The Female Superintendency: Reframing Our Understanding Of Women's Leadership Styles And Behaviors

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THE FEMALE SUPERINTENDENCY: REFRAMING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP STYLES AND BEHAVIORS

BY

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
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2007
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ABSTRACT

THE FEMALE SUPERINTENDENCY: REFRAMING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP STYLES AND BEHAVIORS

The last 25 years have witnessed a growing interest in the role of female superintendents because of the increasing numbers of women who have ascended to this position. The primary purpose of this research was to broadly examine the leadership preferences of women superintendents using Bolman and Deal’s four leadership frames: 1) structure, 2) human resource, 3) political, and 4) symbolic (2003). A second purpose was to understand how female superintendents construct and exercise their use of power. A third purpose was descriptive and included collecting data about women superintendents in New Jersey to establish their demographic profile.

A mixed-method design incorporated surveys ($n = 71$) and interviews ($n = 6$) from female superintendents in the state. Factor analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey data. Grounded theory was used to analyze transcripts and build theory.

Findings: (a) Female superintendents in this sample indicated that their leadership style was multidimensional, ranking themselves highest in the human resource frame and lowest in the political frame. (b) Interview participants described their leadership styles as participative and inclusive. (c) Most interviewees identified power as task accomplishment. Interviewees reported that they avoided using power, expressed tension with this concept, and contrasted their methods of exercising power with that of men. (d) While there were no major differences by context, rural superintendents emphasized control, while urban superintendents stressed hierarchy. (e) While those interviewed described experiences of gender bias, most agreed that gender bias against women in the
superintendency is a thing of the past and that women have broken the glass ceiling in this state. (f) Female superintendents in New Jersey have similar demographics compared to the national profile.

Implications: (a) Schools of educational administration need to prepare female students in the political frame and assist them with mentoring and networking. (b) Boards of education need to understand the benefits of female leadership and address policies related to gender neutrality in their search process for superintendent. (c) Title IX should be reviewed to determine its efficacy related to females in leadership positions.
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This dissertation was the result of a long and arduous journey that was influenced by many individuals. Therefore, there are many to acknowledge on this page. First, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Elaine Walker, my mentor, who saw value in this research long before I did. Her direction guided me through the rigor of the process, and her knowledge and experience improved the quality of the final product.

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Lastly and most importantly, I must thank my family whose patience, sacrifice, and understanding allowed ample time for this accomplishment to materialize.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the people I love most: my husband Carl, my daughter Tanya, and my son Carl Ross. They provide my inspiration. I also dedicate this work to my mom and dad. They were the first to instill a love of learning in me. This inspiration has and will sustain me throughout my lifetime.
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Chapter I

Introduction

"You know, I just don't think that the glass ceiling is there anymore. I think we have
broken through. I think that we have done that by proving our worth."

-- Rural Superintendent

The last 25 years have witnessed a growing interest in the role of female
superintendents in the United States. This interest has been spawned by the increasing
numbers of women who have ascended to the most powerful position of leadership in the
nation’s public school systems. In the seventies and eighties, women superintendents
accounted for only one to three percent of all superintendents in the country (Blount,
1998; Coatney, 2000; Grogan, 2000). In 2000 that figure had risen to 13%, and more
recent data provided for the year 2003 indicate that the percentage of female
superintendents has hovered around 18% nationwide (Brunner, Grogan, & Prince, 2003).

The statistics in New Jersey revealed differences in this trend since the percentage
of women in the role of superintendent is higher than the national figures. At the time of
this writing, approximately 22 % of all superintendents were women in this state (Bishop,
New Jersey Department of Education’s online Directory of Schools, 146 districts listed
women as their chief school administrators. This total represented a higher percentage
than the national average reported in the American Association of School Administrators’
study of 2000 (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). What may account for this difference?

While the trend noted above is encouraging, historically women have been
underrepresented and underutilized in the superintendency since its institution in the
1800s (Blount, 1998; Young & McLeod, 2001). Indeed, some suggest that a glass ceiling effect continues to marginalize well-educated and competent women’s access to this position (Bishop 2005; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Freeman, Bourke, & Shelton 2001; Glass, 2000; Keller, 1999); a position which was viewed as being the most male-dominated executive position in the country (Glass, et al., 2000; U.S. Department of Labor, 1995).

Although there is a growing body of research on female superintendents, there is still a paucity of information on how female superintendents lead and more importantly, how they view and exercise their use of power in this role. This is particularly true of women in New Jersey (Bishop, 2005; Coumbe, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research, therefore, was to broadly examine the leadership preferences of women superintendents in New Jersey using Bolman and Deal’s (2003) four leadership frames. This researcher posited that women superintendents in New Jersey may have defied gender stereotypes, and therefore, the reason women in this state have risen to the position of chief school administrator in a higher percentage than the national percentage can be partially attributed to their leadership preferences.

A second related purpose was to specifically understand how women superintendents construct and exercise their use of power. This aspect of the research focused on female superintendents’ perceptions of their leadership styles and behaviors as well as their experiences in their roles as females.

A third purpose of this research was descriptive and included collecting and presenting demographic data about female superintendents in New Jersey in order to determine the
characteristics that may be unique to those women who serve as superintendents of schools in this state.

Over the last two decades, studies of female school superintendents have been conducted nationally as well as in the Midwest, Oregon, and in some sections of the Northeast. Extensive work has been conducted in states such as Texas, California, Indiana, Illinois and Oklahoma (Brunner & Grogan, 2005; Johnston, et al., 2002; Katz, 2001; McClean, 2006; Parent, 2004; Skrla, 2000).

