um, I try to find as many ways as possible to reward students individually, as classes, um, however I can, however I can so that they feel you know, um, they feel worthy, they feel um, accepted, they feel valued.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Ah, well anytime a teacher wants to plan some sort of reward celebration or wants to provide some type of incentive or provide some type of award as a reward, they just have to bring it to my attention. I support it wholeheartedly 100%. You know it's good to be recognized for your accomplishments, so ah, anything that is positive and for the benefit of kids I support.

THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: _____AP3

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

This is my second year in my current term as Principal of this school. Previously I was a Principal here for; I believe 4 years prior to that.

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Since 2004, August 2004 so that would make it ah, about nine or ten years.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

   Yes, um, the primary goal is to close the achievement gap which is a broad goal, um, and to do that we established that we need to understand the common core, implement New Jersey's model curriculum, develop literacy competencies focusing on reading and to ah, fill in the background and get our students to become ah, math fluent and math proficient.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

   Ah, absolutely, ah otherwise you're picking things that feel good. We actually looked at our NJASK data and established, that the areas which we were deficient pretty much across the board except for Science, were Reading and Literacy and Mathematics and we looked more closely at Literacy goals and realized that our kids are struggling readers; the writing skills are not great. But they can be developed but they still don't have the basic competencies attached to reading, particularly reading comprehension, so we've been focusing on reading comprehension strategies, you know in terms of our explicit

instruction, um, looking at things like non-fiction text to really develop the schema in the background so they can again become really proficient.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

> Well, first it starts by really getting the stakeholders at the table and coming up on an agreed set of values. We did that this year and revisited our vision statement and we tried this year to take out the items and the statements that were not concrete and not measureable. So we tried to reduce our vision statement to measureable things that had some level of tangibility about them so that we can say that when doing activities or pursue professional development is it aligned to our vision, and then can it be measured in some way to see if in fact if we're meeting our goal. So it begins with getting all the stakeholder involved and then getting a buy in and then getting a shared understanding of what the vision statements are.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

> Through discussion at one of our staff meetings to visit the, ah, our vision statement and that was where we developed the shared understanding of what we came up with as a final product. Ah, we have a poster size display we keep in the hallway and we use it and we put it kinda as a banner at the bottom footer on what do you call it, ah, all our letterhead. So that's the way we communicate it, there's more we can do in that area but that's what we do for now.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

> Well, let me be honest and say I don't have a process because that would involve following something pretty regimented. I think I look at when I have time in my schedule and I will go in and pop in on classrooms and in the past I would try to visit each classroom every day. Ah, and there are times when I don't give feedback and I don't comment and I think that I'm not sure if that's a great thing to do, ah, but there are other times when I've started creating observation logs where I would go in the classroom with a specific focus so for example on Monday I would, I might be focusing on lesson plans and objectives. On Tuesday I might be focusing on classroom management. On Wednesday I might be focusing on questioning

strategies. Now my challenge has been keeping up with it as often as I should but you know I have developed processes, I haven't stuck to any one religiously.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

I like, you know to kinda set them at ease, get the focus off what the final determination was whether it was basic, proficient or outstanding. Um, so I tend to turn the observation over so that's not the focus. I try to gravitate towards what is the final ranking, uh, rating. Um, and I'll ask what they liked about the lesson, what they didn't like about the lesson and you know once I get them to talk about something that they didn't like about the lesson I use that as my intro point and segue from there into some of the observations that I've made. I generally will ask them leading questions. I'll ask for some clarity around some areas and I'll share my concerns, um, my criticisms and then I'll kinda gage my response as to how in depth I can go, are they really self reflecting or are they just being defensive or do they even get what I'm saying. Am I always being clear, I'm always checking myself to see if I even understand what I'm saying because I might know what I mean but because I didn't use the best communication in terms of word strategy and phrasing it may exceed what I'm trying to say.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Yes. I use reading level data and district benchmark assessments to develop school wide plans. I review PD hours accrued, another data resource, under specific language arts strategies to determine, make decisions and I look at classroom performance data to make decisions related to teacher assignment.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

I actually enjoy that. Um, sometimes I get a small panel of competent people that I trust that have academic acumen, um, who are tech savvy and who have the classroom experience to give me feedback. And it doesn't mean you have to have X number years of experience and I look at people who implement new strategies, who implement new techniques. Often I'll bring them into this room or the conference room and we'll try to put something on the smart board so we can all see it at the same time. Bring our lap tops and play around with the website and play around with the resource and play around with it and have a sense of it, we'll give it to one, two or three of the teachers and let them play around with it and observe them playing around with it and get their feedback. So I kinda, that's actually one of my strengths, so I do a lot of participating in that.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Ah, generally, um, the 1ˢᵗ day we come back to school, or the 1ˢᵗ full staff meeting we'll talk about and share the results of the past year. Um, and sometimes I'll actually will break it out by individual class performance, you know like Mr. X this percent of your kids passed the NJASK in literacy, um, this percentage of your kids passed the NJASK in Math, Ms. So and so who teaches special education, this percentage of your kids passed in literacy this percentage of kids passed mathematics um, and then you can look at you know I kinda like playing with the data and then looking at the mean score. But generally at that 1ˢᵗ staff meeting I'll introduce it to everyone, then you gotta move the other stuff so I'll generally bring it back one other time but then that's kinda last year's data and it becomes more of a planning moving forward process, this is what we need to progress.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

I don't think I do a really good job of informing students, I kinda in the middle school, I did more of that and I talked about, I would share for example, the honor roll data, what percentage of the kids are making honor roll. What percentage of our African America kids are making honor roll, of our 8ᵗʰ grade students are making honor roll, of our 7ᵗʰ grade students making honor roll. Here at the elementary level I really I haven't done much in sharing with the student's the school's overall performance goals.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Well, I limit phone calls from parents who calling to speak to teachers during student time. Um, I limit parents having access to teachers and conferencing with them during instructional time. Um, often in the mornings is when you'll have teachers and parents together at the same time and that's often when you try to catch up with what's going on, parents may want to walk their child into the classroom asking questions which is understandable except, the teacher then has the responsibility of getting the other kids organized. And if they started and some kids don't react well when they're day is starting off organized and it kinda won't get it back together. It sets the tone for the day so you know we try to limit that, parental interruptions. We try to do general announcements at about 2:20, 2:15, or 2:20 every day. We have our morning meeting in the morning announcements, things that are pressing the staff will check with me to make announcements so they won't make announcements without checking to make sure it's okay. Ah, we don't have an inordinate amount of announcements. Um, and when teachers want to do activities and things that are not directly aligned to the curriculum, directly aligned to instruction, cute plays and other activities and wanting to go outside, you know I kinda want to get a sense of what is the value add of doing these activities.

You know and getting back to your vision and say how much instructional time are we losing can we afford to do this activity at the expense of these kids who aren't performing. I think at the end of first things first, let's get our grades up and then we take it down.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

Well, because I'm at the elementary level now um, I kinda hold the parents responsible for that so um you know truant is an issue and you miss so many days, you miss 10 days and there's a process where you get taken to court. Ah, in the interim if you miss 5, 6, 7, 8, days and I expect the teacher to be aware of how many days the child is missing. You gotta know by grade what's going on. Um, if might involve a simple phone call to the parent, it might involve a home visit, There are times the parent might say my child is going to be sick or my child is going to be out because we're away over the year and you are aware of that. Ah, and the tardiness you gotta hold the parent responsible at the elementary level and try to just press upon them the importance of getting here on time and in addition to that the whole tardy thing with the Genesis is why we started the morning meeting. Um, I remember at one point we were locking the doors and wouldn't let anybody in out back and they had to walk all the way around the entire building and come to the front and they were quite upset but we were seeing you know 200 kids, 135 kids, 60 kids late on a daily basis and when you held them out and inconvenienced them and made them stand outside, and parents standing outside, as much as I got cursed at, fussed at, and cussed at, um, it did bring the numbers down dramatically to where we had 10 or 15 kids late in the day. Um, so we know that we have to provide a standard of being on time. And we also see this same problem during ah, evening events, concerts, and band, parents rolling in anytime they come late so we're trying to be in the habit of starting ourselves on time to set the standard and then when parents come in late we don't let them come in and take a seat we make them wait until there's a break in the performance. They get pretty upset um, about that, but we try to couch it under the idea of respect the performers, minimize the movement, keep your children in their seats and kinda like you're going to a Broadway play but not to the extreme. These things I think are helping to set a culture I think some it is that some of our parents don't know the sense of urgency that being on time to school. The parents that work for the most part know I gotta be to work on time; you need to be to school on time so I can get to work on time. Parents that don't have that are getting up and coming in pajamas and gonna lay back down and watch TV when they get home they don't have the same sense of urgency. So I think this is about acculturating our kids so that they understand the importance of being prompt because those bad habits can be hard to break.

VII. MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes, all the time on the playground, in the lunchroom and I think that helps build rapport, helps you understand a person in a different light. Generally you'll get more work out of

them and the students as well, they respond to that, they like that, they see that. We have to understand that we're in the people business. We work with personalities, we work with children, we work with adults all day. We're in the same building and those interpersonal relationships are very important so it is worth the effort to cultivate those so that you get you know better attendance, better performance, better buy in, um, and just you know I gotta work with you 8 hours a day for X number of years. That's almost like marriage so we need to get along with each other, we need to like each other, you know beyond just tolerate each other so I try to build that as well.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Because I drive a hundred miles a day and I live out of state I don't like to attend the extracurricular co-curricular activities. And I tell myself because I'm focused on the academics that's all I want to know. And I don't like to do the kissing babies, clap, clap, clap it up for children, but you know when it's expected. The PTO meetings I will show up for, um different events, evening things I'm expected to be at, um, unless it's something pressing where I really can't make it, I will show up so barring the unforeseen, barring extenuating circumstances, I'm there not always willingly, not always, oh boy can't wait, but I will show and generally have a good time. And I will try to impress upon the staff you know, I may be obligated in a sense to be here but I need to act like it's not a problem to be here. So I try to make sure it's my demeanor that doesn't show that I really want to go home I'm tired. And I encourage the staff to show up at day concerts and things of that event. When the custodians can take a minute out of the day and watch the kids perform on the stage, when the secretaries can take a minute or two, or 20 minutes or 30 minutes or a period to go watch the kids perform on stage that kinda helps the kids feel like wow, everybody, not just my teacher has to watch me because she's my teacher. They gotta sit here cause they gotta be here it's my class. These are people that don't have to be here and they're taking time out to watch so I kinda feel that's important too.

VIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

Ah, you know I try to recognize teacher's in my news and notes that I send out weekly. In commending them for different things, some teachers don't like the spotlight on them so you know you try to be a little bit careful with that so and I'm not an easy praiser so when I do praise you, you've really earned it. I know that teachers appreciate the public but just as many appreciate the private recognition or thanks. So I give them whether it's a verbal or a written or a public or whether it's kinda private I do try to. I don't always appreciate everyone enough, I might miss some things and people sometime get resentful but I think that's important. We all need validation and as a person so when I can, I try to give praise there's some people that do a good job that you do take it for granted.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

I've done that it hasn't happened a lot. I can probably count on one hand, I say maybe about four times in my career where someone has done something where I really appreciated it or they received a letter from some parent for how they helped them with their child and they really went above and beyond. I'll say I'll keep a copy of this in your file. It should happen more often than it does but I should do it more often than I do.

IX. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Oh okay, um, I take, I go to lengths to plan, co-plan and take part in the planning process for all the professional development that happens in our building. So I kinda feel like that is my interest or more along the lines of professional development more so then this whole Principal thing, I love professional development and I just look at what are the expected outcome to gain from that and how does it fit into our vision and how does it fit into our annual school goals. I make sure things map back to the school goals. So that comes pretty easy for me, it makes sense to me, and it helps keep me focused and between how to spend my resources and how to commit my time and who to bring in as a consultant and as a trainer and even when I have staff members turnkey things or deliver professional development to their peers um, sometimes I'm at the point now where the last couple of years let's sit down and before you do the training so I can see what your presenting is keeping in with what my vision was. You know we can find some common ground so that we're going to get the results that I want so I have the experience of thinking you got it and the person does the PD and it's really not what I was looking for and I didn't get what I wanted from it and you know that's kinda my fault for not getting that whole debriefing thing.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Not enough time, ah, it's an interesting time that you ask because we have what you call the comprehension tool kit and we're gonna spend the next week in our grade levels which we were able to create double period grade levels so everyone has a two period block for their grade level, Having them peer conference with each, open these tool kits and have them talk about an activity or a lesson in there, debrief, discuss it, collaborate and implement it so we want to give them really time to dig into it with their peers so I understand that's a valuable thing. So there's not enough time during the instructional day to do all that I'd like to do with that, so do we do it enough? No. Would I like to do it more often? Yes. It's just the idea of going back to competing priorities.

X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Yes, yes, in fact sometimes I've even sent a letter home like I do it every at the end of the school year after the scores come back, those kids that did really outstanding. Its generally 8 to 12 of them, I'll actually craft a letter and mail it to their home congratulating them and sharing what their scores were on the NJASK, how the parents should be proud, dot, dot, dot. So I do make it a big deal and sometimes I give them when they do come to the school I give them a reward but mainly I think that letter is personal for me, I'm writing the child's name and I'm writing their scores so that makes a personal connection for me even if I don't know the child very well, and that I do.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

I don't think I support teachers actively in that capacity other then I mean we do have our honor rolls but I don't know that I go out of the way to say here's some incentives for them and here's some things that you can do with them, here's some special trips. From time to time we'll have you know, I'll have an honor roll breakfast I'll have an honor roll dinner, but that's really more so supporting the students then the teachers so that's something I really haven't thought about it.

THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

District Code Name: ___MP4_____

How many years have you been principal at this school?

3.5 years.

At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

4 years

I.   FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

   As a priority school, um, one of the things that we have to do is put together a school improvement plan. And the pieces in our school improvement plan include our school wide goals. This is not something that we've done in my first three years here at (blank), um, is have a school wide goal that everything is tied to, unfortunately. We've had um, we had unified plans but they weren't followed through with fidelity.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

   Yes, it's very important and that's one of the things that we've done this year. Use the spring 2012 NJASK data in developing our goals for this current academic year.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Um, one of the things that we've done differently this year um, well we've done it in the last year and in prior years. But this current year we've did some smaller things like the letterhead, one of the things I have to say remember the vision. Uh also I'll say any type of purchases related to the school budget. If it's not in our school improvement plan or support the goals within that school improvement plan then it's not going to approved. Um, just making sure that I reference the school improvement plan goals for the current school year, whenever we're having conversations about different matters within the school.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Wow, that's a good discussion, um, it's in our plan, um, but we're not there yet. But some of the things that will be done in the next 30 days, we met with my school leadership team last week. And we reviewed the school improvement plan. Um, there are four different areas that we're focusing on for this current year. Um, and as we went through line by line of what the school is supposed to be doing we realized that we're already behind. And there are several reasons for that but at the end of the day one of those goals were to put up actual data um, like attendance data, from this year to last year at this point in the school year to see if we've gotten better, worse, or actually stayed the same. Also putting our school wide goals on um, we have a poster maker so making sure that that's, um, laminated and posted. If you look here I actually have my, um, volunteer today, she couldn't finish, but she posted throughout the school our vision statement along with our (blank) student pledge that our students say every day. So um, those are one of the things that we do with improvement, cause we do realize that is important, to have those things posted for parents to see as well as the different types of activities and academic supports we have in place and available to the parents.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Well, based on the parameters set in this question, I visit each room every day, however, what I've done this year is I'll bring my lap top into a classroom and I'll stay 40, 45 minutes and I'll typically send an email before I leave out I'll typically pick about 3 or 4 areas to look at and then I'll comment on all of them and send an email to the teacher. Um as far as a formal schedule, um, for informal observations I don't have that at this current time.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Its verbal and its written, um, after I complete a formal observation they're scheduled for a post conference and we'll meet, we'll talk about, um, how they felt about the particular lesson, that particular day, give them an opportunity to talk about some of the strengths and the areas that they could have probably improved in for that particular lesson. And then I will give feedback as far as what I've observed and give them suggestions as to how they possibly can improve or get increased performance as some of the um tasks or assignments or for that particular skill that was taught that day.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Most definitely, um, obviously you know I can't because we have to, one of the things we have to as a priority school is we had to adopt the model curriculum. So there is no negotiation there as to what we believe as a school, um, however we still do um utilize how the students are performing in certain areas to um, assist in identifying different resources that can help address those areas. So programs, um, other resource materials, um, and that's tied to the school budget. So in that way we do, however the actual curriculum itself, the model curriculum is what we have to follow because we are a priority school and the district actually adopted it for all the schools.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Last year I sat on the um, the mathematics textbook committee, um, however I've never sat on an actual curriculum, I've never have written curriculum before or sat in on a curriculum review committee or anything like that, so other then what we do at the school site which is very little then that's it.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Well, its two ways that we do it, one, um, we do it in a staff meeting to the whole faculty. I'll present the prior year's NJASK data and then also in the grade levels this year we did the 3, 4, 5 specifically grade levels. We looked at the students um performance records as well as map out what we were gonna do to address those. So one of the things we did for our 21st century program, our extended day, we identified those students who were in a certain range 180 – 220 so those who were right at the cusp, who passed and those that could just fall behind. We focused on those students and sent letters home to those parents saying that it was mandatory for them to be in this afterschool program. So we're

pretty consistent with that and we also found that based on or consultant in the 21st century program who ran SBSS data that those students who participated in the 21st century had significant impact on how well they did in Mathematics, not literacy. But most certainly in mathematics they did better than those who were not a part of it.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

The school overall, when you say academic progress or the individual student progress? You know whenever, you know, we had a, it was presented to parents at a parent meeting back in November, however we've never, um, informed the students as a whole on how the school is doing. It's always been individual, the teachers take the individual students reports and they meet with each student about how well they did and where they are, what to do next, they have the students sign, um, and we also at the um, the Fall parent teacher conferences when they come in, that's one of the things they review with the parents when they come in.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities).