However, there has been little research conducted exclusively in New Jersey. There was only one study to date conducted in 1987 that focused specifically on women superintendents in New Jersey. Misner-Senyk (1987), a graduate student at Seton Hall University, conducted dissertation research on 10 New Jersey female superintendents. The study examined their perceptions related to their job. Of the 37 women who were superintendents at that time, 10 agreed to participate in her interviews. Misner-Senyk indicated in her work that several of the women in New Jersey declined to participate, while others were fearful about their participation despite guarantees of confidentiality. Issues related to fear of speaking out, or the notion of being “silenced” were confirmed in the literature (Skrla, 2000). Misner-Senyk recommended that further research on women in this state was needed.

In addition to the above-stated reasons for conducting the current study, the present study also attempted to capture women superintendents’ perspectives about their management and leadership of school districts and, hence, give women in New Jersey a voice in the literature (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Thompson & Crampton, 2004). To that end, this study consisted of data building and theory building through the process of grounded theory in order to identify an external reality about the female superintendency in this state.
Research Questions

The following research questions framed the focus of this inquiry as they related to the overarching statement of the problem:

1. To what extent can the leadership preferences of New Jersey female superintendents be understood by applying Bolman and Deal’s (2003) four-frames?

2. What are the dominant frames women school superintendents employ in their roles?

3. How do female superintendents interpret the role of these frames in contributing to their success, or lack thereof?

Subsidiary questions related to the second purpose

The following questions were specifically related to how women construct their use of power and their identification with their gender as superintendents.

4. To what extent do the four leadership frames characterize the way women superintendents construct their use of power?

5. To what extent do women superintendents’ perceptions of their gender affect the manner in which they lead their districts?

6. Because the percentage of female superintendents in New Jersey is greater than the national average, have women superintendents broken the glass ceiling in this state?

Subsidiary questions related to the third purpose

Research questions related to the third purpose of the study that focused on the demographic profile of female superintendents in New Jersey were as follows:

7. What is the basic demographic profile of these women?

8. What trends about women in educational leadership can be uncovered from these data?
Assumptions of the Research

1. The first assumption was that Bolman and Deal's (2003) four frames is a useful way to characterize the leadership preferences of school administrators. According to the authors, the four frame model is equally applicable to the corporate executive as it is to the public school executive (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

2. The second assumption was that gender plays a significant role in the hiring of individuals who seek the superintendency, and attitudes about gender subsequently affect the perceived ability of that individual to lead a school district (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

3. The third assumption was that the superintendency is constructed socially as masculine and has been so since its institution in 1837 (Blount, 1998).

4. The fourth assumption was that power is at the basis of the role of the superintendent and that female superintendents must understand this complex process of power.

5. The fifth assumption was that since most superintendents are male, most research represented the perception of the role as constructed by men and as experienced by men who have dominated the role of leader in traditional American society (Skrla, 2000).

6. The sixth assumption was that the work of superintendents may vary based on the context of the school district, such as urban, suburban, and rural.

7. The seventh assumption was that traditional and conservative notions of women's career choices were prevalent and enduring during the 20th century. These traditional notions persisted throughout the 21st century resulting in the persistent underrepresentation of women in the role of chief school administrator.

8. Since schools are often considered a primary agent of socializing young children into the norms of society (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982), the
lack of female superintendents helps to perpetuate the conservative belief that men make better leaders than women (Brunner, 1998).

9. Grounded theory is a qualitative method that can yield an external truth about a phenomenon through its systematic and rigorous process of data building and theory building (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Conceptual Framework

Bolman and Deal’s four frames as described in their text, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (2003) were used to define conceptually the framework and components of leadership that are under study. Bolman and Deal’s (2003) work on organizational behavior that began in 1984 outlined leadership into a four-frame model characterizing aspects of organizations metaphorically: factories, families, jungles and temples. The frames are formally identified as (a) structure, (b) human resource, (c) political, and (d) symbolic. Bolman and Deal’s model is useful because it incorporates research from corporate America as well as the institution of public schools. In addition, Bolman and Deal grounded the frames in the canon of leadership that has been developed over the last century. Therefore, the theoretical constructs of the frames are both literature and research based.

The four frames are sometimes referred to as multiframe thinking in the literature. Bolman and Deal (2003) contended that corporate and educational settings have many similarities and therefore, a study of all organizations is important (p. xvii). Essentially by using lenses from each of the four frames, leaders can sort out the complexities and use the frames to analyze situations and problems that confront them (Bolman & Deal, 2003). This is its main purpose.
Thus, using the four frames as the conceptual framework for this study supported a basic assumption that the chief executive officer position in corporate America parallels the chief school administrator position in the public school system. Further, this similarity of experiences and structures supported a subset of purposes in this research that the mobilization of bias affects women in the corporate world as well as women leaders in education (Fowler, 2004).

In addition, Bolman and Deal (2003) argued that women leaders have a tendency to rely on the human resource frame more than men do. To support this notion, they cited Helgesen’s web of inclusion model as evidence. From her work with female administrators, Helgesen argued, “Women put themselves at the center of their organizations rather than at the top... and that they labored constantly to include people in their decision-making” (Helgesen as cited in Bolman and Deal, 2003, p. 81). Helgesen’s research was useful to this study since it provided support for some of the basic assumptions presented in the literature review about women leadership (i.e., that women’s leadership style is primarily inclusive and participative with employees.)

Thus, the conceptual framework based on Bolman and Deal’s frames (2003) was both comprehensive for all forms of leadership as well as specific to women in leadership roles. Specifically, Bolman and Deal’s presentation of women and power as well as their notion of the conflicted experience of women will be considered in the analysis and the findings.

**Delimitations of the Study**

For the purposes of providing as wide a range of work experiences as possible for the interview component, women superintendents were selected purposefully from a
variety of urban, suburban, and rural school districts. Thus, context specificity played a critical role in the study since the importance of location was considered to be a chief criterion for the interview component. In addition, the range of student populations of the districts was considered. As such, districts ranged in size from as small as 350 students to a population as large as more than 10,000 students.

Women superintendents from other states were not questioned about their knowledge of or association with women superintendents from New Jersey. Therefore, their perceptions of New Jersey women superintendents were not included. This study did not include women who were the lead person of a charter school nor did this researcher include any interim superintendent who was female.

Perhaps the most important delimitation in this study was that it did not directly address differences in leadership orientations or behaviors by contrasting the frames with male superintendents’ perspectives or experiences. This study did not request information from male superintendents in New Jersey as to their perceptions of their female colleagues’ leadership styles or behaviors in contrast to their own. In addition, this study did not examine the larger question of the presumed differences or similarities between male leadership versus female leadership in the role of superintendent of schools.

In the interview component, the women in this sample were asked, however, if they ever felt resistance in their work that can be attributed to their gender and as such, considered their perceptions related to gender-biased actions that they may have encountered during their experiences as superintendent of schools.
Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by the willingness of female superintendents in New Jersey to participate in the Leadership Orientations Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990) that was mailed to all current women superintendents during the data collection period. Further, this research was limited to those qualitative methods that were within the realm of this researcher such as developing questions around Bolman and Deal’s frames and conducting the in-depth semistructured interviews. This study was bound by a time period of 2 years, and as such, the data were collected from those female superintendents who held a contractual position within that particular time frame.

Significance of the Study

More women are aspiring to the top role of chief school administrator than ever before. Nearly half of all students enrolled in educational administration programs at universities are now women (Glass, 2000; Smallwood, 2003). In addition, more women are rising to the level of superintendent in New Jersey’s public schools (Coumbe, 2005). How these women view their leadership preferences is valuable information to all educators in New Jersey, to schools of educational administration, as well as school board members in the state and across the nation. More important, this work will help to frame power differences as described through Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003) to add to our collective knowledge of organizational theory as well as the nature of power as exercised by women who hold this position.

In addition to the above, women administrators historically bring more years of teaching experience and greater expertise in curriculum and instruction to their work as the superintendent than their male counterparts (Grogan, 2005). This is in part a function
of career paths that are frequently a part of most women's experience in education. Their depth of curriculum experience may be particularly critical during a period in education when standards are a priority and the No Child Left Behind legislation requires more accountability for gains in academic achievement. Therefore, this research may shed some light on how current women superintendents view their perceived impact on curriculum and instruction, which directly affects student achievement.

Thus, the success of women superintendents may not only influence results in student achievement but may also influence how society views females in leadership roles. Since schools are a primary method in which we socialize children into the norms of our society (Belenky, et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982), the widespread participation of women in the top leadership role may help to influence society's views of gender as it relates to women's ability to lead.

Definitions of Terms

1. Glass ceiling: The term glass ceiling is defined as those invisible and impenetrable barriers that prevent and sometimes exclude women and other minorities from gaining access to the position of chief executive officer, or in this case, chief school administrator (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). This research assumes that the glass ceiling effect is still operational in the 21st century in New Jersey.

2. Grounded theory: Originally developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, grounded theory is defined as “a method of discovery” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.1). This process, used frequently in the social sciences, is the qualitative method used in this study to analyze the interview data. The overall purpose of this research was to build data and ultimately build theory, and as such, identify and describe a “social reality” (Strauss
& Corbin, 1998, p. 3). According to Strauss and Corbin, the researcher’s mind is an analytical tool in this methodology.

3. Grounded theory process: The steps in this process include the following terms and definitions as described in the Strauss and Corbin method (1998). These steps form the procedural approach to grounded theory and reveal the rigor of this particular qualitative research method:

   a. microanalysis – a line-by-line analysis of the data to identify categories from the words of the respondents.

   b. open coding – the first part of the analytic process in which “data are fractured, conceptualized, and integrated to form theory” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 3). In this part of the process, “concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data” (p. 123).

   c. axial coding - “The process of relating categories to their subcategories, termed axial because coding occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 124).

   d. saturation – the point at which no further themes or concepts can be derived from the transcripts.

   e. categories – concepts or central themes that represent the phenomenon under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Categories are presented as central themes in this research and are illuminated in the findings sections of chapter 7.

   f. properties – “Characteristics of a category the delineation of which defines and gives it meaning” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 103).
g. dimensions – “The range along a continuum which general properties of a category vary, giving specification to a category and variation to a theory” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 103).

h. conditional matrix – an analytic device to stimulate analysts’ thinking about relationships between macro and micro conditions/consequences both to each other and to process. A conditional matrix of women superintendents’ leadership preferences using Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003) is presented in chapter 5.

i. storyline – narratives that identify and describe the essence of meaning in the interviews to such questions as “what is going on here?” or “what keeps striking me over and over again?”

4. Power: This study drew upon several definitions of power to frame the discourse about how women consider and use power in their position as superintendent. Among these lines of scholarship was Foucault’s postulation that power is “a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action” (as cited in Felluga, 2003). According to Foucault (1978), power is not necessarily a negative force and not necessarily a “power over” another (as cited in Felluga, 2003). Power, in Foucault’s view, should be conceptualized as a positive force.

5. Positional and personal power—According to the research of Yukl (2006), there are two types of power: (a) positional and (b) personal. Positional power includes influence over others in the areas of control over punishments, rewards, resources, information and the environment. The second form, personal power, denotes the ability of the leader to influence through task expertise and friendship (as cited in Yukl, 2006).
6. Social construction of gender: This term labels a belief that embedded in our assumptions about gender roles there is a stereotype that equates greater status and worth of the leadership ability of men over the competence and ability of women (Ridgeway, 2001; Skrla, 2000). This notion is also termed “expectation states theory” (Ridgeway, 2001; Willer, Lovaglia & Markovskyy, 1997).

7. Four frames model: The use of the term Four Frames refers to the conceptual work of Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal (2003) in their work *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*. Their research organized the work of the leader or manager into four components: structural, human resource, political and symbolic. Bolman and Deal argued that leaders should explore the multiple lens method of “making sense of the organization...to take advantage of the same truth...to develop both a diagnosis of what they are up against and strategies for moving forward”(p.15).