We try to limit the announcements, um, the secretary checks with me prior to calling, making the announcements over the loud speaker. We generally only call folk over the loud speaker if we can't find them anywhere in the building, it's almost like that last call. Um, the only time we call students to the office is when a parent is here to pick them up or something of that nature so it has to be something pretty serious for us to call students out of class. And I don't have a lot, and usually if it's a disciplinary issue they're already in my office so like they're brought to my office to deal with that.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

There are none. I'm gonna be honest, there aren't any. That's one of the things that we struggle with over the years because we don't have nobody to keep them after school. And then when you keep them after school, if you talking about a kid that's in 1st grade then that's kind of tough. You know if it's like middle school where they walk home they got their own keys or the high school, that's a whole different environment. But here you know you mess around and keep a kid after school you stuck with him until 6 cause you can't get a parent to come pick him up. So that's kinda tough.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes, um, I um, every morning after announcements, sometimes before announcements but before 9 o'clock I've already made my rounds to say good morning to everyone in class. Also from 9 o'clock to 11 o'clock I have blocked out to go and visit classrooms specifically. I don't think I did a very good job this year in sticking to that. But that's something moving forward. There's a couple of students that took a lot of time, and one student in particular is now at another school, they were classified and um, based on this placement he's been placed in another school and it's been a big difference. Um, so I should be able to get back to doing that.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

I'm at 90% of all our extra co-curricular activities. Um, being an elementary school it's really not that much. You're talking about the average month anywhere from 2-4 nights out of the whole month. Whereas when I was at the high school there's always something going on, or even at the middle school. So the basketball season starts tomorrow. I'm going to miss that game; I have to do an interview here at 4:30 tomorrow. However, um, Thursday's game I'll be there. It will be a home game. So I'll go to over 90% of any of the extracurricular or co-curricular activities that are involved with the students here.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

Staff meetings, but what I have to really move towards is putting more in writing.
One of the things that I established here is the (blank) owls and I did it my 1st two years. Couldn't do it last year, it's like the academy awards. Um, and at the end of the year party, um, that we have for the staff its categories, it might be four teachers up for a particular award and they get some real nice trophies and plaques and crystal balls. Like all kinds of nice things like that. Um, I'm changing it up, we didn't do it last year, it got crazy but it's coming back this year. But I have to change it because there's certain things that certain teachers could never win. So um, we're gonna change the way we do that. But no, it's not a lot in writing. a lot of it is verbal whether it be while I'm making announcements thanking teachers for uh, a particular project we just finished as a staff. Or in a staff meetings for certain individuals so a lot of it is verbal more so then written.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

I did and I, like I said that's something I definitely have to get better at, I've done it but not at the level that it could be done. Because I have a lot of teachers, well staff members period that really go above and beyond what they do, so typically in their results it would be shown in there summative evaluation where I reflect back and you know, give them kudos for that they've done during the year.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

That's pretty easy. We have our school improvement plan. And um, we're part of the priority schools initiative with NJEA and do we have a consultant that comes in and works with our staff once a week. Um, and it's all tied to professional learning communities which is one of our large, larger goals, over arching goals actually. Um, And anything else if someone puts in for to go be a part of a workshop or conference it has to support what it is that we're trying to get better at, if not we don't use school funds to support that.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

No. There are times when teachers are afforded the opportunity to share ideas and participate in professional development activities. The bulk of these opportunities take place in their 80 minute grade level PLC's which occur weekly.

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Each marking period we have a awards assembly, we just had ours this past Friday, and where we um, recognized those who made honor roll, perfect attendance, and then the teachers recognize them for other awards within their classroom for the marking period. We don't have, I give out a weekly newsletter but it's really to teachers to let them know what's coming the current week and to highlight some things that happened in the previous week. But um, we don't have a newsletter per say that we give to students and parents, or would see that would recognize their children for making honor roll.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Um, you now outside of the honor roll assembly, the awards assembly, there's nothing, um, you know actually as I think about it teachers don't really ask me to provide, a lot of them do that on their own. I do know it is supporting, you have people like Ms. (blank) that will you know I don't know where she gets them from, but she has a million stuffed animals. So you see kids with stuffed animals all the time, then you have stickers, and you have snacks. So I do know on a regular basis the majority of our teachers do provide some sort of support and reward and contribution. We also have a program; we call it the star awards. There's a bulletin board there and we'll take a kid, whoever that student of the month is, their picture. Actually, no, all the slips given to students for doing something great that month there name will go on the board, the lights light up, and the n they're in a raffle and five students get to have lunch with me at the end of the month.

THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: ___GP5_____

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

I have been a Principal for two years at this school.

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Six years in June.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Ok, my school wide goals, um, are focused around five key areas: human resources, business practices, community and family engagement and um, learning outcomes and the last one escapes me. Um, and in looking at those goals I took a look at where um, the school was before I arrived which was a year and a half ago, and where we needed to go and our learning outcomes goal is the one that um, I am most focused on, between learning goals and family and community engagement.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

Very important, um, right now we look at our um, NJASK scores for grades, um, 3 through 8 and really 4 through 8, because we begin taking NJASK in 3^{rd} grade so when our students arrive in 3^{rd} grade we don't really have data on them from the previous year. Um, but it's important because in looking at our NJASK data we um, we make our goal to shoot for 10% over the um, percentage of the efficiency that the teacher gained the previous year, and so each grade level um, looked at their number of students who scored at proficient and advanced proficient and we added 10% to that for that to be our um, goal for a particular subject area. So language arts is a little different and for math and science it happens at the 8^{th} grade and at the 4^{th} grade level. Um, we also look at um, DRA assessments, a little underdeveloped, but I'm looking at really pushing forward with DRA data next year which is the reading data.

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Um, not very effectively, um, we're looking at the mission, um that was adopted a few years ago. What we are doing now, um, is embarking on a process of developing a um, different mission or an enhanced mission um, for the next school year. And so I'll be pulling together all of my stakeholders including the students in the school and we're going to be developing our 2013-14 school mission.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Um, I would probably say our strongest um, support for ensuring the school's academic goals are reflected would be in our bulletin boards and our work displays. Um, I think all the other areas are quite underdeveloped for us, but what we again are embarking on is putting a process in place so that our field trips are aligned with our goals, activities and programs are aligned and so in our framework we're putting together a piece that starts with um, what is our goal for students learning outcomes and family engagement? How does this particular activity or program fit into that goal? So, we will instead of actually having just activities and programs, look at the goal and then talk about what activities are going to support that goal.

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

I think I've switched my um, process around quite a bit. Um, Right now the process that I use, is um, I have an informal walkthrough sheet and um, I at the bottom of the sheet I have 5 areas to look at in the classroom and so I take those goals and divide them between 5 days of the week and to keep myself organized I'll say on Monday I'll look just at student's work. I'll make that a goal for Monday and then Tuesday, I'll just try to look at student's response to instruction. It's not always successful and that's probably why I play around with quite a few different processes for you know doing that. But right now that's what I use.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Ironically, we had a conference today, um, with a quite an experienced teacher however, the lesson was a very basic lesson, border line on unsatisfactory. And so um, I really had to reflect on how I was going to approach it because we do have a post observation script but I really wanted to get to the meat of the lesson so I started off with asking how she felt about the lesson and whether or not um, she believed that her um, desired outcomes were achieved in the lesson. And um, then I approached it by domain. I just approached the whole thing by domain, um, and in our conferences actually it's to be continued because we're going to talk some more um, on Monday about it so I'd like to start with the positive and I have the habit of starting with the positive but ironically um, this particular one I just wanted to get right to the issue.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

I don't rely heavily on it, um. I do ah, rely more so on um, what the current practices are, what the current curriculum is, particularly with our model curriculum through the state. Um, and that's right now what is really driving us, and I look a little at the testing because it, we're talking about getting the results months after the um, the students actually take the test. Um, and so I'm a little careful in terms of making greater decisions based on the one shot deal.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Um, district wide I sat on the curriculum committee about a year ago and we were able to look at um, various text books and things like that. But what I try to do is whenever a

company sends me a sample I'll thumb through it, but I'll give it to one of the teachers on that particular grade level and ask them to utilize it as supplemental and then tell what you think about it, if it's something that's worth us looking at. If you use it let me know because I'd like to take a look and see how that sheet, or that lesson or that something works with what you're doing.

V.　　MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Um, it, I guess I'm in the habit of releasing it by, via letter, and via power point letter in that when the results come out and we're able to go through them and it's usually at the beginning of the year. And I will um, put it in our welcome back letter or back to school letter and then when its, when we're presenting to the parents usually back to school night, if we have the data, I will present the data and um, and everything to the parents at that time.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

Um, this year, um, well actually I'll go back um, to 2 years ago because I haven't started it this year. We would have um, data conferences with students where we actually take their feedback from NJASK, sit with them and talk about what the goal number is and where they are and the area that we need them to improve on.

VI.　　PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities).

I'm not good at that, um we're an elementary school; we're kindergarten through 8th grade. Part of the environment here is the fun stuff and the extra stuff that happens. And I find it very, very hard to limit you know, but you know it also doesn't mean that we have, you know, announcements and stuff all day.　But talk to the teachers and they would say that we're announcing stuff all day. I try to limit it but I find it difficult because we're an elementary school so that means the 100th day of school, that means read across America, that means um, drop everything and read, it means just what goes into being a child in an elementary school, so I'm not successful in that area.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

Currently, there's no process in place. Um, we contact the parents, um, unfortunately we have a set number of students who are habitually tardy and um, by the nature of this

particular school we don't have a lot of success in the parents taking us seriously. A lot a times our students are late because it's very convenient for the parent on their way to work to drop the child off, um, but in very few instances is it a situation where um, children are responsible for being late. It's usually the parent's issue.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes. Yes, I do. In the hallways um, if when children are coming down to deliver something; Um, I invite students in for lunch. I have you know, conversations in the hallway at lunchtime. Um, not so much outside for recess, they kind of tend to want to stay away. Every opportunity that I get to talk to them, that's one of the parts of um, that I do that I really enjoy. There are you know people that find the conversations quite humorous. I like talking to the little ones a lot, and you know I ask them what they're reading, what's going on, what did you do yesterday. Um there are quite a few of them who know a lot about my life. Um, because you know they'll come in and ask things so um, that's like the lighter side of you know what I have to do.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Um, whenever possible, um when I can go to basketball games I'll go to basketball games. Um, I think I've made every PATT event; we've had a lot of dances and meetings. We do have clubs that happen after school and I'll occasionally walk in and see what they're doing. But our big thing is basketball season and that's about it in terms of those things that happen outside of the school day.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

No, which is an area that I really have to improve upon.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

I have in the past, um, in the past I've done that, in the past two years, year and a half I have not.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Well, that goes along with our professional development plan, which we try really hard to take seriously, our professional development planning. For example this particular year we looked at our school goals. We planned accordingly with the common core standards, um, the use of technology but because the state and of course with the district we're going through the use of a particular evaluation model, there's certain mandates that we have to abide by and so I found myself veering off from our plans, um, of professional development plan to go with what is mandated for us to do. So um, we hope to get back on track next year. But we definitely planned um, between June and August what's going to happen the following year.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

I would say, um, of all of our faculty meetings, maybe 15% or less have been with teachers sharing. What I have done is if we had a professional development day in which we were allowed to plan, I try to put on that professional development day um, a period for teachers to turnkey something that they've learned um, and so we did that at our last half day session, we were able to do that.

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

I do, we have um, of course we have our um, awards assemblies 4 times a year but I also hold something called a cupcake social and that's for students who are student of the month. And so once a month of course they get their names called over the intercom, but I order cupcakes and we have cupcakes together in the cafeteria and at the end of the day. And that's the 2nd or 3rd Monday of the, the 2nd Monday after the month that they're recognized. And of course we call their names over the intercom, we congratulate them and we always recognize birthdays, so every morning we announce the birthdays for the day and for the weekend.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Hmm, that's a good one. I would like to do more of that, I think, umm, I encourage the teachers if there's something that's happening that I may not know about 'cause I'm not there every day, to let me know so that I can make an announcement or make a big deal about it. I think parents; you know the parents are good at letting us know if the child is involved in doing something and that they can be recognized. But I want the teachers, because teachers are on the front line, because they see the children more than I do and are more involved in their lives. I would like to have better communication as far as that's concerned.

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: _____WP6_____

    A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

  This is my 4th year.

    B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

  This would be my 8th year.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

    Yes, I have. Based on the data that we receive from our end of the year scores it is a mixture not only of the NJASK, but the attendance, the ELL population. We try to match where will the next steps be so it's a collective analyzation all these factors, NJASK data scores, attendance and how to best serve our English language learners.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

    It is very important but it is not just the single item of importance. The data shows us basically, it takes a snapshot well it depends again, the end of the year takes a snapshot of what the students have done at that particular time. And there's other distractions that may happen during the testing time, but during the course of the year we have the informals, the summative data and some of the data that we usually perform during the school year that gives us a little bit more of a focus on where we lead our instruction. We're trying to look at more and more of ah, not necessarily standardized data but also trying to include the data that's presented, with their portfolios their writing pieces, their DRA's, all that's a mixture of how we have met their goals, the student goals, how we have met our own goals and how we gonna keep on moving onto the future.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

For the school community, again there's the partnership with home and school. We have conversations with the faculty where we will present the data, and basically using the protocols that we have learned from the professional learning communities. Setting that up 'cause I believe strongly that the input from the staff since they're in the front lines, they're input is most valuable. The next step would be again, sharing that with the executive board for the PTO and then presenting it to the general body of the PTO. Even though we can't control what happens at home but we try to push it in and basically stress the things that parents can do at home. Making sure that there's a blocked time for homework and it's quiet. Making sure there's reading time, and providing the students with incentives so that again they're motivated. We don't want to go to the extreme but from the exterior part and then again feeling good about themselves. We're just trying to keep it motivational and stress the importance that the more they read the better they become. That's like a continuous push through the announcements and then again the conversation with parents.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

In assemblies again we also have in addition to the honor roll assemblies that we have, we have conversations with the parents and we have implemented some nightly situations where again because we get more bang for our money when we do something with kids and once they perform or before they perform. For example, this last time we shared our ESEA we had our black history performance, so before that performance came in I did my spiel on where we were at last year and where we need to be and how the parents could help us out. And again pointing out where student groups were doing in comparison to years past. Um, honor roll, we also have PA announcements where we highlight certain grade levels, certain students. We are starting based on a 5th grade teacher who used the term scholars in reference to her students, that's what we have been addressing our students as, student scholars, so again infusing that mindset that they can do it, if they do the work that's needed. Posters we have put up, again our honor roll, 1st, 2nd, those winners, so again and we also with that, if they receive 1st honor roll, if they're basically, if they're receiving honor roll they get this set of rewards, 2nd cycle they get this set of rewards 3rd ………
and then if you've made 4 honor rolls throughout the course of the year you get a trophy, so indicating that you're the honor roll recipient for the four marking cycles. For each particular one they get a set of pins reward and one of the things that recently struck me is how do you push like the citizenship, that we noticed that citizenship if everyone gets one as if you wasn't good enough to make honor roll. Well, so we're try

to change the criteria for that and make it as just as valuable as the honor roll. Because being good citizens is just as important as having academics.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

    When I do the informals um, they're usually done by grade level. Let's say I pick a day of the week and this is not you know beforehand, it's something again for me not that I mention it to the staff. I usually isolate say Tuesday I'm going to do 5ᵗʰ grade and Wednesday whatever I pick a specific grade level. I sit and I observe the lesson, sometimes when I see that I notice something that can be improved on they may get a written, we may have a conversation, we may have collectively come together as a grade level and have a conversation if there are certain things that I noticed. And based on that grade level conversation there are certain things that we're going to work on. So I give you feedback on that way with the um, I try to give them as much feedback as I can with that but again keeping a close eye, that again I am trying to go in there as a coach, not as somebody that's going to nitpicking whatever every little thing, and I noticed that you did this well but you gotta work on this and you know always highlighting the positive.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

    It's a combination of both; I think I have established a relationship with the teachers, with the staff here where we can have truthful conversations. And I just personally like, again I'm not writing anything down when we have conversations you know, unless it's a pre and post, that's when you write down. But in other words I'm not writing it down but then again let me pick your brain a little bit, why did you choose to do it this way. So I can understand there rationale, sometimes when we come in we have our own little thing in our head, but again let me hear it from you, Ok good alright I can accept that, or let's just see how we can arrange that a little bit different. One of my strengths where I focus a lot on, is the type of questions that the teachers and the students ask, and that's one thing where I go into the pre-conferences and I let them know from the beginning and you know my pet peeve is the questions that are asked at the beginning of the classroom, and where they're at in Blooms, is it high for teachers and for students? That's something that we want to push. We want to push as much as we can.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

We draw upon it, but then again not emphasizing a whole lot on it. 'Cause that's something that ah, again each building is unique, each classroom is unique, so again it's something that it's there, its present. But again looking at the makeup of the room that's basically most where our conversations are at, knowing that again, this is where we have to go, how do we plan in getting there?