8. Superintendency: This term refers to the top executive position in the public school system commonly known as the chief school administrator. This executive position shall be considered parallel to the chief executive officer in a corporation. To be considered successful, superintendents will be in a stable position with at least 3 years combined experience at the level of superintendent and having had a contract renewal.

9. Objectivity – “The ability to listen to the words of respondents and to give them a voice independent of that of the researcher” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 35).

10. Language – The basic unit of analysis of the qualitative component of this study.

*Summary*

The body of research about leadership and theories about leadership should be about both men and women. Since the 1980s, the place of women and the manner in
which women exercise leadership in organizations has begun to be studied, which includes, but is not limited to, descriptive statistics, their aspirations and career paths, the barriers they encounter such as the effect of the glass ceiling as well as their perceptions of their leadership styles.

Thus, this study will have significance for the field of education, for women aspiring to leadership roles, and for the realization of equitable access to the highest executive positions in the American workplace. Since this study incorporated the voices and perspectives of women currently practicing in the field, it offered participants in New Jersey a place to contribute their knowledge of this experience to the canon of leadership theory. Hence, the findings of this research may augment the literature that identifies women leaders as marginalized and silenced by virtue of traditional models of leadership over the last century (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

Organization of the Study

For the purposes of this study, this dissertation is organized in the following manner. Chapter 1 introduces the problem of the study as well as background information related to the problem nationally and in New Jersey, outlines the research questions, assumptions, presents an overview of the conceptual framework, terms, limitations, and finally the delimitations of the study.

Chapter 2 presented the review of the literature. The literature review was organized into five broad categories: (a) the history of women superintendents; (b) gender, gender bias and the glass ceiling effect; (c) related theories and research including research on female college presidents and female leaders in the corporate
world; (d) dissertation research about superintendents; and (e) a review of discourse on leadership, power and women.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology conducted for this dissertation. This study incorporated a mixed-method approach that allowed for an examination of the research questions both qualitatively and quantitatively. Survey data were collected using Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientations Survey (1990). An in-depth semistructured interview was constructed for the purpose of the qualitative study. Grounded theory was used to identify trends, concepts, and categories from the semistructured interview.

Chapter 4 discusses the demographic data related to women superintendents in New Jersey from the survey instrument and the interview transcripts. These data are displayed in frequency counts and percentages using descriptive statistics.

Chapter 5 discusses and interprets the data from the in-depth semistructured interviews. Using grounded theory, these data showed the interrelated categories that intersected along properties and dimensions of the four frame theory. Using the coding formats of grounded theory, data results and corresponding theories were presented as well as a conditional matrix.

Chapter 6 provides a review and interpretation of the quantitative data collected from the survey instrument and the statistical calculations of the study as conducted from the survey data. Findings are gathered and organized in tables and charts.

Chapter 7 presents a summary of the findings and implications of the study as well as recommendations for further research.
Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

“No one helped me. I had to struggle, struggle, struggle.”

-- Urban Superintendent

Research about women superintendents in education is relatively new, spanning the past 25 years (Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995; McCabe, 2001; Grogan, 2000). Primarily, the literature describes the demographic profile of female superintendents, the history of their role in education, as well as the increases or declines in percentages of women in the office of superintendent across the country (Shakeshaft as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995). Studies in the form of unpublished doctoral dissertations about women superintendents inform us about gender, gender bias, leadership orientations, and an array of barriers that prevent women from rising to the top leadership positions in school organizations (Ridgeway, 2001; Skrla, 2000).

Some have contended that not only has this marginalized group of leaders been absent from the research, but they have also been silenced in their role (Freeman, et al., 2001). Some have believed women have been stifled deliberately to maintain their unequal status in leadership positions (Freeman, et al., 2001; Scott, 1999; Skrla, 2000). Yet, others have alleged that this absence in the literature is not simply an omission; it is instead a “conspiracy of silence” (Shakeshaft as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995; Skrla, Reyes, & Scheurich, 2000).

Although there is relatively little research, the body of literature that exists is informed by the narratives of female superintendents who expressed their perspectives in relation to several repeated themes: voice, silence, the glass ceiling, and power. The
literature, therefore, is both interesting and instructive since it reveals a complex set of theories and data about women leaders’ experiences in educational administration.

In addition, the literature suggested that American women superintendents have been socialized, not solely but in large part, by two major institutions, the family and the schools (Belenky, et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982). Researchers suggested that these two institutions perpetuate assumptions about women and their leadership abilities because of the traditional male gender role associated with these positions (Brunner, 1998).

For the purposes of this study, the literature review was organized into five broad categories: (a) the history of women superintendents; (b) the gender, gender bias, and the glass ceiling effect; (c) related theories and research; (d) dissertation research, and (e) a review of discourse on leadership, power and women.

*History of Women in the Superintendency*

For the most part, the evolution of the American public school superintendent has been examined through the lens of the general population of school administrators since early in the 20th century. Much of this research has been collected through surveys by the American Association of School Administrators (Glass, et al., 2000). Traditionally, superintendents of schools have been men. Therefore, the narrative of this public position is not solely, but in large part, a narrative about men in a public executive role (Brunner, 1998).

Early in the 20th century, the process of documenting superintendents’ work originated when the National Education Association’s Department of Superintendence requested that a national survey be conducted to capture trends related to the role of the superintendent (Glass, et al., 2000). In the middle of the 20th century, when the
superintendents' division left the NEA and formed the American Association of School Administrators, these studies were then conducted under the aegis of this new organizational body largely comprised of men (Blount, 1998). Since then, "Ten-Year Studies" have been conducted regularly by this organization. These data provided much of the statistical information that researchers draw upon broadly and frequently for research purposes (Glass, et al., 2000).