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

One of the things that we discussed in grade levels, especially right now with the conversation of the common core in the model curriculum, where everything basically is green, so it's a clean slate. In the year's past I've heard some teachers who are very creative in their instruction; it is now their time to shine. You don't have anything holding your hands right now, you can design your own, you can pick your resources, you're not bound to a hard cover book, a basal, and I hope the district realizes that too. More emphasis on gathering resources, that's one of the type of conversations that we had and again during faculty meetings, bombarding them with an article. I recently gave them an article of the common core ate my baby, how to become a common core ninja. So those type of conversations, so again I stress to them that this a beautiful thing to be in, we're in ground zero. Everybody in the nation is in ground zero, so let's now, we've always been hearing taking best practices and now is the real time. Let's take those best practices and run with them. Now, if you're bound to a book you're gonna have issues. If you're the structured person that you need a book you're going to have some difficulty.

V. MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Um, in the combination of mostly again, we've been having that conversation recently with the results that came up with the ESEA, the new assessment and how we're moving towards that. Giving them where we recently shared with the district and where we fell, and then again changing the mindset although you saw a lot of yes down the paper but look at the color code. We don't want to be in a yellow we want to move toward green, but we don't want to be in green either, we want to be in blue because that's where we want to go. But you notice in certain areas where our results and our work wasn't being reflected is now being reflected. Some student groups you can see there's been an increase and then pushing that message along. How do we take that if we satisfy in meeting just the 5% target rates we're not gonna get there. We have to shoot higher so it's a conversation, its memos and then again in conversations with their post and pre conferences and how they set up their professional development plan and areas where the technology, again, that's always a constant. You know where your group fell at, our cohort. How do you for your next experience with another group, how do you push them along?

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

We have had conversations with the again, with the honor roll. We have highlighted ah, especially at the grade level and the 3rd grade level. Introducing that this is going to be their first NJASK test, so again ask questions, if you have friends in the 4th grade, in the 5th grade, and we try to convince 5th grade scholars again, share your experience with the 3rd and 4th when they ask you that. 'Cause again you're a veteran with the standardized test, let's say, but this is the first time that they're taking that test. And again sharing that information with the parents and again whose a 3rd grade parent here? Raise your hand, NJASK is coming, its intense, share with us. We send a calendar for grades 3 and 5 its what the parents can do for getting ready for NJASK. Little you know, taking them to the, market, sorting , asking questions so its little different activities, but everyday what we do stress is read. Read, read, read and now with our media specialist we've connected some scholastic dollars behind that so when the book fair comes, those who have earned dollars based on your reading and your reading logs you build up a bank account. So my next goal is how I'm going to pay for it, but it's an incentive for them to read and then again involve the parents, because the parents they have to sign the log and whatever so it's a communication with that.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities).

Well, we have set a standard here from 9 to 2 is sacred time there are no announcements there are no announcements that are made. What we usually do is there are certain staff that have been given walkie talkies so that if there's a need for someone on the 3rd floor, boom, and again calling into the classroom .So there's no general announcements that are constantly beep, beep, beep, beep that's been considered sacred time. Um, again when we do have to call students we use the walkie talkies especially during lunch so can you bring something up? So again when you hear that beep, beep, beep, either it's an emergency, it's a code red, an evacuation, they know that something's coming after that, so it's basically emergencies.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

That's one area where we need to work on 'cause I noticed that um, and we found out most of our offenders of this we have found out recently that they don't live in the area. They don't live in the area, but again we're going to respect the time that they're here, because basically I'm not gonna, at this point they're staying here, unless they do something that's crazy. But they're staying here until the remainder of the year but having conversations with parents. So if that continues to happen, just letting you know we will probably, a good idea or setting up an after school or some type of detention or again some type of learning time that they missed. Because unfortunately you do have some children that walk in here at a quarter to nine and that 1st period is gone. So that's

something that we need to work again, but again most of our issue is that the majority of these students are not in walking distance or zoned to (blank).

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

I make it a point to be at recess as much as I can. Today I covered all the three lunches. Just being out there and again staying outside in vigilance but having conversations with them downstairs. Usually one of my dismissal posts is in front of the school so between 2:50 and, I'm sorry, 2:35 and 2:50, I'm in that general area. Which is good, I get to remind parents as they come in, PTO meeting on this , half a day on this, so they see that I'm there and about as much as I can.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Every, there's very few that I miss. So again PTO meetings, valentine dance, after school assemblies, that's something that again we're both there and just being vigilante and having that perfect time for just having those conversations. And again we've notice that, which it's no big revelation, but when students perform parents come out. The winter concert they're out there. It's a perfect time and I usually upset them and I say well thank you for coming to our PTO meeting and I get the dirtiest looks. But again that's the perfect time for me to share that information, keep it short and brief and let's enjoy the show, but again stressing that importance that we have these other meetings that you should be too.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

What I have done and I need to do more of, but what I have done and I'll tell you why. I have given them a big thank you on my Monday focus, like for example thank you Mrs. Boom Boom for your part in the NJASK performance, your coordination, so big thank you's go out. Um, I notice that when I publicly, at a faculty meeting, some of them feel a little bit, I don't know if its embarrassed or you know what I mean they don't like the spotlight. So I try to not to do it that way but I also, I mean I shoot it in, but they do need to hear that. But little, sometimes, most of the times, during lunch you walk up to the classroom and say thank you very much, Because we had one teacher who had done something with our parents for the common core so after the meeting I you know went up to her and said thank you very much. 'Cause you know we have our meetings at 7 and its late, people have other things to do, but she took the time to come out and did a beautiful presentation, so again a little thank you. And what I wanted to do and I still want to have something like it is a little pin and call it the gold eagle and then any little thing, boom here, a little gold eagle. You know you can collect them, whatever and this is something that you did special for the school.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

I have done ah, when I made recommendation letters that goes into their files so basically that's one of the things I have done. But again, that's something that I haven't done enough of. And I think that's again, you don't, its….I don't want to say you take it for granted sometimes, but ah, I'm going to have to say you take it for granted. Because you know the teachers that are well and it's basically the same thing as for the good kids. You never hear the good kids but you know all the names of the bad kids. So I think that's something that I need to do a little bit more and just again putting something in there hands and all so um, in their folders in addition to when they come and ask for recommendations. 'Cause for those special teachers, there's a special recognition, I mean there's always that a little extra, boom boom, with others you give them the basics, okay works here or whatever. But for that special teacher that you know, but something like that I think personally I need to work on that a little bit more.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Not only with the schools goals but with their personal goals as well 'cause one of the things that we do a lot of again, we do when we share the data we have that conversation that some people say you're comparing apples to oranges. But sometimes when you compare it's not that way because you've been in that grade level for a certain number of years and these are the results that you are getting. Either positive or negative these are the results your getting so that's something you have to keep that in mind. With the in-services we targeted now this whole big thing with the common core has been the focus with that. So again trying to everything that we do, we try to focus with the common core and give them as much information as possible. And now recently with the Danielson piece which the whole district is doing but then again giving them enough information. Because again you are going to be evaluated on how well you do the common core through Danielson, so you gotta have those two pieces, have to be a marriage. You have to be well versed in the common core and present it by the Danielson piece.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

We have done again um, in the turnkey sessions those teachers who have turn keyed, I mean who have performed not only turn keying it to the faculty but also turnkey it to the grade level. So recently its ah, two of the teachers recently went to a content, pulling content from literature so right now they're working on the presentation for their respective grade levels and 3rd and then from there going into the big, the general staff. That's something that again, ties into what we're doing as much as possible. 'Cause one

of the goals of literacy, how do you infuse it? How do you do the content areas? Technology? Now this building, even though it's a 97 year old building, but as far as the tech piece is, each room has a smart board. Each room has a document camera, we have computers, laptops. So the excuse that we don't have the resources, can we have more? yes, and we're working on it, but the pieces are there. Now it's up to you to take the next step. So again, cause you see it down the road where every magazine that you look at in the educational world, boom, infuses the technology, boom, boom. Now one of the other things that we're going to look at is how are we going to infuse the work sampling. With this piece of work sampling how do we do our best work around it and support that because there's a lot of, not only in the building but in the district, there are a lot of gaps with that. So how do we get that piece together if that's going to be the piece that's going to be around?

X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Well, we do is again, the honor roll and unfortunately we had done something in the past where we have shared the honor roll and I don't know if they still do it. I could probably check, but it's to share the honor roll piece with the Courier News so they could be out there. But again during the process of the honor roll, the different awards that come in place, the recognition of those students that have honor roll, 1^{st} 2^{nd} cycle, 3^{rd} and 4^{th} you get what we call Aladdin's lamp, because it takes you to all the places you want to go. So we do that as far as the announcements that we make as far as the honor roll recipients. 5^{th} grade, I mean you can't mention them all, but we had 23 honor roll and stuff like that.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

One of the things that um, that I do is based on there summatives is to put that little extra piece um, in the tone of their conversations with the student and again how they have taken a certain cohort of students and pushed it a little bit further and there's even if the improvement is slight then again there's a lot of work that goes with that. But again the conversation piece, the written piece on their summative and then again vice versa where you don't, you didn't take the opportunity to extend the learning. That has to be addressed to so there's two sides to that. And again supporting those teachers where if they come up to me, Mr. X there's a workshop thank I think…… let's make it happen, let's make it happen or whatever, we usually don't get the sub coverage but let's do our end so that you can attend these workshops. I recently was able to um, obtain I-pads and that's what I did to those grade level leaders. I-pads boom, boom, boom because again if you don't model new learning it's something that's shared or looked at as how can I do the learning as well.

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: ____DO7_____

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

Umm, five years, this is my sixth year.

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Altogether, see I was thinking before about this school, at the end of this school year I will be a Principal eleven years.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Yes, ah, we do have annual school wide goals. Usually what happens with my school management team, we meet over the summer and we have a retreat where we plan our goals for the year. Um, this year our focus is always on student achievement, improving student achievement and our 2nd goal is um, maintaining a safe school environment.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

Yes, we do take into consideration the student performance data when planning our goals. It's important to use the student data so that it helps to drive our instruction and any programs that we want to incorporate for the upcoming year. Any things that we have the previous year that may not have been as successful as we wanted based on the student data. So that that's why we try to look at, review the data.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

The mission this year in the beginning of the school year, usually at our back to school night, we share it with the parents. It is also on our website and um, in our newsletter that we send home in the beginning of the year.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Well, as far as our academic goals like I said it's on our website. We do have um, not so much a bulletin board but there's a poster in the hallway. Um, this year we had several achievements so we also displayed information pertaining to um, our achievements on the standardized testing as well.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Okay, I – for my informal um, I usually visit classrooms as often as possible. Um, I might have a focus of um, a couple of different teachers. Um, basically I go in and I may look for a particular area at a given time, not looking at the classroom as a whole. For instance I may just focus on student discourse and so that's when I go in, that's what I focus on.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

During the post observation um, meeting usually I discuss with the teacher um, any learning strategies that were performed, implemented during the observation. I give them verbal feedback, as well as written feedback that's in their observation.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Um, yeah, when we look at the tests over the summer when the results come back um, and basically that drives what we decide to do as far as any special programs, any after school programs, um, any particular software we want to use as far as

technology. Um, so it does play into a big affect of how we run the instruction for the year.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Most of the curricular materials are decisions made by the district, but the district does have committees so in some regards I try to sit on various committees so that I'm an active part. Um, and this past year I was on a couple of different committees. Um, yeah this past year um, I currently am a part of, they have a common core PLC and I was working under the math portion, umbrella of that and so I went back to my roots, so that helped me to have more of an active part in the Math curriculum and materials.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

I give the teachers a copy of their performance results and its usually in the form of a memo and we go over them during our first staff meeting.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

Um, usually that's more on the teacher level in my building um, as far as, well you said the school's academic progress, um, what I usually do is, I have during the 1st week of school, I meet with different grade levels and we just talk about like an overview of the test scores. What the results were, what the expectation is for the upcoming year and as far as the student results, the teachers go more further in depth in the class.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Basically um, announcements are only held at certain times of the day, you know first in the beginning in the morning and the last ten minutes of the day. I limit the amount of announcements made during the school day so that there's no school interruptions, and that's it overall, that's basically it.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

There aren't any as far as um, my primary grades K-4. For my 5, 6th to 7th students they're treated a bit more as the middle students um, and they are given um, lunch detention if they're tardy. That's my school policy. And basically, well yeah, and it really was the idea of the teachers who have those students in 6th and 7th and they kinda

came together and said this is what we want to do not just for tardy but also for behavior interruptions that they would actually give lunch detention. So they give up their lunch on their own.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yeah, I try to go to the cafeteria during lunch, during recess. Um, I'll stop kids in the hallway and talk to them. Teachers love to stop me and talk to me actually. And I've made a big mistake of actually some teachers actually have my cell phone number and just today one of them was texting me about a kid, and I'm like why does she have my phone number and when did I give it to her, like why? Yeah, she texted me like I was at a personal day today and something happened and there was a sub, one of the kids called the sub, said something to the sub, so we gave him a couple of days. But, um, so she was at a workshop and then she came back and found out about it and then she saw the kid at a basketball game. And she was like, why is he on the bench to play a basketball game, and I'm like for real, like I care right now at 5:30 in the evening. But, um, yes I do try to take time to try to speak to staff and address students outside of the classroom.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Um, not often, as often as possible, I probably have not done as much this year as I did last year. Last year I tried to attend the basketball games and things of that nature, um, this year I haven't really got to any of the basketball games but um, it was a district wide spelling bee on a Saturday and I did go to that. So when I can I'll make the time and I'll say maybe once a month.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

Yes, actually I do. For each teacher, I have ah; I email my teachers a week at a glance. Every Monday I send out one with an overview of the week and we capture anything that may have happened in the previous week. If someone did something great you know, I'll do a kudos to so and so. Like I just had a new teacher, she kinda really spear headed the black history program so at the end, you know, it turned out really nice and I did a kudos to her in my weekly newsletter. It's just mostly one page, sometimes two pages. It's like a little, at the top it has Monday thru Friday and I'll put what's happening on those days and then the rest of it, just kinda like, let's see, last week was kinda quiet but um, let's see. If it's a staff meeting and I need them to bring anything I'll mention that. If its bulletin boards, time to change your bulletin boards make sure, I'll mention its due on such and such date. We do benchmark testing, you know, all of your score sheets need to be in, send them to whoever. You know whatever is going on. Field trip requests are due,

whatever is going on. Wednesday we do a staff uniform day, I'll just put that on Wednesday, staff uniform day just as a reminder. School Spirit day, you know um, student council or if there's a trip, 3rd grade will be out of the building on a trip, you know where everybody knows, if there's a class or a special you know that's where they are. Um just stuff, um, portfolios, your portfolios should be reviewed you know I'll be around on whatever date, or reminder make sure you sign in at 8:15. You know, just whatever's going on. If there's a district wide event I'll put it in there, like I said reminders, things I need from them. If it's a general um, so yeah I try to send it every week. And even during the staff meeting um, you know we celebrate like everybody's birthday the 1st staff meeting of the month. We have 3 staff meetings, 3 Mondays. But the 1st one I usually buy a cake, cupcakes, something and just celebrate birthdays for the month. We'll have cupcakes, ice cream cake, and you know whatever, I'll have whoever's birthday stand up for their birthday and they look forward to it. A couple of teachers will get up and dance for the birthday people and they feel good about that.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

Occasionally, um, the last time I did one was my winter concert um, my um, performing arts staff, I wrote one for my drama teacher um, the vocal music teacher, the instrumental music teacher because he did a really good job.

IX. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Well, one thing that we do district wide, we use my learning plan on line and the teachers want to attend PD it has to go into my learning plan which forces me to read over it and review it to make sure that it's inline before I approve it.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Yeah, ah, I usually if I know a teacher has attended a in-service or if I've been in the class room and I've seen something really good that the teacher is doing I'll ask them to share at the next staff meeting. Um, so they are given the opportunities to share and actually they're required to turnkey when they attend. Which I'm not always you know, you've got 2 weeks to do it. Yeah, it's a lot of things going on so you know I'm not always on top of it as I probably should be, but um, if it's not done in a staff meeting I ask them to do it during their grade level meetings, their CPT.

X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Yeah, we have after each marking period, we do a marking period awards assembly and that's school wide K-7. We don't do all the kids at once 'cause I don't have the room for it, but we do recognize all the kids.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

How we support teachers, um, basically I make sure the teachers are provided with various incentives whether it be certificates or pencils or whatever it is. Um, we try to schedule the awards assembly so that everyone can participate, everyone is there. The teachers are given an opportunity to you know, come up to the front, recognize the students.

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: ___YO8_____

    A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

Um, I've been a Principal at this school for 8 years. It made 8 years on the March 8th.

    B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

I'm going to include my Assistant Principalship because as you know you're Principals also as the assistant Principal so that would be a total of 9 years.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

   Ok, um, for the past two years we've developed SMART goals. We use this; this is actually a framework that was filtered down from the state department with everybody needing to develop these SMART goals. And what we did was we looked at our NJASK data and the benchmark, the district benchmark data from the previous year. Using that data we began to develop um, instructional goals. Well, actually academic goals and then based on the academic goals we developed instructional goals that would speak to or assist us in achieving those academic goals.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

   Absolutely, um, that's the only thing that should be used when developing academic goals. So as I said we use the NJASK, we use our benchmark, we use study island data and we targeted those areas that the students were most challenged in. And um, we were also able to see that there were some areas across the board that the student's were challenged in which then gave us data as to where we need to go with the professional development . Because obviously that's a weakness for the instructional portion of you know the student's day, so we needed to train the teachers.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Well, first we developed the mission as a team, as a school body. So the mission wasn't filtered down from me. We actually um, looked at the mission that was in place when I came in and then we revisited it to see okay is this really the direction that we're trying to go. And um, is this a mission that we are all willing to live on a daily basis. I'll give you a copy of the mission. I'll get that for you. Um, and then we began tweaking and revising and we did it in small groups, then each group delivered you know whatever it was that their group came up with and we constructed an overall mission that we all adopted. And we did that with our vision, mission and our shared beliefs. We don't do it every year because you know you can achieve a mission in one year you know. So with over the past 8 years we have visited it twice. So it was in place for about 4 years and then we um, revisited it.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Okay um, for our academic goals we actually started this last year. We began to develop data walls, yes, so with our data walls we encouraged the teachers to develop them within their classrooms. We encouraged teachers to develop classroom data walls so that the students could look and see where they are. But in and with that it's not just displaying the data, and the data was to be displayed in a way where the students wouldn't be embarrassed you know, so there weren't really any names attached to it. It was the overall classroom data and where they measured. And during their conferences with the students, you know if there's an area of um, let's say Study Island, they have partially proficient and proficient and advance proficient so if the graphs are going up the teachers could tell them you're falling in the proficient area and maybe within the certain percentages of this portion of the proficient area. We need for you to be in the higher percentage of the proficient and moving over to the advanced proficient. So having that conversation with the students they were able to say, you know where they were. We also developed um; we posted our NJASK data and benchmark data on a data wall. They're really partitions but you know we posted it on there so that as the parents and the students would walk throughout the hallway they could look and see. It really at times like…, I would like for it to be as effective now as it was last year. And the reason why I think maybe it's not as you know effective is because you know when new things come in then you start to give attention to new things, so we kinda backed off posting the data. The data was still used and it's always used but we didn't display it in the same way as we started to last year, which is something that I'm gonna work on for next year. Because I saw it motivated, even the kids would say oh, look at the 3rd grade, they're doing better than the 4th grade. And not that I'm so much one for competition but if it's something that's going to motivate them to say we gotta do better we gotta pull it up, you know,

then I'm all for it. At (blank) we've always created our own charts. We collect the data and the master teachers, they're the ones who actually collect the data, the teachers do all the corrections to it. But they create these charts in a pie graph, color coded everything and the teachers um, they know how to read it. We've been doing it for so long so it wasn't really a practice that we needed to have any type of professional development in. Not here in my school. I'm not sure if they do it the same everywhere else but you know that's a practice that we've always had here. And that's a practice that I walked into when I came on board. So my predecessor had already had them doing that. And that was before my district had even had them, we were doing benchmarks and everything. I really came into; I could have not walked into a better structured school. I'm telling you things were already in place and there was um, standards were already set so um, it was there.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Okay, um, I conduct daily walk throughs every day. Every day I walk through, I don't always go into the same classroom every day. Some days I have like a primary focus, where I call it sweeping the hallways. So I sweep the kindergarten, 1st and maybe 2nd grade classes. And I try to go in and spend a little time just looking to see what's going on. Do I see evidence of 1st and foremost student engagement you know, effective instructional practices, the practices that I know for a fact that they've received professional development in. You know um, once a month or really every other month I'll pull up their portfolios. Like for instance right there are some examples of portfolios that I have to go through to see where they are you know with maintaining their writing portfolios. And um then what I do is I walk with my stickies, my sticky pads, and when I see things that are really working nicely in the class, I'll write the teachers a little note and just leave it on their desks. Just kind of they need it, I think it's kinda of like giving, when we give kids little stickers you know that they're doing a good job and the teachers appreciate that. Um, what I'll also do is um, if we have a staff meeting that may be coming up I'll ask them to share you know what I saw in their class, their method. And like simple things, you know not like for instance I had you know one of my teachers her way of bringing the kids back together, when I clap once, when I clap twice, that drives me crazy, but it's their way. But another teacher had okay the music is about to start, and she played like toy story you got a friend in me. And once the music started and this was a 1st grade class the kids immediately they knew, they picked up their things, she didn't even have to say clean up now or anything. She said okay here we go here I'm starting the music and pressed it and they got everything together. So I thought that was an excellent management technique to use especially on a lower grade you know without to go through and when I say within seconds the kids had brought themselves together and she was ready to transition to something else. So something like that I would share at the staff meeting and ask her to bring whatever it is that she uses and share it with the staff and then we just move forward.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Okay, um in their post ob so I'm assuming that is would be a formal observation since it's a post ob. First thing I like to do is I sit them down and I ask them how do you think that went. Share with me your thoughts. Tell me what do you think? If there is anything that you would change in that lesson what would you change? What would you do differently? And usually they pinpoint exactly what I saw in most cases. You know, um, there are some that are in total denial and then I bring in you know um my recommendations to them. How the lesson could have been a little more effective. You know um, what I have observed in other classrooms within the building and outside of the building that is deemed as a best practice and you know then I tell them you know I'd like to come in again and see you know um, if you were able to utilize any of these recommendations you know. And then I actually go in and I follow up with them to see. Most of the time they come back and they say you know you were so right it did work a little better. Or you know the children were very receptive to this you know. So that's usually what I do.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Now, I'm thinking of curricular decisions and I'm looking it as the curriculum. For us the curriculum is rolled out from central office, um, which I can tie into the next questions into this. Unfortunately, we don't often get to have any input on whatever programs you know we are using. We are asked to provide recommendations for professional development which that's definitely a help. Often we're just given programs and told you have professional development or I how to implement Read 180, what you should be looking at when you go in. We never, we don't really have an opportunity to select or even say well I don't know if that really is a good fit or my kids don't really need that. We really need a more phonemic based program that can assist us. And that's not speaking to Read 180 I'm just speaking in general. So with the curriculum we don't really have much say so with that.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Well, there is a um, a curriculum committee and um, I know that to my knowledge, I don't know of any of the Principals that necessarily sit on that committee. Um, I'm assuming that there should be or there probably is. I know our curriculum department; they're the ones who actually, um they do. I will say that actually before we began with our Read 180 program this year, at the end of last year they did bring it to us and they had a consultant come in and they said well what do you guys thinks about this and it's working here and there. You know and we were a little like hmm, but next thing we were told to create your list you're getting Read 180. It was kind of like how do you like it?

Like it or not you're getting Read 180. And um, not to speak down and you know I do understand they're going on what's research based and you know what has shown success in other districts.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

    Well, we have common planning time on every grade level. So during those common planning times our teachers actually get to review um, benchmark data. We are using the model curriculum so right now we're going into benchmark number 4 they're about to take. So they've had 3 prior benchmarks that they've sat down before the benchmarks and discussed like where they are with their kids and whether or not looking at the actual common assessment. Where they're going to be, whether or not the kids were successful, what are their challenges? Then once they complete it they go back and look at it again. From there they create their plans as to okay we know we have to focus in on you know a particular skills so that the kids can um, obviously secure those skills. The only um, downfall is that the next benchmark like totally assesses different skills. So it's not as though they get that opportunity to see or gage whether or not the students progressed in this skill that they were deficient in from benchmark to benchmark. Now there are some repeated skills, but very few, but some you know so they can gage back. From there they have their conversations and they develop their plans, um, I actually just gave them a staff meeting to review data from benchmark 3 their data and create their plan of action to address you know just one of the deficiencies. Um, and the one that they would deem as being the most impactful, you know. Sometimes there are little things that they don't necessarily have to create a plan for and they just need to go in and reteach those little things. But when you see that the majority of your class did not get this specific skill, it's time for you to go back and really create a plan for that specific skill. So they do that, that's when we go through that.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

    Well, my teachers are required to maintain what I call a SIB. The SIB is the student information binder. I gave them binders. The binders have to be, in their SIB they have to maintain their data but I didn't just want to call it a data binder because in their SIB they have to maintain um, logs of parent phone calls, logs of student conferences, a log of um the data where the kids are, and a log of their intervention sessions that they have with the kids. Like what was the focus 'cause each teacher has been given an intervention, an additional prep period to do student interventions. So in there with that small group of kids each one of them they should complete a form that says their target and whatever their skill deficiency is and let's say comprehension and you know or analyzing text. We are a relatively small school. And I have some of my special teachers had such airy schedules, so I'm like no, you'll go in and give an additional period to the students so each one of them is assigned a different grade level or two. Some of my kids have world

language twice a week or Spanish twice a week. Whereas the Spanish teacher goes in and the general education teacher pulls out her 3 or 4 kids to do the interventions log.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Well, um, let's start with our morning announcements. Well no let's start with my week at a glance. Every week I said I give my week at a glance so there's no need to make special announcements about this or that. I start every morning off with my words of wisdom, we move into depending on what month we're now narrowing down so women's history month. Every morning I would have the kids read a blurb of a woman. I have these little cards out there and they read you know her bio or whatever and introduce them to new people. Not just Harriet Tubman and Oprah Winfrey but people they never even known you know so um, then we move onto our morning announcements, so I give them morning announcements. During the course of the school day the only time we would make an announcement would be something as we have a gifted and talented program, so we'll call for the students for the scholar's academy to come down and that's only on like a Monday and a Thursday. Outside of that, if there is a parent, 1st of all I've let the parents know in our policies and procedures manual that unless a student has a doctor's appointment with a doctor's note then we can't interrupt you know the instructional day um, so when we dismiss sometimes they try to beat the traffic out here so they'll get here at 2:15, 2:30. We don't do that, after 2:30 even if they have a doctor's appointment they dismiss them, because they're getting their homework and we really try to adhere to that. And we send notices throughout the course of the year. When we begin to see a rise in it you're simply letting them, know because we send letters home letting them know, like for instance, I send housekeeping notices to the parents the other day about coming to school late. About wearing the uniform you know and making sure that homework and everything is completed so um, for extracurricular and co-curricular we don't necessarily, we include those in our morning announcements than again in the afternoon. I'll do the afternoon announcements. So anything that happens during the course of the day I fit it in during the announcements.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

In the real world, outside of public education I would really love to just be able to charge the parents with overtime. Because in most cases it's not the kids you know. My older ones when they come in with their grocery bags because they went across you know to the CVS they have detention. You know you're staying for detention, and if it continues then we give them a suspension. On Fridays, we have actually one of my special teachers that basically has a whole free day on Friday she's our ISS teacher on Friday. So we put the kids in in-school suspension and they're there all day and they do their work. I'm really a little more lenient with the babies because I know that it's not necessarily them.

But for the babies I'll give their parents a call and I'll let them know that do you realize that after a certain amount of tardies you know it can be counted as an absence. And you know when 18 absences then your child is retained because they haven't met the requirements to move on to the next grade level. In most cases it does work but then often we'll also send out the attendance officer and that's when we find out that they don't reside in the district. So either they're taking the bus to school and they're waiting on the city bus or they'll waiting on their parents and its taking longer. So once we figure that out and you know we usually give them a letter and that they're gonna have to prove residency and then they end up transferring.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes, I like to um, in the morning if I'm not bogged down with a teacher or a parent more so than the teacher, um, I usually go in to the room where the kids have breakfast and I'll walk around in there and see how they're doing. And they give me my hugs and you know we wish each other a good day and you know I also take time out to talk to the teachers and I try to make a connection with the teachers and you know like when I know certain things. A couple of them are pregnant, so I'm like how are you feeling? How's the morning sickness going? Oh, this building is very fertile. Or you know, I know another one called out because their child is sick and you know you try to make those connections 'cause you want to make sure that they know that I do care. You're going to do your job, but I do care you know.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

For most of the evening events um, that we have, especially our school functions um, I'm always here or I always open them up, you know. And um, our co-curricular activities, meaning like our basketball program and things like that when they have practice I'm here for most of the time for practice. I don't usually stay for the whole time but on Saturdays when they have their games I try to make it to as many games as I can on a Saturday. And um it's not just for the students, I think it just sends a message to the parents also 'cause they often say you're the only principal that we see out here you know. It's not easy you know cause I have kids at home myself you know, and between their schedule and you know trying to make sure that I'm here to do for these kids. You know um, these are my kids to, it gets a little difficult, but I try to make it. I don't make it to everyone, but I try to make it happen.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

Yes, ah, that's when I mentioned when I showed you my WAG. In my WAG I have like different events that take place. And our committees are those that spearhead these

events, so I try to make mention of the things. So like last week we had our family math night, so I gave kudos to Mr. X who is our master teacher and his team of teachers that supported you know, to make sure that the event transpired with no flaws and they did a great job. They always do, so I mentioned it in there week to week. Whatever they do I mention it over the PA system you know, when we have the event and I mention it in my morning announcements, and or my afternoon announcements. There are times when I will write a memo to them letting them know that you did a great job you know, and I don't just send it to them, I send it to the whole school you know, just giving them kudos. With our um, spring concert which was great you know, thank you to so and so. Yeah, I recognize them. We also have something that we actually…, this year at our staff meeting, we started it but then teachscape came in and we didn't have enough time, we're going to pick it up. Now we're going through teachscape training so every staff meeting has been devoted to teachscape and the training you gotta stick on it or otherwise. But we did something that was like pay it forward where my school management team um, identified one staff member that they wanted to acknowledge and give just like a piece of candy or candy bar whatever, so we announced to the staff who it was that we wanted to give it to and we gave it to them and they had to now, whoever received it had to pay it forward and acknowledge someone else. You know just a little something to keep the morale up.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

Yes, with the amount of time and demands I should say that we have just on a daily basis you know you want to sit down and your attempt is you know what I gotta let them know what a great job they did. But you don't always have that opportunity you know, so I try to get you know, my secretary to help me with making sure that I put something together. And I don't do it as much as I would like to, but I have done it.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Okay, for the most part the in-service activities and professional development that are offered are filtered out of the district office. So they're aligned with um, whatever the districts goals are and the district's goals are aligned with the direction that we're going in as well. We may have little focus points where you know, school wide comprehension is a challenge for the students. So that's something that may not be a challenge over at (blank) school or (blank) school but for the school we focus on that and what I'll do is my master teachers, like my language arts master teacher, I'll have her do a focus during the common planning time. Like even for instance, we were just talking about writers workshop and conducting um, student conferences and I went in and I didn't realize you know, that some of my new teachers that just came on board and they didn't really know so they're focusing more so on the dramatical and you know, portion of the student writing and you know I didn't teach them. I didn't tell them, so of course you know they

would be like, let me make sure they're using sentence structure and I before E and that is not as important. But them getting their thoughts down and them getting prompting questions that you know can get them to really think and be more descriptive in their writing is more important than a misspelling of a word. So I just spoke with Ms X yesterday, so this is going to have to be a focus, reviewing the correct way to conduct student conferencing.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Um, we don't usually do it at faculty meetings because when they go to in-service it's usually grade specific. So what they do in the middle school, 1st graders it doesn't pertain to them, so they do more of their talking about their in-service during their common planning time meetings. Where you know, it's more relevant to that specific grade level.

X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

We have um, at the end of each marking period; we do an honor roll assembly. Well, we have one assembly every month, which is a school wide assembly, but at the end of the marking period we use one of the school wide assemblies to award our Principals honor roll and honor roll students. That we use the district's policy to gage who makes the Principals honor roll, who makes honor roll. But every assembly program we do a caught in the act and the caught in the act is just random acts of kindness and we put on the pink panther movie, I mean not the movie, the music to the pink panther and 2 of my staff members will dress up as detectives and they use magnifying glasses to walk around, is it you, is it you and then they make the announcement and they give them a certificate. They get so excited about that.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

You know in my 8 years of being here I have to say that this year has been the first year that I've actually began going in to do that. And I think it's because this year has been the first year that my teachers have really shared, like come up to me and said you know Mrs. X (blank) so and so went up 30 points in his lexile. So when they share it with me, and they're making a point to share it with me, I make it a point to go up into the class. And it just happens you know, you can be in this business for all of this time and you know I should be ashamed of myself that you know, I didn't go and begin doing this but once they brought it to my attention, I said send me their names and I'll get one of my little crates and I'll go upstairs. And we have like water bottles and little pads that say the (blank) and everything and I'll walk in the class and I'll say, I'm so sorry for the interruption, but I received a very important announcement that you know this one, this

one and this one went up on their benchmark by you know 30 points or they moved with their lexile by you know, so I just want to give them an award. I really only have done it this year on the 3rd and 4th grade, but that was the grade level that needed it a lot. Because we had kids that emotionally knew they were low you know, academically, so their confidence you know, was going down and next thing I knew the kids were coming to tell me did you hear? Did you hear that I went up on my….So I'm like we're on to something here you know. If they know that I'm watching and listening and celebrating with them then maybe they're going to work harder to do it even more. So I got it, it may have taken me a minute but I got it now, I got it.

Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: __RO9_____

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

Seven years going on eight. Wait, Let me back that up. I've been a principal for 3 years, no, 4 years and an assistant principal for 3 years. I was initially hired as an assistant principal and then I became principal.

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Altogether just as a principal, 4 years.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Yes, we have um, our goals are aligned to the district goals, so once the district presents their goals to us in August, we then come back to the school and work on framing our goals around the district goals. Um, we definitely um, do this once a year. We revise or decide that we're going to keep our existing school vision which includes the school goals and that is a collaborative process between the administration and the staff.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

Absolutely, that is the number one goal all the time, is student achievement. Everything we do is around student achievement. Um, definitely using data is a part of those goals. There are challenges that we face with that however um, and this could be similarly across the board. We do spend a lot of time assessing students and collecting data um, we do analyze the data. The disconnect comes when there doesn't seem to be enough time once the data has been collected and analyzed to use it to improve instruction before the next assessment or benchmark or something comes along. So there needs to be more time or we need to streamline that process and maybe identify two things. Instead of looking, you know we can have a data team that looks at all the data but then we're going to pick

two things and make a change right away, in our teaching practice to improve student performance. But that's where the disconnect comes where the teachers are now actually using the data's been collected and analyzed and then using it to change their planning or modify their planning to meet students needs academically. This district is a data district. It's a challenge but it just seems it's never enough time from one assessment to the next assessment, um and then all of the other things the district wants kids to be involved in. That makes that process challenging, so with each passing year you know, it's up to me to try to help guide teachers in how they're going to do that and be effective, and of course all the data is important. However I don't have to time to you know make revisions based on all the data. So now what do I do? We have to narrow it down and then we do prioritize our student needs um, based on that data. You know we'll start with New Jersey ASK data over the summer, we're following the model curriculum for the state of New Jersey now and they have 5 units for each grade level for each content throughout the year. There's assessments in those units and those are district benchmark assessments now because they're aligned to the common core. But like I said there never seems to be enough time to actually use the data after its been analyzed in planning. That's my challenge right now.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

We do it a couple of ways, ah, the school, we have a vision we don't have a mission. We had a mission and a belief statement and we were like look this is just too much, so we just had a vision. And the vision is placed on all, like on our letterhead that goes home on everything. So you know, every communication that we have with parents, you know our vision is on it. Um, during PTO meetings we communicate the vision. This is one of the things that we do. We also involve the PTO in the creation of the vision, so there's also something in there about parent and community and you know in supporting ah, improving student achievement. I play a very active role as well as a lot of the teachers and staff members in trying to get parents involved. Unfortunately we are not very successful. We have 650 students, at a PTO meeting they'll be 12 parents. Yet, we get 600 parents come to our spring concert. They come to the winter concert and then also I don't, I kinda shy away from going to PTO meetings. There are certain requirements that we have to share with the community. Like the data, like our school budget, our vision, those kind of things. Um, I'll go to a PTO meeting and I'll speak to the parents about…. I don't usually go to the meetings unless I'm invited by the parents because otherwise then I'm taking it over and running it the way I want to run it. And that's not a PTO organization, that's an Administrative thing and so um, I need them to be this self functioning entity. And that's how we communicate the vision. We definitely put it on everything. It is shared at PTO meetings and you know it is posted.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Right outside we have two places. Um, and we use, well this year it has not been a board of academic progress, last year it was. But there's a bulletin board right outside of this office. That last year and only because this is the first year we've done the benchmarks for the model curriculum, but next year it will be out there by grade level, by content, so we all know that there's one 4th grade language arts teacher. So in 4th grade language arts this is for the 1st unit assessment, the scores were this for that teacher, this, this, this and this, five times a year. And so when you walk by, you know teachers want to complain to the union because I posted it and we all know who that teacher is so I said that is not private, this is not private. And maybe if you saw it slapping you in the face every day when you went to sign in you might think maybe I need to modify my practice and then accept the support that I'm giving you to let you know that when we analyze this that you need some support in moving things forward. Or you've done such a great job, I'm gonna use you as a source of support for others. So, but definitely bulletin boards, also discussed at PTO meetings in the community

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

There is no real process to our informal evaluations. To me they don't happen as frequently as I would like. Um, because of the tenure laws regarding the formal observations that need to take place. I have one assistant principal. We have approximately, we have over 100 staff members that need to be evaluated. We have maybe 15 non tenured staff members that need to be evaluated 3 times a year, and a summative. And then we have timelines for evaluating half our tenured teachers as well as the other half and squeezing informal observations within that is very challenging. Um, but we do, do them. And they usually come, they are prioritized usually with our non-tenured teachers, or 1st year teachers or teachers that we know are struggling. Those are usually where we start and then we do provide feedback, we do have coaches in our school that um, we may direct to work with the teachers. Moving forward based on our informal observations and um, formal observation rather. Usually the feedback is not written unless there's something so negative or so glaring that it needs to be documented that way and possibly attached to a formal documentation as an indicator of that this was observed prior, these were some support mechanisms that were put into place and based on your formal observation things have not gotten better and I'm still witnessing these dangerous professional practices.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

The observation tool we've been using for 3 years now has been the Danielson model which we're now using 2013's Danielson for the next school year. And um, we have been using it a while and it is a very powerful tool because it simplifies things from an administrative standpoint where observations in the past were um, guided by a different format and some of it was subjective and this is very specific with a rubric and everything that goes along with it. Teachers received professional development on the rubric at the beginning of every year. And um, we've done, you know we break teachers into groups, each of them is assigned a domain, they have to go into the sub categories of the domain and have conversations about um, what's unsatisfactory, basic, proficient or distinguished. And then that will probably take one 90 minute staff meeting amongst the group to unpack all that and then at the subsequent staff meeting then they would share out. The feedback that we provide in a post conference is based right out of that tool. So if there were areas that were basic or unsatisfactory or areas that were commendable we would definitely start with the strengths first and then if there were areas of concern um where maybe you could have gotten a little more out of your lesson if you tried this, this and this. It's not to say you didn't do a good job, it was proficient, however you know you want to have as many distinguished areas as you possibly can and um, in a way to improve upon it might be this, this and this. Which is based on the critical attributes that are listed in the rubric, so it's just all, you know my reference point is always that rubric that at critical attributes in the examples to point to the teachers on how they can improve their practice with the existing evaluation tool.

IV. COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Principals in (blank) do not make curricular decisions, period. Those decisions are made at the district level, um; we can, we even face some resistance um, if we bring in additional supplemental materials. Not to supplant or to take away from the fidelity of the instructional program at all, but we made need to bring in other things because some of them when they were purchased by the district were not aligned to common core. Some things it was lacking and additional supplements need to be brought in. However, we may get the concern is if they're doing a district walk through and a teacher is using not the specified curriculum materials at the time but a supplement, that would appear negatively in the walkthrough. And they'll say you're not implementing programs to fidelity, and then my argument will be that we have supplements to the common core that are needed in order to meet the common core that the existing curriculum does not have. So what is your recommendation on how I should address that? You know I'm not saying I didn't do anything wrong. I'm not telling you that you did anything wrong for doing what you're doing. But I know they definitely invested a lot of money into these programs and they want to ensure that they're implemented to fidelity, but sometimes supplements are needed, um, those are the only curricular decisions I make and I do that, not only with the grade level teachers and content area teachers, but our coaches and master teachers and then I do try to involve a director at the district level so I have a little more leverage at

with that. I usually don't just jump in and say, without involving a content area person from the district.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

We do somewhat um, if the district is looking to purchase a new...., we follow the model curriculum. So the tool we use to support the model curriculum may be, we may look at 3 different programs for let's say Social Studies that we're going to look at. Because Social Studies they want tied to language arts and the common core. So we're going to be looking at 3 different Social Studies things and as administrators we may be broken out into little groups and then may have to come back and give feedback. One or two of our schools, one school may pilot each, so if there are three tools we're looking at your gonna pilot this one, you're gonna pilot this one, you're gonna pilot this one and we're gonna come back with feedback. We want your feedback administratively, we want the teacher's feedback, we want to you know come with exemplars, student work you know, assessment, you know things like that and then the district makes the final decision on what will be purchased.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

We um, they're informed multiple times a school year. They're informed first, one of the things we do is review the NJASK data from the previous year. One of their activities is now taking the students' scores from last year and identifying the students that they will now be teaching. Prioritizing them based on you know numbers and operation, number sense, problem solving, all the areas that come under math. They have to break down the components and identify. Put group students accordingly so that automatically create groups for their differentiation. But this group if we're working on number sense, this kid might be in the low group, but in data analysis he might be in the middle group you know what I mean. So it's really getting kids where they are and um, meeting their needs there. And from that point on in those groups that's the expectation of how students are to be worked with and then when we come to look at evidence on that like based on the model curriculum assessments um, we're looking at data um, that way. It is discussed after the unit assessment is completed, the following common planning time um, is spent reviewing that data, um, sharing out that data. Like I said before we are, our district was big on walk throughs so that's what's outside my office now. Wasn't the data but it's how we're responding to walk throughs and documenting our growth and deficits that they've identified. Next year, like I said last year was all data, next year it will all be data. All you will see is um, by grade level, by teacher, but the teacher's name won't be there. Um, but you'll know who the 3rd grade language arts teacher is. But it will all be up there by grade level for everyone to see the student progress. It will be very public and updated with the rollover of each new unit. So once we've collected the data for like we're just staring unit 5, the last unit. And teachers will put in that data. I'll put it in my little chart and hopefully have it up there before the end of school year. But that's what they're

gonna see at the end of the school year, is I may take down units 1 through 4 and we're gonna start with 5 where your students left off and then go 1,2,3,4,5. Or I just may remove it altogether and pass 5 on to the next year's teacher.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

Well the teachers um, are supposed to have conferences with the students about their academic performance based on the unit assessments. If I'm not in the room I can't tell you that has or has not happened. Teachers um, have been um, it wasn't required but it will probably required next year. Especially since teachers are being so held accountable to growth. I would want it in my classroom. I would have pretty much what's going to be out here just for my class in my classroom. And then I would make sure that the students knew who, it remained anonymous, but students would know where they fell on this chart. So all the students' names or ID numbers would be there but you wouldn't know whose ID number is who and the students would know that this is my ID number and this is where I am. One of the 1[st] thing the students have to do at the beginning of the school year is they have to know their NJASK score in Language arts and Math and then collaboratively with the content area teachers they have to say what areas they're going to work on based on their area to improve their score. 'Cause you stop them in the hallway and say what did you get on Language Arts? What was your score on the NJASK in Language Arts? What was your Math score? And it gets them in the thought process of self analyzing you know, where they might not be because someone else is always doing it for them, so what's your plan? This is an area you didn't do so well, you think this is an area you might want to focus on? Like we give teachers, give them 1 or 2 things. Don't give them 10 million things that they didn't do 'cause you're never gonna see growth. Give them one or two things and I'm gonna help you and support you and then I'm gonna come back and formally and informally observe you and track, monitor your progress.

VI. PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Well, we totally limit it, announcements, unless it is an emergency and we can't reach a teacher. We have tons of phones in our building that we can call directly into a classroom as opposed to doing an announcement and disrupting the whole school. We do not have the flexibility to make an announcement into a singular classroom however we can call the classroom on the phone, which is still a disruption but its less disruptive then doing a school wide announcement. Typically announcements are made 1[st] thing in the morning and then announcements aren't made again until ten to three if there are any reminders on a typical day. Um, there are occasions where though that does happen, but we do try to minimize it. We don't transfer parent phone calls to the classroom; we don't do any of those things.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

Well the consequence for here in (Blank) it's been a past practice that 3 lateness's will count as an absence An absence, at the number of absences can determine whether a child is retained or not. We retain um, at 18 days of absences approximately. You know I'm at this dilemma I have a child that's been absent 30 days, passed 1st and 2nd marking cycle, had a medical reason for the absences, but was not absent enough to receive home instruction and the doctor according to the parent wouldn't give documentation for home instruction. So now he's been absent 30 days but he passed the first two marking cycles. And this, the end of 3rd marking cycle we have no grades for him so we have to mark, he was out most of the 3rd marking cycle so we're giving him incompletes. We're compiling a series of packets for him to complete to make up this work. He'll have three or four weeks to do it, if he doesn't then he gets all 50's. Um, because you know mom provided some medical documentation but none to justify the extent of the absences but do we fail him? Do we retain him? Because he's passing the first two marking cycles, that's kinda the rub. But there are consequences for tardy. I'll call the parents and tell them they have to come to school. We have a parent that doesn't bring the child until 11 o'clock every day. And she lives right down the block, every day. And then we say they're supposed to be here at 8 o'clock and um, and you know we threaten to call social services on them. We'll do attendance referrals we'll do those kind of things, because your child's not in school. That's why we send someone to your house 'cause your child's not in school, and your child needs to be in school. And um, the consequences are more for the parent because the ones who are consistently tardy are our younger students who can't come to school by themselves. So how do you hold a 6 year accountable that mommy didn't get up and drive me to school today, you know. And then we let the parents know that your child is consistently tardy and we have to mark 3 tardies as an absent. Which may keep, God forbid you tell them you're going to leave their child back they'll make sure the child is there.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes, I do, all the time. Initially um, the roll of the assistant principal was to do all the lunch periods. Our school has since expanded so much that for my assistant principal to do a lunch period she would be doing a lunch period from 11 o'clock in the morning to 1:30. We have four lunch periods. So there would be a time when I need her working on instruction, or we have other discipline issues, or we're working with parents or we have our own other meetings, our data analysis, our safety committee meeting, our whatever other meetings that we're required to have. So I've assumed some of the lunch duty responsibility, I go down two of the lunch periods and she does two of the lunch periods. And that is a big time in the morning. In the morning is another time. Usually I'm down stairs when the kids are coming in and we have two waiting areas. Our 5-7 students wait

in one area, our kindergarten wait in another. The assistant principal and I split those up, um, we meet with students usually. We just got a parental complaint and this is true, we have not been doing it. Usually we were very visible at dismissal time. We have not been but also there have been a lot of meetings at 3 o'clock, there have been teachscape at 3 o'clock, there are a lot of things that keep us from going outside. And I know that's a good time to meet the community when they're picking up their kids. And so you know I just met with her, my assistant principal today. We need to be more proactive and get out there 15 minutes and whatever needs to get put off, gets put off. And we're going through the teachscape, initially took 2 hours to do now we're getting it done in an hour and 30 minutes, an hour and 15 minutes. Going through each area so now we do have the time to do it and we'll just let the teachers sit there and talk until we get there. And so um, yes, we are definitely very visible to students

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

Um, I participate in all the extracurricular activities in the building. I'm present, every single event that we have I'm there. Um, if my you know, that's not one of the job requirements of the assistant principals is to be at all of them, but I may put that in her summative observation that I want her to be at least half of them. I know she has, and it's not a requirement but she should be at as many as possible with a minimum of half. Um, I know she has a young child, I have two young children myself and um, I'm doing it on my own, she's doing it on her own. But you know we get there and um, and then this way also um, and there in her observation um one of the things that I make is that um, she assumes the administrator point person position for one or two events in the school. Usually I do that for all of them but I need to delegate some of that for her.

VIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

We have a teacher of the month every month. We are currently aligning the criteria for our teacher of the month to Danielson. So making the criteria to be selected as teacher of the month will be selected by your peers of teachers at team meetings. And then the school management team will make the ultimate decision on who's the teacher of the month. And that's posted right outside for the teacher of the month. Well they would vote in there to nominate someone and at every grade level. And then that would be brought back to the school management team. We would review the criteria and that they would have to, they couldn't just vote for the person. They would have to provide artifacts that show that this is in fact taking place and those teachers are meeting this criteria based on that information we would determine. Or we could also do one of these, yes they all do meet this criteria put all of their names in a hat, pick one that's the winner. Because you know since they were all eligible that's a real easy process. And it's also very fair.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

Um, I have not done that, however not in writing. I have spoken to teachers about things that I was extremely impressed with and pulled them to the side. The culture of our school and I don't know what it is, it's been like that since before I got here. One of the things that I've been trying to do is we have some great teachers that I try to push out as leaders. Which is one of the district goals that they want us to do, to try to push out these teacher leaders a little bit, they don't like it. They don't like being spot lighted. They don't like why can't you be more like this. You know that's what they think its like, why can't you be more like this. Um, we kinda do it in a roundabout way. Why don't you share, one of our staff meetings that we usually end the year on is because most of our teachers never see because the school is so big. They don't see what a seventh grade math teacher is doing down here. You know they don't see what their bulletin boards are like. They don't see what their instruction is like. They don't see anything good happening, all they see in the kindergarten wing, that's all I see is Kindergarten. And the 1^{st} graders see 1^{st} grade they don't see kindergarten, they don't see any other grade you know what I mean. So we try to have like this sharing out session of the successes. Um and ideally I wanted that to happen once a marking cycle. We will end the year with it but only 'cause so many things took precedent we had to do professional development on using the model curriculum. You know that took up the 1^{st} whole marking period of you know professional developments. We had to and then we have to do all the things that we have to do first. We have to do HIB training, we have to do affirmative action training, we have to do blood borne pathogens training, we have to do security procedures and drills. You know all that has to be like the first few staff meetings and then you kinda get down to this. But we try to do things where they bring them to the table as opposed to being spotlighted by Administrators. They don't like that. They like that I came up and said something to them about it or gave them a pat on the back about it um, but one of the things the assistant principal did, she's responsible for coordinating the bulletin boards and assigning bulletin boards teachers. And we have criteria and a rubric for the bulletin boards and she kinda, she gold stars them that they have you know met the criteria and expectation for the bulletin boards like that, so that's another way we kinda do it.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Well we're very aligned in that area. We have no PD that does not have to do with a school goal. Um, however when, I can't, when the district has PD it's gotten much better. But you know you'll get the conversations, why am I going to this workshop? This has absolutely nothing to do with what I do, you know. You know I teach 4^{th} grade math, why am I going to a science workshop for 12^{th} grades? You know or whatever. And our

PD has become…., our school PD is totally aligned to goals. The district PD you know is where do you put the guidance counselors? Where do you put…, they have to go to. And like we had to do training on the procedures for NJASK for this year, I had, paraprofessionals by their contract do not have to come to staff meetings. Um, I had all the paraprofessionals come to the staff meeting and kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade teachers had to attend the staff meeting. And I knew the 1st thing out of those stupid peoples mouth was going to be why are we here and the thing was our school has so many modifications. Half of our school is special needs or LEP. The other half is general education and maybe of that other half a quarter of them need to be, will be classified and have some kind of classification. And so during testing we have probably more modifications than almost any other school in our district. Testing modifications, so we may need to pull an experienced testing teacher in 2nd grade out of their class, you have to call out for a sub and you're going to test this modification group. Or you're going to test this classroom 'cause this is a 1st year teacher who can't test and they're gonna do your class or something like that. Everyone needed to be there because we needed them to all be hearing the same thing because they may be pulled to do testing. So they understood it you know. So it did have some relevance, I usually do not like to place teachers or staff members in PD's that have nothing to do with what they do. But all, like I said, all our PD is aligned to district goals.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Usually not, because they want to leave right after, but our, my school is a little different. You'll have that group of teachers that will stay and we'll have conversations about it. Teachers during the activities… 'cause um, we'll have conversations about it. Like I said we have about a hundred staff members. I do not like…, during the teachscape whole group, so to speak. Usually, that's not how I do staff meetings, not at all. Um, one of the things, it's not a highlight, but it's to show staff that we appreciate them. But for example on our school calendar we have the picture of everybody's birthday who is in April, and then once a month we celebrate their birthdays. Like this Monday before the teachscape I get two cakes, we celebrate all the April birthdays, they all stand up, we all clap, we all eat cake and we're teachscaping. It's just another way to acknowledge them, but like during our faculty meetings. Then once we do that, then K-2 teachers go to this room, 3-4 go to this room; 5-7 go to this room. And I've met with my instructional team that's going to be facilitating in each room and then everybody is hearing the same thing. Then myself and the assistant will bounce from room to room.

X. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Yes, we also have our student of the month, and student of the month is not all academic. We're probably one of the few schools, like the Superintendent recognizes the students of

the month for each school at every Board meeting. The majority of the other schools, you know they want Principal's honor roll which means you got a 98 in every subject for every marking cycle. You score 300 on NJASK, you're in the National Honor Society, this club, this thing, they usually pick those kind of students, you know. I pick the little Special Ed kid just because didn't have 3 fights today, because he's made progress, which improves his behavioral progress which improves academics. But it's not stellar, he's not a superstar, but he made major accomplishments for it to be acknowledged. And he might not ever get acknowledged and um, I think I'm probably one of the only ones that does that. I think that it is important that those kids get something because we're always acknowledging…, like we're gonna have our NJASK rally Friday and there's a poster contest that we have for 3-7. Each grade level, you know, the winning homeroom will get a pizza party kind of thing. Then we also acknowledge the kids who got perfect scores the previous year with PTO and the school, we give them $100 gift cards for getting a perfect score.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Well, we do have um, an honor roll that I don't…., I really couldn't tell you how they do that because some teachers do it differently; some teachers don't do it at all. Um, the rewards usually come at the school level. One of the things that we just did um, is our sunshine committee purchased a money machine, like you go in and it blows up fake money and you give them the real amount in what they would collect. That's going to be one of our incentives that we use next year for students. But also the way we're going to get the money to actually do that is um, like at our spring concert. We're planning spring concerts, winter concerts, right next to pay day. We will sell raffles to the parents. One ticket for $2.00, three for $5.00 to go into the money machine at an intermission during the concert. And then they would receive in cash whatever they collected in the fake money and um, but the first time we used it we raised $600.00, and that wasn't on a pay day. So if we would do it close to a pay day and then that money we raise we put into our student activity account at the board of education and we use it for other incentives.

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: __AR10_____

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

Well this is my 4th year 'cause I was here, left and came back so this is my 4th year at this school.

G. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Eleven.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Well, we have, gees there's so many of them though. Um, let's think, well first of all there's NJASK so all of the NJASK we actually develop a plan in order to let's say increase the proficiency level in NJASK. In addition to that we also have DRA's that we give to the children. And the teachers have goals that they need to reach with them so annual goals for the school, just let me try to think, NJASK, DRA's. Also we have goals that we have with the community. We try to increase the amount of, every year we have school wide events. Naturally, we take attendance and every year we hope as a group and sit down and try to figure out how we can get more and more people to come in. So whether it be our Reading night, parent universities, because we are trying to address one of the biggest problems here is the increasing ESL population and so we try and have those parents come in so we can teach them how to assimilate for lack of a better term. In other words know what the expectations are for their kids, that's part of our goal. Is this just academic, social or is it everything? Okay, so I guess I mean in a nutshell most of our stuff unfortunately is NJASK driven.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

I will tell you this, as I mentioned previously, I have been a Principal for 11 years and one of the things that is grossly underused is the way we use data. We took our professional development; we have a professional development team and our PDT team we meet monthly. But the focus for that team is how to use data. We create tests in order to get data and we get those weaknesses to the teachers. For instance I have, just to make that as simple as I can, I have seven different grade levels. Well actually, right I have K through 5 that's six and grades 6-7 so did I do that math right? Each one of those PD teachers is assigned to a grade level. So then we look at everything from Learnia, to NJASK, to DRA's, SRA's whatever data we have including teacher driven and also teacher made and in addition to our reading series they have assessments as well. So we take all of that stuff monthly, we look at it and we develop a plan in order to tackle it. Now last year our test scores went from doing this to about the 35^{th} percentile to the 60^{th} percentile. So we were pretty happy with that. And we're going to continue doing that in not so much math but Language Arts. We're very strong in Math. We were in the 80^{th} percentile. So we try and move, we have other issues here. The ESL is a huge problem but we're able to attack those weaknesses by analyzing this data. And I can tell you this, speaking to other Principals, data is grossly underutilized. And we have to have that. Do the teachers know how to read the data? That's the other thing. So we actually spoon feed them the data. I tell them exactly what I want them to do, we actually give them the material to make them successful. 'Cause if you don't you see when it goes along with data, this is just my opinion but we are throwing to much at these teachers to quickly and they you know they can't handle it. Not that they don't want to handle it but if you give them too much the shut down. So you have to break everything down to the simplest form. And like I've said I've been a Principal now for too long but I've done this type of thing and we all have to remember that we all were teachers. We gotta give them everything in its simplest form because if we make them work any harder than they have to work, then they're gonna shut down and go back to doing what they were doing. If you just think about the amount of work that they have to do report cards. I mean and now they have to in put it into the computer, so like I said, I try to break everything to its simplest form. I've been very successful with that um, but I use data and I think we use it pretty well here.

II.   COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

Well, we doing our, it's a couple of things we do. We have breakfast with the Principal. We have faculty meetings. We have parent university, we talk about um, exactly what we need to do there. We discuss our mission once a year and we also talk about the school level objective. That's once a year and twice a year we talk about our NJASK scores and what our plan is so actually that meeting for me is tonight. But um that's how we do it; I mean that's it in a nutshell.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

You know I read this question and I was, well you know we use learning walks pretty effectively here. You know the lesson plans um, but I'm not really big on, although we talk about bulletin boards, if you were to have opportunities to walk around the school you'd see writer's workshop is posted on there. Um, we use posters to reinforce the ESL's not ESL but Spanish. We do things like that um, but to reinforce I'm not really…, you know this question bothered me a little bit I'll have to admit. Yeah, cause I mean what steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected, you know a lot of times although we give the teachers what they need, I count very heavily on the teacher's to do their jobs. Um, so unless I'm reading this question wrong, and am I? We really don't, I mean posters, bulletin boards. When you say emphasizing academic progress, are you talking about gallery walks? Well, you know it's funny, this one of the things, I guess we don't do enough of this to be honest with you. Like I said we talk about things during faculty meetings, I mean during our parent meetings, our PTA meetings. We have Parent University, ah, things like that but we, you know I'm going to be honest with you. I don't think we do enough of it. This question bothered me I have to admit. Yeah it did, 'cause I don't think we do enough and you know what I don't know if any school that does really. Not naturally I could make up an answer but I'm not going to do that. To be honest with you, I don't think I do enough of this. So it will certainly make me think.

III.   SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Ok, that's actually, I think I was doing learning walks before they were actually called learning walks. But before we actually had a name for them I thought it was important to actually get up and around the building. And there's a couple of things I do, informal I would say, I would walk in and I'll tell you. There's so many things that I would do, let's say I walk in your room I always carry a little note pad around and I just jot something down, it would usually be good, it would never be bad. Like I'd say, one of the reasons I became a Principal like I joke about this all the time, but really one of the reasons because I never wanted to do a bulletin board ever again. I thought it was so, I was never creative. Maybe make a little note about the bulletin board or something I saw on there. But as far as I might walk into a room and I might write loved your questioning strategies. You know things along those lines. I enjoy the differentiation, great use of teacher made materials, um whatever it would be, I would jot a little something down. If it was something that I didn't particularly care for, the 1^{st} time I usually talk to the teacher and say hey look do me favor. I mean I had a problem with the one teacher where they had a problem talking with the child. So I would just say it. The 2^{nd} time I would write an

email you know as we previously discussed please you know watch your tone or you know the sarcasm or whatever it would be. Um that's how I would do it bad things the 1st time, and then the 2nd time I'll put it in writing and then send it. I usually make a copy of it and then I'll throw it in their folders, if I thought it was a real big problem. It works pretty well too. As you know they don't want any part of us. They want us as far away from them as they can. So the good, the bad and then let's say yeah that's pretty much how I do it. Good things I usually write down on a piece of paper and leave it even if it's something and I even share things. Well, I'll give you a good example, I have teacher involved right now on a very sticky IEP and before I start any faculty meeting I start with positive affirmations and the good things that we do. Too often I just get up there and I rattle off the 50 things that I have to talk about. But um one of the things the teacher is, keep it soft, you know what I mean, when you talk to parents keep it soft. Don't get confrontational and I had another parent and the teacher sat right where you're sitting and the assistant principal was there. The parent was looking to blame the teacher and it could have been very confrontational and the teacher looked up and just said listen I will do a better job of making you aware of your child's deficiencies, and I thought you knew or whatever she used. So I brought that up at the meeting so I'll do that as well so I'll communicate that to the whole staff. I didn't use their names, I didn't want to embarrass anybody but I did say these two members of the staff and it all happened within 2 or 3 days. Um, yeah so things I see during learning walks that I really enjoy we'll talk about it at faculty meetings at well. We always learn like I said, if you go back to question 4 that I don't think I do enough to let everybody know. We do a lot of great things here, I've never met a group of harder working teachers then I've met in this school. And but maybe I don't do enough to let everybody know. It was kinda hard for me so gonna have to think about that question.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Alright I usually, I just write it and we talk about it. But one of the things I will say, I'll ask them what didn't I like. I was in a room not too long ago and I was watching a teacher use, try some instructional practices. I really wasn't crazy about the way she was doing it so I made some suggestions, you know try this, try that and you know look if I don't go back in there they're not going to do it so please make a point and let me know when you're going to do it. Give me a couple of times when you expect to be working on it and I'll go in. Like I said everything I do I usually put on paper, you know, and I'll send them an email, I really did enjoy that. Nothing bad the 1st time it's on me and the 2nd time we'll put it in writing. The same thing, formal observations I have no problem with writing something in you know if you have to give somebody an unsatisfactory, what is it, an improvement needed, whatever it is. I'm fine I used to think that the direct approach was the best but I don't really sugar coat anything but it's the way we say it sometimes. And I'm pretty good at that, like I think I'm pretty good at it so I just wanted to make sure that I got everything I wanted to say for that one. Yeah, okay I would say I do both, both conferences and written.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Yes. Yeah, absolutely. We take some liberties. So we make sure we incorporate although it's the new common standards we make sure we incorporate writing into science and social studies. But I was doing that before we were supposed to do it. For instance we departmentalized here and as much as it, I mean, the truth of the matter is I don't think a 5th grader needs 5 days of an hour a day of Science. I have 6th grade and the 5th grade also, and the Superintendent wanted us to departmentalize which is fine but I don't feel a reason for them to do Science 5 days a week so I cut that back and I do the same thing. Social Studies is incorporated into the Language Arts box. I want writing, reading and writing. We look at weaknesses and we try to incorporate all of that in Science and Social Studies plus the Language arts so I'm getting more of it and I check the lesson plans, yeah.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Well I do. We recently adopted a new math series so I was involved with that. I was on that committee. We recently adopted a new writing series, or actually adopted a writing series, we never had one so I was involved in that committee. Currently I'm on the new reading committee so any time I get the chance to you know give my input I do it.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Well, we do it at faculty meetings. I give them whatever I have for instance the NJASK we get the forms we break them down and then we tell them exactly where they're weak and we give them the grades. 'You know whatever we get from the state 'cause every teacher wants to know how everyone of their kids does and then we take it a step further and break it down. So I put it more in a memo then a newsletter.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

We inform the students. I would tell a 3rd grade student exactly how they did on the NJASK exam? Yeah no, I never had to do that. I don't talk to the kids at all, I talk to the parents, no sorry.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public

announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

We have AM announcements and PM announcements and that's it. Alright we also have cell phones, anybody I need to contact, although the teachers are not allowed to use their cell phones but um, we don't, we're not afraid to get up and walk. In extreme emergencies, sometimes we have to get on there, but I would say it's the exception and not the norm. We have these things, the intercom.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

There is none. This is probably one of the most frustrating things of being an elementary Principal. We have absolutely no recourse. And to be honest with you, you hit, that's a sore spot with me because I had one kid that's been absent 60 times. I've called DYFS, I've called the police, and I've called the parents. Nobody cares. And it kills me because you know listen, it's very frustrating because there's not a whole lot I can do. It's a lot of instructional time, 60 times. I've called the police, I've called the parents, I've called DYFS, I even called the kids Pastor to talk to and that didn't work. So I mean very frustrating, and even so, even some of the kids that have been out a lot. I worked in another district and actually used to go to court. And I encourage that but they don't want to do it. Not that I want to be a jerk about this but I don't have that much time. As soon as I come in, I don't have that much time. I'm not retaining anybody, I don't believe in retention by the way but that's whole 'nother thing.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yeah, lunch and learns we have. I'll walk in and it's a good way for me to find out exactly. During grade level meetings I'll sit down and have lunch once or twice a year and we'll talk about things. It's important venting session for them, sometimes they're a little frustrated so we'll talk on the time. I have a pretty good relationship with the teachers. They know I'll listen to them but they know they better not come to me with nonsense because it's just too busy but I am supportive. It's a delicate balance sometimes you know.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

I go to just about everything, because like you I want to be a Superintendent someday. Well, I want to be a Superintendent. Well, I figured since you were going for the Ph.D. No, I'd like to be a Superintendent so I'm trying to get there, yeah why not I've been a Principal for a long time so I'd like to give it a shot.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or

memo's?

Constantly and I'll tell you something, besides we have teacher of the year award and things like that. But during our faculty meetings I have come up with the best thing ever and if you'd like to use this you can. The teacher goes out of their way and does something outstanding, we give them jean coupons, blue jean, one day, or a lesson plan coupon so they can have one other thing. Either they don't submit a lesson plan for the week or a jean coupon. Alright so in other words we just had a night, a March reading madness celebration so I said anybody; they all came back except for one teacher. Whoever came back they got a jean coupon. The superintendent is not crazy about the jean days. We have them once a month but we always ties them into, we call it the (blank) food drives. And we have them bring in a can of something for the food bank in (blank). And they'll bring that in, and they'll do anything to wear jeans for a day and you know that. They'll do anything and so hey guys you want to come back you get to wear jeans the next day.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

I've only done it once or twice. I've only done it once or twice so there are yes, well were we actually talking about things that I've observed like going back to the other question as far as observations? Right I write thank you notes and a lot of times we make copies for their folders so yes. I think that's where you're going with that.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

Well, I don't do that. That comes from the curriculum office. I wanted to do a couple of things. I wouldn't mind because I would tell you exactly where I wanted to go with it, exactly what I would do but they won't let me do it.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Yeah, there is. At the beginning of the faculty meeting they usually yeah, right after we do the positive affirmations if anybody has attended any professional development you know or anything that's working they can talk about it.