The most recent "Ten-Year Study" completed in 2000, published findings that mark significant changes for women superintendents nationwide. Drawn from approximately 12,604 active superintendents in America's school districts (Glass, et al., 2000), more than 2000 survey results were returned from 1953 males and 297 females. There were 86 items on the survey instrument that collected and organized the follow data that include but are not limited to:

1. personal profiles of gender, race, family status, education, and area of residence;
2. characteristics of school districts including staffing, hiring practices, programming, and size;
3. involvement and participation of women and minorities in the superintendency;
4. issues surrounding the preparation of superintendents and professional development of practicing superintendents; and
5. career patterns of superintendents (p. 10).

The 2000 AASA study indicated that females represent nearly 13.2 % of superintendents nationwide, a dramatic increase from 6.6 % reported in a 1992 study (Glass, et al., 2000). According to their findings, most women follow a career path that is similar to men, and once they begin a search for a position as superintendent, "nearly 60
percent gain their first position in less than a year” (Glass, et al., 2000, p. vii.). Because more than 50 percent of students currently enrolled in educational leadership programs in universities around the country are women (Smallwood, 2003), Glass and others concluded that women will constitute a larger part of the candidate pool seeking superintendent positions in the next decade (Glass, 2000; Logan, 1999).

Further data provided insights into the current status of female superintendents nationally. According to Glass, et al., (2000), “Most female superintendents feel that gender barriers exist. Most men feel they do, as well, but to a limited extent” (p. vii.). These perceptions from the 2000 data confirm other findings that support the notion of a glass ceiling effect may be a reality in the field of educational administration (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

Perhaps a more significant finding in the study is the perception that women employ leadership practices differently than men. According to the findings from these researchers, women superintendents “tend to be more concerned with teachers and marginal students, are more motivational, and value working with parents and the community” more than their male counterparts (Glass, et al., 2000, p. 17).

In addition, they cited the research of others who stated that female superintendents “encourage participation, use democratic leadership styles, achieve higher levels of participation, maintain more closely knit organizations, and produce higher levels of job satisfaction than do their male counterparts” (Glass, et al., 2000, p. 17). Grogan confirms these sentiments stating, “Leadership becomes the capacity to involve others honestly by respecting and legitimizing different perspectives” (2000, p.
132). These viewpoints are also reported by Bolman and Deal who cited Helegeson's "web of inclusion" as evidence (2003).

While the 2000 study sheds light on the current increase in female superintendents across the nation, a look back into the history of women in educational administration may be helpful in assessing the journey that has evolved for women in this position. In the seminal work, Destined to Rule the Schools: Women and the Superintendency 1873-1995, Blount traced the history of women in educational administration (1998). Much of her study involved databases that provided frequency counts of women superintendents in the United States from 1910 to 1990 and reporting statistics by state and by decade. As her study is unique in nature, it provided much of the historical basis of this current research and provided a foundation of quantitative data that other researchers have used in their respective studies. Her groundbreaking work, therefore, figures prominently in the literature and is cited frequently by many who study this topic (Grogan, 2005; Young & Skrla, 2003).

Blount began her historical review discussing that men were primarily the school masters in schools during the 19th century. It was not until the Civil War that women entered the school house or became "school mams" because hundreds of young men were dying on battlefields (Blount, 1998; Skrla, 2000). This national event provided an employment opportunity for young women at the beginning of the common school movement (Blount, 1998).

Blount reported that when the number of schools grew, thoughts turned to managing them (1998). As a response, the appointment of the first superintendents of schools occurred in 1837 in Kentucky and New York (Blount, 1998; Skrla, 2000). The
role of superintendent at this time was primarily clerical and supervisory. As educated men abandoned the profession seeking other work such as law and the ministry, women assumed the role of school teacher. By the beginning of the 20th century, women teachers filled increasing numbers of classrooms thus, “feminized” the teaching profession (Blount, 1998).

Thomas Mann, the first state secretary of education in Massachusetts, promoted the notion of women as school teachers (Blount, 1998). Blount cited the following quotation, “Schools needed women teachers, he (Mann) argued, because they provided a cheap and readily available source of labor for the burgeoning common school enterprise” (p. 6).

Therefore, Blount (1998) posited,

I argue that it was not coincidental that teachers’ independence and decision-making powers were stripped away just as women dominated the profession numerically. The male educators who remained had to assert their masculine qualities somehow; thus many became administrators to control the labor of women just as fathers and husbands long had done in the home … Teaching had become a woman’s profession – controlled by men. (1998, p. 37)

According to the literature, the first female superintendent of a public school system was Ella Flagg Young in Chicago, marking the beginning of women’s entry into this role in 1909. Young, a former doctoral student of John Dewey's at the Chicago Lab School, arrived in her new position with much excitement announcing that it was time for women to “rule the schools,” an often quoted statement in the related literature (Blount, 1998).
Following Young's superintendency, the suffrage movement in this country helped women find leadership positions in schools (Blount, 1998). By 1910, women superintendents accounted for approximately 9% of all superintendents in the nation rising to 11% by 1930. Some call this period the "golden age" for women in educational administration (Blount, 1998). From that point, there was a steady decline for the rest of the 20th century sinking to its lowest point in 1970 at 3% (Blount, 1998). A doctoral dissertation indicated that an AASA study entitled Project Aware, however, noted that by the 1980s, the percent dropped to only 1% of all superintendents were women, identifying 184 females nationwide (Coatney, 1982).

By 1990 the percentage of women superintendents rose again to nearly 6%. At the beginning of the 21st century, however, a woman in the "masculinized" role of superintendent was still a rarity (Skrla, 2000). A century has passed since the first woman obtained a position as superintendent; yet, women continue to be underrepresented in this role. Despite legislation such as Title IX established in the 1970s to provide equity of access, women in this position had made little, if any, progress especially in urban settings (Blount, 1998; Mertz, 2006).

Meanwhile, the position itself evolved over the course of the century. As summarized in the AASA study, the role transformed from a position of headmaster and clerk to the person responsible for all operations in the district (Glass, et al., 2000). This period, which saw the beginning of the industrial age, mirrored the work of executives in the scientific management era that looked to managers as efficiency experts. Superintendents entered into a process to make themselves more respected as
professionals. As a result, leaders such as Cubberly advocated for an executive leadership role in partnership with local school boards of education (Glass, et al., 2000).

Later in the 20th century, the role transformed again, taking on the look of the corporate model of leadership. Today, the authors of the AASA study posited that the 21st century superintendent is “the chief expert on schools in the community” (Glass, et al., 2000, p. 3). These authors suggested that current superintendents must provide a vision for change (Glass, et al., p. 4).

**Gender, Gender Bias and the Glass Ceiling Effect**

Is the glass ceiling a myth or reality? Whether it is myth or reality, the metaphor represents those invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching the highest levels of executive positions in organizations (Freeman, et al., 2001; U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). First coined in a *Wall Street Journal* article in 1986, this metaphor captures both the phenomenon and the reasons why women and other minorities fail to rise to CEO in representative numbers (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). The glass ceiling effect is also used frequently in the research to describe the limited access women have as superintendents of public schools (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Ridgeway, 2001).

In 1991, the United States Department of Labor’s Federal Glass Ceiling Commission authorized its first study of the glass ceiling under Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act to investigate those perceived or actual obstacles. This fact-finding report resulted in a major agreement that was stated as follows: “Corporate leaders surveyed, and women and minorities who participated ... all agree that a glass ceiling exists and that it operates substantially to exclude minorities and women from the top levels of
management" (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995, p. 7). According to congressional studies, women on average earn 20% less than men (Stein, 2003).

Some suggested, including those with feminist perspectives, that gender stratification in the workplace mirrors the socially constructed notion that power is masculine and thus, leadership is inherently masculine as well and is, in fact, a male prerogative (Harris, Ballenger, Hickes-Townes, Carr, & Alford, 2004). This concept of viewing the superintendency as male centered was labeled by Shakeshaft as "androcentric" (1989). As a result, the social construction of gender concept conveys the belief that men make better leaders than women (Ridgeway, 2001). As otherwise interpreted in the literature, a woman makes a better leader if she "acts more like a man" (Brunner, 1998).

*Female college presidents.* Some concluded that obstacles facing women in organizations are not only inherent in basic organizational structures, but are also a part of our deeply entrenched cultural traditions that can be traced back to the emergence of the scientific management era in the 1900s (Blount, 1998). This phenomenon has not only affected the school superintendency, but has also pervaded the presidency of universities as well. Over the last 25 years, the percentage of female college presidents has grown, but females are still underrepresented as a whole (Brown, 2005). Recent reports from the American Council on Education indicated that the rate of female college presidents has jumped from 10% in 1986 to 23% in 2006 (Paddock & Trounson, 2007). In the context of the two-year college, women accounted for nearly 27% of college presidents (Valdata, 2006). Brown reported that mentoring women to become college presidents is an important component that will provide benefits to aspiring scholars.
Brown also suggested that women should not wait to be mentored but should actively seek mentorship.

According to Valdata, who studied six female college presidents, women leaders were aware of their leadership styles. This study also reported, “Women were more inclined to take risks and more inclined to ‘think out of the box’” (Valdata, 2006, p. 30).

Part of the reason for the increase in female college presidents was that there are more credentialed women in the pipeline working as provosts (Lively, 2000). One example is Condoleezza Rice who was a provost at Stanford from 1993-1999 (Lively, 2000). Another scholar in the pipeline was Drew Gilpin Faust who was recently appointed president of Harvard University. Her appointment was viewed by some as a break in the glass ceiling in academia (Drago, 2007). Others viewed it as an important message. Paddock and Trounson (2007) reported that the appointment of Faust indicated Harvard’s displeasure with the former president, Laurence Summers who reportedly suggested that women do not have the innate capacity to understand the science. Faust, who has a background in gender studies and is a Civil War scholar, is said to have a “quiet charisma” and is the antithesis of Summers (Paddock & Trounson, 2007).

According to the experience of Keohane (2007), former president of Wellesley and Duke, women in the role of university president are successful when they conform to the expectations of the situations around them.

The phenomenon of the glass ceiling breaking in academia was predicted in comments by Judith Block McLaughlin, chair of the Harvard Seminar for New Presidents at Harvard University (Lively, 2000). McLaughlin noted that 20 years ago it was common to hear comments such as, “I don’t know if we are ready for a woman” (as cited
in Lively, 2000, p. A339). McLaughlin and others predicted that in 6 or 7 years, the doors of the college presidency would open for more women (Lively, 2000).

*Female leaders in corporate America.* In Fortune 500 corporations the concept of the glass ceiling effect was described similarly (Tischler, 2004). In the mid-nineties, 97% of senior managers were White males (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). According to more recent information, the picture for women in the corporate world has made some gains (The Conundrum, 2005; Goodman, Fields & Blum, 2003). They cited that only 8% to 15% of the top managers are women who earn an average of 72% of their male counterparts' earnings. According to a 2006 census conducted by the Catalyst organization, 15.6% of Fortune 500 corporate leaders are women (Damned or Doomed, 2007).