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Okay we have what they call the Principal's club. In fact if you want I'll print the criteria for you and you can have it. We recognize, when I was a kid I went to Catholic School and I never was recognized for anything. And I wasn't a great student but I worked very hard. Probably in today's day and age I probably would have ADHD or something. Just sitting here my head is ready to explode, I'm not a sitter, I like to you know, so that's okay. So but my point is I created this award for those children for instance one of this things would be, behavioral improvement would be one of the categories, or went up one letter grade or two letter grades, or significant academic improvement in one particular area. Now we don't use letter grades in K-5 we use a number system so leave that up to the teacher's discretion. They developed an act of bullying that's another one. So I have a lot of criteria, we have an awards night. The teachers are allowed to pick one person per marking period. We have a little ice cream social for them. They get a certificate, they get a little pin. And the parents come and they take pictures, we have a real nice time. I also do this for, I'll have lunch with the Principal for the kids they love that. We also have, while they're in here they get to call their parents while they have lunch in the Principal's office. They tell them that they're in the Principal's office for a good reason and everyone always gets a kick out of that. So we do things like that anyone that scored highly proficient on the NJASK exam we recognize in the morning over the PA system. An awards assembly, we have that as well. And we also have a (school)gram and we recognize the kids that do outstanding work in there. It's the newsletter, we highlight student work on the web, so we have highlighted students and every month a grade level has to submit stuff.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

They have a whole bunch of things here, sometimes I go to, they have you know not awards ceremonies but stars of the month club and stuff, buy maybe pizza for them. That's another thing you give kids pizza and they'll do anything for you. So I'll go to those so like I said a few teachers that do it and the kids get to pick a prize. And one of the prizes is hanging out with me for a day. So I'll do that as well, so whatever they ask me I am usually pretty good with that. We also have um, I can read to the Principal. Once a kindergarten kid is ready to read they send them down here and they read a book to me, and I give them a button that says I just read to the Principal. So we do a whole bunch of stuff like that, so we also have kids that get glasses. It's called (blank) glasses club. I make wearing glasses cool 'cause I'm the coolest Principal in the whole wide world, ask the kids that they'll tell you. So any way that I can support the teachers I will, and the kids as well, alright.

**THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: _____JR11_____

A. How many years have you been principal/vice principal at this school?

Since 2002, ten years, yeah.

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

Vice Principal, probably 2000, thirteen years.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Yes, we do have one; we call it an action plan. Every year I know Mr. (Blank) does the two, and he did this in September. What I did is, he's out on sick leave since November. What I did is go to the district in the Superintendent meeting, and I got the plan, I have to review it, what we did and how to help students make improvements. Throughout the year we revisited it several times. Um, it's basically about achieving student's performance on the test, the NJASK test.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

It is very important. We even, the action plan, we look at the NJASK scores for grades, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Not only that, for the lower grades we look at, we have the DRA test. Its Language Arts you know, your leveled students reading level, we look at that. We have beginning tests in September and then we have the 2nd round, 3rd round. The 2nd round is like February, 3rd round is at the end of the year. We look into the student's growth. Some students may start with a level 8 and it's throughout the year jump to a level 12, 18. And we also look at the reference average grade of one student should read at the level of let's say 14 or 18 compare to that and of course our class range.

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

    Most of it is through the faculty meetings. Through faculty meetings, also we have PDT's, PDT is the professional development team and we actually, they're involved in developing the school goals or missions. And at a faculty meeting we print out what we generally did on the plans and you know like that.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

    We do have assemblies; we do promote academic excellence and at you know assemblies, student assemblies. But we do not give the pressure that this is our goal. But the faculty members, we do share where we are targeted and this is where we want to be and we all have a form. We all have a form, ah I cannot put it in my hands on, and we have our safe haven targets.

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

    We did that in the past three years you know. We, Mr. (Blank) and I, we split them up. The faculty names and we built a schedule, so you're going to see this and we're going to rotate and in other words we have a learning walk schedule. Learning walk schedule A and learning walk schedule B. So this week he's on A, I'm on B and then we switch off. So we did that for the past 2 years and yeah this year Mr. (Blank) is out, I'm on my own, with the vice Principal and the Principal. We have someone to come in to help but it's not you know the same. You have to reach out a lot. So I do have someone Mrs. (Blank) the curriculum director comes in with me. We did at least once a week, informals. But in the past two years we tried to reach five classrooms on a daily basis. But right now and I don't cause the learning walk but I'm in the classroom probably even more because Mr. (Blank) is not here so we have and this and that. So I'm always in the classroom, yeah. We decided in house so in that case basically all the teachers are covered.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

    Um, what I do is I most of the time; most of the time I come back to pre-observations so we all agree on what I'm going to look into. You know if you want me to look at

something you're practicing, you want feedback, so we pinpoint where I want to look, the areas. So after the observation we sit together and talk about where is the strengths and where it's not the strengths. So I have five areas, I organize my observation report on five areas. Like planning and um, this is not the Stronge this is this years, and we category in five, like knowledge of content and instruction skills. I put the strengths and the suggestions, classroom management in the environment, that's another one, suggestions, planning and the preparation, knowledge of the child development and the student evaluations. So I will focus on these five areas, and you know give some suggestions. For each one sometimes I spend time, you know we have to have the post observation conference and really sit down; you start off with something else. But the idea that this year after I finish writing I went to the teacher again, I said after I finish the writing I saw something else if you want to hear this. I think after a long deliberation, thinking I match up your effort, you probably have the lesson planned for one hour but the observation spans about 1 hour to write it up. Now I write up and I saw more and I started going back and giving them you know a second round of feedback. You have 3 days to meet. So after 3 days, you know how busy it is and then you really sit down and put it on paper and then you sit down and say Oh my God I forgot to tell her this, or I forgot to tell her that. This could've been like…, so I've tried to tell them again. We have three days for the observation and 10 days I believe to write it up.

IV.   COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

   Yes, we do. We do look at our Language Arts and our Math scores. If we, for example this year we are Language Arts scored, our targets, we didn't pass the areas of math. So we think about how can we improve the math. And also our language, our math score is a 78 passing rate, the language arts is a 53. But the Language Arts is still low so we cannot take it easy on language arts. So the district will implement a new math curriculum I think and that's to address, you know the need. But we do look at the scores to see, and also we will say oh do we need to practice more? Our math did not meet the math benchmark, even though it's a higher passing rate.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

   We have different committees, like math, like reading, like writing and you're a committee member you get involved. As a vice principal, also I hold horizontal meetings. I will chair the 3rd grade teachers on different after schools and for one hour we talk about okay, 3rd grade curriculum, math and language arts. But I didn't participate at the committee meetings. They didn't require me; I don't know if they required Mr. (Blank) you know as a Principal participate more. Also we have an education committee, the district wide, talking about the curriculum not only elementary school, middle school, high school. I attended a few and not everyone you know.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Okay, we share it with the teachers for example I just call all the teachers to my office. This year we did this, I gave them their letter, I showed them your 3rd grade teacher, you are K so this is your performance. This is A, B, C, D….its each person in our district. So they felt good or bad and sometimes you are this. I said I cannot tell other people but I can tell yours, the district created this. I suggested that we create it, in the past I created them, but I don't have other schools and can only say this is the 4 teachers. We have 4 sections, but we cannot compare to any other teachers so I like this, I like this very much. And some teachers look at it and oh my gosh, I'm like this.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

At the PTA meetings we tell the parents I think. Mr. (Blank) did several times; oh we met this, this is the passing rate. Students – I don't know how much they can absorb that, they I told them so many times their own score. I'll will say oh come here, do you know your last year's score? I'm telling you, I bet not many vice principal does this but, yes, you tell them once they forget. Or I ask them or did you get your results, no they say we don't. I have 5th grade, 6th grade, they forgot. I only talk to those who didn't pass because you don't have that time to reach out to everyone. And we did um, NJASK celebration achievement, we give buttons for those who are higher, above 250 in math. But the language arts, not even many. We give at the top three prizes, the third one only 230.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

Hmm, what we did is we hold all the announcements in the morning and we do announcements in the afternoon towards the end. In the middle we have some announcements, we try not. For example we try to predict we're going to have an out day, in day instead of calling during the day. And for me I talk to the kids at recess time. I try to for example, re-registration all those behavior problems, I try to get them at lunch time, at recess time, instead of calling them out. For emergencies we have to call them out and also we do it on individual basis, some kids can't afford it, and some cannot. Today we had the chorus practice and we looked at them. Some kids, they need to be afterschool program, but they're at chorus practice. So we say next year should we really call or put a ban on the students who are not academically comfortable to afford this, you know. So we do give a lot of considerations and every time we're at the band or practice we talk to the teachers you know.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

We do ask the teachers to tell ahead of time if you know somebody's absent, for 3 consecutive absences to tell the office. If accumulated seven days, we have to know too. So I will call from my office. Mr. (Blank) send letters out saying we want to check your documents, registration paper, we're afraid you're not in the area. We have a truant officer check the house to, district wide. But it's still a lot of people, you check their papers and they're so mad, yes. We were thinking should we do that, and then they argue it's not the 1st graders fault. Can you really punish the 1st grade, you can't. That's why we didn't. We've probably, I know high school definitely.

VII. MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes, every morning and um, I see them on the playground or in the hallways every dismissal time and recess. We have like 500 students; I almost can call almost everyone's name. Yes, almost everyone's name because I'm around so much with them.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

I attend all the like um, for example today's the band practice, I was there all the time. I was there all the time watching. Actually I'm frustrated, they're so bad. I went a little bit crazy today. We have the 5th and 6th selected to the chorus. Their behavior is so bad and their singing is so bad. They are bad in performance too, both. And you know what's the worst? The teacher just tell me Mrs. (Blank) I'm not expecting them to, it's just for fun. I have a problem with that. You know what its representative of the district and I said you should see other chorus. I said let us pull several kids out. So everyone now you know your words and now you can sing confidently. If I don't know the words how can I sing confidently? Before they come to you I said I'll talk to you tomorrow, because its better I talk to you tomorrow because I'm upset. I truly think that I do things 100%, if I'm a music teacher, I give all. The kids didn't even show up, 3 or 4 times basically and stand there and know nothing. How can you accept this, for the 1st time you should have called already? You only miss music 2 times and then you're out. But don't let him miss a 2nd time, you talk to the parents, you don't talk to the parents and he keeps on missing. You argue for him, he has to participate for what?

VIII. PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memo's?

I write the teacher of the year recommendation/nomination and I write the 2 letters. I personally tell them I try to not at a staff meeting to say oh who is so good? We have the teacher of the year and that's basically it and also I read the emails, thank you letters and the final evaluation. I put good things on there you know um, but I didn't try, have you tried to put at the faculty meetings, tell one teacher's who's so good. We have another one, this TPSIS Program. It's a kind of positive behavior in schools you know. You reward a student with tickets and also the teacher can write a note. A thank you for extra work, they write it to each other and we just read it. TPSIS Positive Behavior in System in Schools. Yes, this is the 6th year, it's pretty effective with students.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

Not much, I have to say. We didn't have that practice, maybe I should do it. Some of them they really deserve that. Probably when you're not too busy, sit down and do several one. That's a good idea if you have the luxury time.

IX.   PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

For example, if our goal is to improve students, you know, performance on NJASK we have workshops, we have instruction and invite a professional development workshops to do, geared toward them When we send people to professional development we will say oh this is the NJASK related a little, this is math related and we're trying to get a writers workshop. Send the teachers to Columbia, that goes with our weakness in writing. That's also district coordinated you know.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

I think we do, yes. We did on the SMART skills. Sometimes we say oh, we do not have faculty meeting, everyone meet on your grade level. What I did is this, this year I had the kindergarten, 1st grade meet. So vertical, what do you really think what our students need? And then 1st grade met with 2nd grade, so 1st grade they're in the middle. Because 3, 4, 5, 6, they had the NJASK or something else to do. So the lower grade, first kindergarten meet with the 1st grade. The 1st grades meet half and half. Half with kindergarten, half with 2nd grade. They liked it very much. And also we did the peer observation. I have new teachers observe the other teachers. I sit with them when Mr. (Blank) was still here. After he left I had no more time for that. They just tell me, I go to their classroom or teach their classroom sometimes. I said I teach your class and then you go see another teacher. Basically I can teach any grade level. Sometimes, I just say oh my God, you better stay and look at me then another teacher…, I can explain this with my modeling better. I was 6th Grade Math teacher for many.., ten years. So I have no connection. nothing, I was so effective the students every year make the 15th percdntile

increase. So I was in New York City the Bronx. So the Superintendent in Brooklyn picked me up.

X.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

We do have honor roll for 3rd or 4th grade above. But the 6th grade they come in with the new report card system. We give them this year, we had it for years. And 6th grade, we have honor roll. Yes, we change their report card, it's not a grade anymore it's like S you pass. It's like a U you're on grade level. It's like become a letter. If you're a letter grade how can you have…? But it's kind of complicated. Oh you pass, you didn't pass, oh you got a 4, you got a 3. So this year we did the NJASK performance achievement celebration. So we gave them a certificate and this and that. We have like an assembly.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

We have the PBSIS, you know being good and they are being rewarded, not by their classroom teacher, any teacher caught them being good. So they will have tickets and then submit the tickets and have you know raffles. So sometimes it's not, maybe not the best of kids again. The reward is probably whoever are good get a chance, but you always get a kid who has a bigger chance. Because the more tickets you have the more chance you get to be picked. It's not by whoever gets the most. They have a prize, a different prize they can choose. For example spend the time with the Principal at lunch time. Take a picture with the President, above we have a live site prompt. We have a winner's circle so that's the area. Yes, there's so many to choose. Each class gets one, you pick one each week, It's not like a whole month they have to wait. Each week we collect tickets to give the reward. They just put the tickets in a bucket and then they just pick one. Also every month whoever got picked, if the staff member gives it to you the staff member gets a prize to, because you gave a lucky ticket. For example, today we have a rewards day. All students and get 10 tickets you gave the staff member you think is the well behaved, so the jar is there. So the staff member will write their name they want to be picked so they get a prize

THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Adapted version of the (PIMRS) Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

These interview questions are designed to provide a profile of your leadership. It consists of #20 behavioral statements that describe principal job practices and behaviors. You are asked to consider each question in terms of your leadership over the past school year.

Please provide the following information as instructed by the researcher:

Code Name: ___AR12_____

A. How many years have you been principal at this school?

An administrator for 3, Principal for 5. No I said Administrator, its Vice Principal for 3 and principal for 5

B. At the end of this school year, how many years have you been a principal altogether?

It will be 5 at the end of the school.

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

1. Have you developed a focused set of annual school-wide goals? If so, please explain them.

Mm-hm, we have building goals that are done through um, action plan goals. Every Principal in the district has to do them and they're based on data. So we take our, usually our NJASK data and we formulate an analysis of that and base our goals of that area. Writing and um, Language Arts Literacy and we formulate school based goals in regards to that and set up services in regards to that as well. As well as, our professional development team which is no longer active at the end of this school year. We look at that data and we come up with um, more creative goals that are more intimate to our school. Um, that's for example, we'll have an um, writing day where it's fun and we do something that it incorporates the goal but it's more a fun kinda way to incorporate it above and beyond an extension of what we are actually, what it is.

2. Is it important for you to use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals?

Yes, very important. I have a lovely binder here of testing data and um, It's probably why my faculty meeting ran over so much. I'd just finished a conversation with my staff about um, the new evaluation system that's coming down the pike. We're adopting Stronge, we have the beachscape device but we don't use it, it's just sitting in a box somewhere. The superintendent saw it somewhere and we still haven't gotten it out of the box. Its new it just came. For example, what I talked about today was, these are rankings of all of the

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teachers who are 3rd grade teachers in the district and of the students in their classroom who weren't proficient in their class on the NJASK last year. This is teacher 1 and she had almost 80% of the students under language arts proficient and that same teacher had in 3rd grade in Math had over a 90% proficient. So I'm trying to get them to understand that um, data is important because they're going to have to do it next year with their SGO for Stronge, Student Growth Objectives. And data is something that I use to determine what I need to do internally.

For example if you're ranking is 12 consistently year after year that is a red flag for me that I need to move you out of a testing grade. You understand what I'm saying? So if your ranking is let's say here, to me that's more of a red flag consistently from year to year, up and down, up and down more of an indication for me that we need to work together to make you a more efficient teacher in this subject area. You know what I'm saying. This is a teacher for example I then took this and I didn't show them their rankings, well the person that made this chart changed it from 1 to A but this 1 is A, 2 is B, so this is showing the teacher's name who is not in this building, this is the whole district. This is the highest ranking teacher for language arts for 4th grade. I did not tell them who they were or what their ranking is. At the end of the meeting I wanted them to see the data and understand that we're looking. Don't think we're not taking this seriously. So I need them to understand that next year when it comes to data, Danielson is completely different from Stronge, so with Stronge that have to create almost like an action plan. This is an assessment in September I give students and then I put a plan in place to work on, first you find a need or a goal. Our goal is the writing in Language Arts literacy and then they take that and that assessment, they assess the kids where they are in that reading, writing genre and then they have a plan in place of what they're going to do to bring up those kids. In January they retest them and they have to show me almost like a report with percentages and so forth as to where those students have come up, you know what I'm saying.