Those who study women corporate leadership believe that the glass ceiling effect pervades their ability to lead. According to the findings in "The Conundrum of the Glass Ceiling," there were several reasons why women do not reach the position of chief executive officer. The first was exclusion from networks. Second was the belief that men are biased against promoting women. The final reason cited was a lack of female role models (The Conundrum, 2005). On the other hand, other studies reported that much of the problem lies within the work ethic of women themselves because women do not compete as intensely for top management positions as do men (Tischler, 2004). As Tischler stated,

There may be simpler--and in many ways more disturbing--reason that women remain so underrepresented in the corner office. For the most part, men just compete harder than women. They put in more hours. They're more willing to
relocate. They're more comfortable putting work ahead of personal commitments. And they just want the top job more. (2004)

Hence, some placed the blame for this phenomenon on women themselves (Young & McLeod, 2001). Instead of blaming women for this situation, these researchers argued that there should be more aggressive efforts to encourage women to aspire. More recently, a 2007 Catalyst study entitled “Damned or Doomed- Catalyst Study on Gender Stereotyping at Work Uncovers Double-Bind Dilemmas for Women” sponsored by IBM corporation found that a common perception of “men-as-default leaders” was still prevalent in industry (2007). In Catalyst’s survey, 1231 American and European senior manager were asked about gender bias and women’s ability to lead. In the second part of the study, 13 women were questioned using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The findings of this study suggested the following:

When women exhibit traditionally valued leadership behaviors such as assertiveness, they tend to be seen as competent but not personable or well-liked. Yet those who adopt a more stereotypically feminine style are liked but not seen as having valued leadership skills.” (Damned or Doomed, 2007)

Consequently, Catalyst’s researchers concluded that “women are at risk of stereotypic bias” (2007). Further, as Catalyst President Ilene H. Lang stated, “Ultimately, it's not women’s leadership styles that need to change. Only when organizations take action to address the impact of gender stereotyping will they be able to capitalize on the ‘full deck’ of talent” (Damned or Doomed, 2007).

In a study conducted by the Wellesley Center for Women’s Studies, 60 noted women leaders were interviewed and suggested that mothering or the mothering
metaphor was a part of their leadership style (Erkut, 2000). According to the Inside Women Leaders study, this was a surprising finding that suggested that females bring an intuitive notion about fairness to their work that may be embedded culturally in our assumptions about caring for a family. Erkut posited,

While it is not possible to talk about a singular female style of leadership, the majority of these leaders combined a strong focus on results with equal attention to the growth and development of the people surrounding them. Indeed the descriptions of nearly every woman's leadership practices included elements of the democratic, people-oriented style. (2000)

Therefore, according to the research, women bring their natural qualities such as their participative styles and notions of fairness and mothering to their role. As such, the bias that some have suggested affects women's ability to reach the office of superintendent of schools is congruent with other research that stated that women experience difficulty reaching these top positions and once there, are at risk for experiencing gender bias.

Related Theories and Research

According to Ridgeway (2001), “Gender is an institutionalized system of social practices. The gender system is deeply entwined with social hierarchy and leadership because gender stereotypes contain status beliefs that associate greater status worthiness and competence with men than women.” Ridgeway contended that a theory known as expectations states theory is deeply embedded in our social practices and assumptions; hence, a glass ceiling effect has developed that not only marginalizes women but also penalizes assertive women because they do not follow accepted gender tendencies.
Expectations states theory suggested that we hold assumptions about a person's behavior based on our ideals of their gender. If the person conforms to our ideal assumptions, they are accepted. When an individual does not conform, we experience bias against this person because their behaviors conflict with our expectations (Ridgeway, 2001).

Other theories are helpful in understanding bias against women leaders as well. Role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) postulated that there are two categories of characteristics that underlie people's assumptions about gender: (a) communal qualities and (b) agentic qualities. Communal qualities characterize care and support that are typically associated with behaviors of women. Men, on the other hand, display agentic characteristics, such as dominance, self-confidence and assertiveness (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Therefore, our cultural assumptions tell us that we ideally expect to observe women displaying communal qualities and men to display agentic qualities. When we do not observe these qualities in women and men respectively, prejudice may emerge (Eagly & Karau, 2002). They also indicated that these expectations cross nations and countries (Williams & Best, 1996; Williams & Best as cited in Eagly & Karau, 2002).

More specifically, Eagly and Karau contended that women leaders more frequently experience bias if they display agentic qualities. These qualities in a woman often create a backlash of resistance and negative responses to them in their leadership role. Hence, Eagly and Karau indicated because of this, men have a double advantage in leadership positions while women have a disadvantage. According to empirical research, the perceived potential of women's leadership and women's actual performance as leaders are rated lower than males (Eagly & Karau, 2002).
In a meta-analysis of 162 studies, women were also found to have a transformational style of leadership suggesting they are more participative and inclusive in their work with followers (Eagly & Johnson 1990 as cited in Eagly & Karau, 2002). They confirmed that women must walk a fine line to be successful in male-dominant positions of leadership. In addition, this finding was reported in the work of Bell and Chase who discussed women’s task orientation and their regard for followers (1995).

Therefore, the social construction of gender profoundly influences our society’s biases toward women in traditionally male-dominated roles. This influence is more than simple bias. As Skrla (2000) stated, “…the U.S. public school superintendent is understood to be a man’s role, and women who inhabit this role will necessarily have difficulties caused by their femaleness” (p. 293). She further stated that these influences are also felt “by the profession, by policy analysts and by educational administration researchers” (p. 294). As such, these biases are widespread, invisible, and persistent affecting the work experience of women leaders.

Gosetti and Rusch presented a compelling argument in their chapter “Reexamining Educational Leadership: Challenging Assumptions” (as cited in Dunlap, & Schmuck, 1995). They contended that Dewey argued that schooling and society are connected and that the socialization for society takes place in school; hence, Dewey’s viewpoint was confirmed in the psychological research of Gilligan (1982) who studied women and morality and Belenky et al. (1986) who studied women’s “ethic of care.”

Gosetti and Rusch also argued, “…the construction of leadership is so immersed in privileged truths that there is limited opportunity for multiple perspectives to emerge
and change the social realities that foster marginalization and inequality" (as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck 1995, p. 12).