So I'm getting them to understand that data is important because they're going to have to do it next year with their new evaluation. And then I want them to understand that I'm also looking at this data because I need to do something. If you're down here you need some more professional development. You need to observe some other teachers. I need to work with you to try and find staff development opportunities. We need to talk a lot about some strategies differently in your classroom so you can get up here. If I consistently stay here that's a problem. You know we all inherit teachers when we come into a building that are usually down here and there's nothing we can do about them with tenure laws but I'm not making your life easy. So they need to know that you're getting moved if you're not performing. Um, and then which is good for us, there are only 2 teachers that did better than all of our teachers. So all of our teachers actually, this teacher was a teacher in our building but she left, so our teachers rank high. And afterwards I didn't share this with anyone because it's confidential but I told them if anyone wants to know your ranking you come and see me. So afterwards they came to see me and said where do I fall? So I said you were E, you were C and they got all excited you know because they realized they weren't L you know what I'm saying. But they need to know, you know it's a high stakes environment so we use data all the time.

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

3. How do you communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community?

You saw it when you were sitting out there, but did you see our banner? At the end of this hallway we have a big huge banner, it's about the size of this wall. It's when you turn the hallway right when you turn the corner. If you look at the corner it's a big huge banner that has our mission and see under the door right there, our mission is in every classroom. Um, it's in our resource center that you saw when you were waiting outside, the parent resource center, that's what that is with the pamphlets. It's in all the booklets, all the brochures and whatnot. And when we're in faculty meetings we constantly go over um, well I constantly go over expectations so my expectations are I expect that you give these students an excellent education. And I don't want to hear you give excuses, family this, or this, you know whatever the issues. I'm expecting everyone to be on the same exact level when it comes to educational progress. But I want you to meet the individual needs of the student and I want you to make sure that you reflect on your practice as much as possible so that we can achieve our mission which is to make sure that we give a quality education.

4. What steps are taken to ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays or forums in the school? (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress, in assemblies or discussions)

Displays are visible, I just told you, um, the first part? Well we have the banners the brochures, the display right there that you see is in every class also. And we share it at functions, back to school night, you know, the parents and things like that. Do we reiterate verbatim to the students, no. We already do for like our preschoolers, but we have an expectation at the end of the year when we go over the expectations which includes the goal and our mission so um, its reiterated in those areas.

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

5. Describe your process for conducting informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference).

Well, we have um, learning walks which we do daily. So we take these (Stronge documents) it's a draft. It was created by our district under the auspices of the standards. I mean it's not directly from Stronge and next year we'll be uploading it to a web based site instead of it being paper generated so we do this daily. We record the information. Right now this year um, in speaking with the union, teachers union, we are not doing anything with this other then providing feedback. It doesn't go in there personal files. It doesn't infringe upon there you know evaluation, but next year it will. Because the

Stronge model and every other model, you know…. So we do these daily, my VP and I and we just provide feedback in their email or verbally.

6. What is your method for pointing out specific strengths and/or weaknesses in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback? (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations).

Feedback, um, well you know there's the normal feedback after your formal observation. What I do is I try to be as creative as possible with ways to get teachers to reflect a lot. So what I do often, especially with my novice teachers is I tell them I'm going to sit in your classroom and I'll have someone cover your classroom for a half hour and I want you to, for example, 1st thing in the morning if it's difficult transitioning with the kids, getting them to take their stuff off, putting it in the closets, it's just taking too long. So I'll say I'm just going to stand there and you walk down the hallway and see what you see. So in the 10 minutes that it takes you to get your kids settled everybody else is already instructing. So I do a lot of out of the box, um, I have them go with me to other buildings. I have all the kindergarten teachers follow me around so we can see what other kindergarten teachers are doing. We have horizontal meetings where they collaborate among different levels in the district and we also have grade level meetings where they can collaborate among themselves. Sometimes I give them things to reflect on. How are you, its they're meeting they all have it separately in different parts of the building but feedback for me is to get them to reflect on their practice, it would be tell me as you collaborated how you use data to drive instruction? So they would have to provide me with data showing that. Um, another way is through learning walks which I already talked about and then I um, faculty meeting agendas are set up like this, I have dates I have a reflection piece and I always have the learning walk piece.

IV. COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM

7. Do you draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions?

Well, I'm confused because I'm thinking curricular decisions meaning the actual company we use. In no way shape or form, so it's kind of hard to answer that question 'cause I have no control over that. But, I will tell you um, there is one program out there called Shirley for English but its spelled Shurley and my daughter uses it in her school and their language arts scores are off the charts. You know what it reminds me of? Remember when we were little we use to watch school house rock. The whole program is based on like sing songy songs to get the kids to remember. So they're singing and they're dancing and they're jiving and they're doing all this stuff but they're learning at the same time so its motivational and these kids will sit in the auditorium before they come singing these songs. But the great thing is that I have this one teacher, that I have teachers piloting it as a supplemental thing. So it's not like the thing that we're used to throughout the district. But the teachers who wanted to pilot it loved it so much that they asked if they could keep it as a supplemental thing to use with the existing curriculum. And this one teacher, she's noticed that when they come and they show me their writing

they use it all the time. In the beginning of the year they were used to writing simple sentences. This program is a spiraling program so at the beginning they teach them what an article is, but eventually by the end of the year they attach things like an adjective. So that's one thing that I like stole from someplace else that I told them to use. For test prep we use buckle down, um but I really have no autonomy over how I use the data to, I can't really make the curricular decisions 'cause most of the time it's made at the district level.

8. How do you participate actively in the review of curricular materials?

Yeah, well um, well the great thing about I guess is our meetings, we have two types of in the district. We have Superintendent meetings and curriculum and instruction meetings. We as administrators meet monthly to talk about curriculum and instruction. That's where we do the brainstorming of what's working, what's not working, what can we tweak, what are you not doing? We talk solely on curriculum, we look at articles, we talk about trends and what's new down the pike, other than being on a committee which I have in the past that is a consistent thing that we do that looks at um, curriculum in general. What I also do I um, for our grade level meetings we, they look at; they always give me feedback as the teachers. So they, every five minutes it seems that we have a new program that we're using. Next year we're changing to Math & Focus, and looking for a new Reading program. So they're always giving me feedback from there grade level discussions. They turn into faculty meeting discussions which in turn talks about formal instruction because of all of the things that are new coming down the pike. We also have coaches in the district that come and assist with anything curriculum related and that's about it.

V.   MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

9. How and when do you inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form? (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)

Well, I just showed you that from the faculty meeting number one and in the beginning of the year is when we get the data which is always late. I usually have private closed door meetings so I will set up a meeting with each teacher. Especially my new teachers because I guess I have the meeting with my new teachers to discuss expectations. Then I have a meeting with my testing grade level to discuss how they're doing and we talk about like their ranking over a couple of years. We know you were going through a divorce last year, last year was a bad year for you. But look you did so much better this year. We talk about things like that, we talk about reflections. I don't know what your district calls it, a professional development plan or a PIP, or PDP right. We talk about their PDP's and how they're going to connect their professional development plan, the results their getting back from there test scores as well. And now it's going to be in there Stronge evaluation system because they have to create this whole action plan with their SGO's.

10. What is your method of informing students of school's academic progress?

Well, I don't like it but the teachers provided formal and informal feedback. They receive report cards that have been changed a number of times already that to me I don't think provided them with feedback that they can understand. I guess if they were in the secondary level they would understand it more but our's is such where they come here to work hard. Just as we come here to work hard and we get a paycheck. They get a report card to see how they've worked hard and that should be their feedback. Um, report card is such where it's based on the standards so its ah, you know, here's the standard the child meets it, the child exceeds it, falls short of duh, duh, duh……The child meets, exceeds, doesn't. The standards are written for educators. They don't understand that the report card should also be feedback for the students. And when you get your report card and you can't read all those standards and understand them, and have no idea what a 1 or whatever means. Right before that we had a report card, we had developing , secure, and then we would have DYFS come in and say so and so is getting all D's. So when they see D's my phone is blowing up. And I have to go thorough did you look at the key. Progress reports get sent home. So I think we lack in giving the positive feedback that kids need when it comes to their grade.

VI.   PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

11. What steps do you take to limit interruptions of instructional time? (e.g. by public announcements, students not called to the office, limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities)

That's my big, big pet peeve. We don't have none. We have announcements, our school gets dismissed at 2:48 and we have announcements at 2:45. In the morning we have, I'm big on, and it's not just that, it's everything. We have in the morning, targeted kids who fell very short on proficient. We took these targeted kids and we have our basic skill teachers, we don't start instruction until 8:41. These kids come in the morning early, like 8:20. The basic skills teachers are working with these students in targeted groups in the area where they fell short on the NJASK. They work with them every morning from 8:30 to 9:00. I like for them to get the best bang for their buck, I'm not going to stop and have them wait for the flag, pledge, for this, for that and interruptions. I tell the teachers all the time, my way of communicating with you is the 1st class; we have email, If its pertinent I will get on the intercom. If it's not pertinent check your email. And I understand that they're teaching they're not going to be on their email all the time. But, you know the important stuff is on the back of the agenda. Anything that is pertinent I will get on the PA, stupid stuff I can email you, you can read it at . Even if its recess, if they're not going outside check your email, if we're staying in, there are no announcements, rarely. This really has to be done, like there's a car blocking another car, this person needs to leave, come please move your car. Other than that there's no, we're looking for Johnny, please come to the office right now. No, no, no, none of that. Instructional time is important to me. They need to be in your presence and they need to be learning as much as possible.

12. What is the process for ensuring that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time?

Don't get me started with that one. We sat as a group of elementary educators and came up with this global attendance policy. And with that policy so we could all be on the same page 'cause we were noticing some schools were doing things a little differently, um, after we made that policy, we asked the powers to be if they would bring to the board's attention the fact that the elementary school does not have a attendance policy. If you look at the um, policy all of the like you say consequences and things all relate to secondary. And I have been saying for a long time along with my elementary colleagues that we need an elementary attendance policy because the parents have become accustomed to well you're not going to do anything about it so I'll keep sending you late. So other then the fact that I have to spend time out of my day calling parents saying where are you, you know. Um, teachers calling parents saying where are you? Scheduling I&RS meetings just to talk about attendance issues, tardy issues. And sometimes which has not been fun calling DYFS to basically say its academic neglect now.

We've also had to, and this is just thinking out of the box because we do not have any etched in stone written policy. I have retained a student for missing 56 days of school. The kid was smart and the mom was like he gets A's on everything at the time that we had the other report cards. He physically has not been here to absorb 56 days of the curriculum, how can we say that he's ready to go on. Her only response to anything was I don't understand what the problem is he's smart. You know like stay out of my business he's smart, part of the problem. And then it became, that was the one time I went to the Superintendent, I told the Superintendent now that we're doing retentions, we have been meeting with the I&RS meeting and being on the same page about it. She's going to come to you and complain, I'm putting my foot down. This woman needs a consequence or year in; year out this woman is going to be missing 60 days of school. So he was like I hear you. And of course she went to him and said there's no way you're keeping my kid back and went to the Board and they denied her, he was retained. But that's the kind of things that we have to do because there is no policy. Now if we had a policy it wouldn't have to be all of this, all the time. So other then all of those things I just mentioned, it's just literally following up, reaching out, having the teachers reach out, having our I&RS meetings. We do send the truancy officer out, and calling DYFS and retaining. So there's not much else we can do.

VII.   MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY

13. Do you take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks?

Yes. So um I have an open door policy and the teachers know they can email me things, one of my teachers came back into the cafetorium and said just so you know Mrs. (Blank) you know you have a lady waiting out there for you. And I said thank you for letting me know. So um, they email me about anything and everything. We have that open relationship. I think an open relationship with the staff. The only thing I feel that is a hindrance sometimes is again sometimes you inherit certain people in the building. When

I came on board my style is more of I call it like I see it, I don't care who you know, I think. I don't play politics very well. So it became a issue of for years I've done this, now here you come and tell me this and who do you think you are? If you don't do what you're supposed to be doing I can be difficult in their eyes. 'Cause I just don't conform to oh well don't you know who I am type of thing. Um, those are the only people I have a difficult time kinda like winning over. But in the same respect I'm fair you know. These are my expectations and you're no different than anybody else and you need to follow those expectations.

When it comes to socially, I drop in on all their grade level meetings, learning walks, I give them that formal, informal feedback at the time or when um, I Come back and I email them. And sometimes we come back and have dialogue on email. And we have things through sunshine, that's our social group where every month we have a breakfast and quarterly we go out and have drinks, relax you know, appetizers, have fun. I go in the beginning to those but then I leave once people start getting happy because I want them to feel comfortable. They're all like, no stay. And I'm like no, you guys would feel more comfortable if I'm not around. Um, so we have those quarterly. And the students, constantly talking to the students. I think the one reason why I didn't want to become a Principal is because I couldn't cut the cord and hand over the reins of being a Vice Principal for somebody else, is because when you're a vice principal you're dealing with the kids who are challenging students and you have a lot of time to influence them through your conversations. So that was very difficult when I moved here, is because that's what I'm good at, taking to those kids and modeling for them. The good thing is I get to communicate with those troubled kids. We have the Principal for the day where the 3rd grade teacher wants an outstanding student who doesn't have to be outstanding academically but shows a lot of effort, great role model, never gets in trouble. And they nominate that student to be the Principal for the day. So every day I go to lunch with that student and they have a shirt that says today the Principal tomorrow the President and they get to spend some time with me. And they do some announcements and some emailing to staff and some stuff like that, where they write something silly like please give a no homework pass to the class today.

14. How often and when do you attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities?

We're a professional development school so we collaborate with Kean University interns. So next week all the senior interns are coming to this building as like a field trip. It's a course they're taking like preparing for the work place. So they're coming to my building and I'm like the guest speaker and I give them strategies, tips, roll playing when it comes to the interviewing process, the resume that type of thing so there's things like that, that happen as community things which I say are extracurricular.

VIII.   PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS

15. Do you reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or

memo's?

We have a plaque out there for the teacher of the year so her picture goes up there. She has a parking spot out there also. The district, I had them paint it, the custodians came out there and painted it on there with a stencil. Teacher of the year gets that parking spot for the whole year. I also have, they love these, I put everybody's name in here at the faculty meeting and then they get a duty free pass. So they can email me their schedule and as long as my schedule is free or the VP's schedule is free we cover their duty. So I interact with the kids on the playground all the time so I'm out there jumping rope with the kids. They love that. I'm always thinking about the people who go above and beyond so I take the time to write up something informally and then they can put it in their resume or portfolio, wherever they may be in the future. I go crazy during teacher appreciation week. I'm always giving them stuff. We have themes, I had this theme once about fish, I don't know why, I think it was because of some videos we saw. I had my secretaries cut out some fish and then we would throw them in the teacher's mailbox with all kind of catchy sayings. You know like caught you being good, you know corny sayings but they all got them in there. And then one year we had these stars in the faculty room and they would just get them just because. One year for teacher appreciation I had a massage therapist come in, because I really do appreciate my teachers.

16. Are their times when you acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files?

Yeah, I said that, usually when I give them memos I put it in their mailbox.

IX.　PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Explain how you take steps to ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals?

I guess what I do is, I guess that one's a hard one because most of the time I feel that ours is not in line all the time with our district goals, I mean our school goals. So I try and make my own professional development. Like one time we had the Kaggan group come in and do a training on cooperative learning and things like that. So I try to bring in my own. But I don't always agree they they're in line with our individual goals and sometimes I wish that they were more so.

18. Is there time set aside at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities?

Yes, I said that. I gave you a copy of the Agenda where there's a whole section in there that says sharing for turnkey.

X.　PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING

19. Do you recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter?

Yes, we mention all the kids in the newsletter if they're the Principal of the month, patrol of the day, writer's roundtable winner and um, honor roll, perfect attendance. It's all in the newsletter, on the website. Um, and we have honor roll assemblies as well where they get a whole heck of a lot I must say. The get so much stuff, if you get on the high honor roll we have an agreement with the community where they get this paper and if they present the paper it has their business name and what they get that's free. So they get a free hamburger at McDonald's of a free pizza slice at this pizza place. So they get a lot of honor roll stuff. And of course at the end of the year we do an awards assembly, a promotion assembly and stuff.

20. Describe how you support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions and accomplishments in class?

Well, um, you didn't have anything about parents in there or did I miss that? We have, I don't know if you notice when you walked in the door, we have a hall of fame display out here when you walk in. We had a grant to put that up, the hall of fame display where we had a schedule and every month a different grade sends down there students highlighted work so that gets displayed in the hall of fame every month and we have open door policy where the teachers know, like I said with the Shurley program to come down for um, encouragement and every last one of those pencils with the erasers on top has a different theme, like good job reading or math super star. So I give them a pencil with an eraser and this one when they read to me it says I read to the Principal. So they do come down and they do send them down often. And also I get teachers quite often email me and say if you're free such and such a time come down and such and such this day. And one teacher, was teaching science, and they need to know that I'm not going to have all this time next year once we start doing Strong. It was a Science lesson and they were working with clay and then she asked me to help and when you come can you bring the camera and take pictures. So they don't have any problems with asking can you come down, can you help and by the way can you take pictures. Yes, that happens.