Since the late seventies, research surrounding the work of women in the superintendency emerged in a few isolated places. Professors of educational administration at various universities have written extensively on this topic in the 1980s and the 1990s (Blount, 1998; Brunner, 1998; Brunner & Grogan, 2005; Grogan, 2005; Shakeshaft, 1998). They have achieved prominence in the AASA’s Women Administrators’ Conferences and thus, their work figured prominently in this field. They presented their work to this segment of AASA and suggested that women in leadership roles were affected by bias (Brunner, Grogan & Prince, 2003).

Although much of the research concerned the lack of women in these roles and their lack of mentoring, there was also little in the way of research providing insight into “strategies for success” for these women and those who aspire to this role (Brunner, 1998).

In her qualitative study of 12 women from across the nation, Brunner (1998) studied narrative responses to determine strategies for success. From this research using complex qualitative methods, Brunner recommended that women must have an expectation about their role as superintendent as well as their role as a woman (1998).

In addition, Brunner captured insights from the narratives of these women. Brunner cited evidence that revealed exclusionary practices towards these women such as silencing and the use of negative body language (1998). In addition, many of the women in this study were uncomfortable about power when asked to define the term. For example, one woman in Brunner’s study suggested that she was more comfortable talking
about the term “leadership style” and preferred this term over power. Brunner stated that many women in her study defined power as collaborative and consensus-building, while men often defined this term as dominance or authority.

In a later work related to leadership and power, Brunner collaborated with Grogan and Prince at the 2003 Women Administrators’ Conference entitled “Leadership on the Line: Standing Up for Public Education” (2003). In her remarks about the AASA’s National Study on Women Superintendents and Central Office Administrators, Brunner stated,

> Women tend to have an understanding about power that is important to all superintendents. They understand that it is not about how much control you have over others, but rather it’s a collective synergy, and that their roles as superintendents provide them with an opportunity to serve and support others working toward a common good. (30)

Brunner et al. (2003) investigated gender differences and concluded that to reduce the imbalance of representation the following policy actions must be implemented:

1. state and federal agencies and foundations must fund more research on the topic;
2. women and men researchers need to take the topic seriously and bring renewed critical perspectives and energy to it;
3. gender power differentials in educational administration must be acknowledged. (p. 27)

In Skrla’s qualitative study of three female superintendents (1997), her participants recognized that gender affected their work. Some suggested implications for
university preparation programs and policy makers in education, school board associations, and superintendent search agencies who are often gatekeepers to women who rise to this position (Skrla, 1997; Tallerico, 2000). Shields presented findings that included proactive recommendations such as women analyzing the power they have as educational leaders and striving to reverse biases against women in leadership roles (2005a).

In addition to society’s embedded preconceived perceptions of women’s leadership abilities, some research considered the way women use language. For example, Scott interviewed two exemplary female superintendents to analyze their construction of identity through their discourse (1999). Her findings, developed through the grounded theory approach, determined that these two women used typically male patterns of discourse when describing situations of power and authority. Also noted in this paper was that women were often criticized by stakeholders for appearing aggressive in their professional roles instead of conforming to socially accepted norms (Scott, 1999).

Other research has been done on the differences in discourse between men and women. Studies revealed that men use facts and figures more frequently in their language whereas women concentrate their topics on relationships (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). The differences between men’s and women’s speech patterns have been referred to “pink versus blue” language (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). In fact, women leaders’ language has been referred to as “Pink as a second language” (p.94). Although there have been increases in women in leadership in both corporate and educational settings, there has been little change or progress in how women are viewed in the workforce (Leathwood, 2005).
Women's speech patterns were also studied and connected to the role congruity theory. In several research studies, women's use of tentative speech was regarded as more trustworthy by male audiences than the speech patterns of confident and assertive women. Conversely, female audiences preferred women who had confident and assertive speech patterns (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

In a study entitled *The Career Psychology of Women*, Betz and Fitzgerald outlined prevalent theories of the 20th century regarding the variables influencing women and their occupational preferences in this country (1987).

Prior to the 1970s, women in the United States considered their vocational interests as the work they would do prior to marriage and raising a family. However, the work of Rand and Miller as cited in Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) noted that there has since been a shift in women's career orientation later in the 20th century. Betz and Fitzgerald stated, "Studies in the early 1970s strongly suggested that the majority of young women planned to combine marriage and career" (p. 17). This concept demonstrated a shift in thinking and has had an impact on the American workplace and career options for women.

Further, the authors indicated that in addition to the variables of marriage and family, they viewed stereotypical sex typing of roles as a major influence on women's career choices in the 1970s as well as the opportunity for women to see role models. Betz and Fitzgerald cited a study by Donovan (1976) stating that "if modeling is important to learning and if same-sex models are more attractive, the career development of women would be limited by the lack of adult women representing strong career orientation and varied career pursuits." (p. 35)
Since there has been a lack of female role models in educational administration, there has been little opportunity for young women who aspire to administrative roles to view and learn from successful women as examples. This concept about the importance of same-sex role models was often repeated in relevant studies (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Isaacson, 1995).

Betz and Fitzgerald also concluded that the variables previously mentioned have been set forth by society and that school systems and counselors have contributed to impressing these traditional messages to young women as a matter of course (1987). They supported this premise found in other studies that the very institution that socializes all young people into our culture is responsible for perpetuating gender biases related to career choices.

Critical work in developmental psychology by Gilligan provided a foundation for many studies related to women and their methods of constructing reality. In her work entitled In a Different Voice, Gilligan posited that women primarily identify themselves with relationships and the ability to care for others, thus viewing themselves through attachment, intimacy, and affiliation (1982). This theoretical construct was termed an "ethic of care." Gilligan, who contrasted her findings with that of Lawrence Kohlberg, explained that this specific tendency of attachments and relationships places women lower on Kohlberg's scale of moral development at stage four, where relationships are subordinated to rules. The highest levels on Kohlberg's scale are stages five and six, involving a range from the simplicity of rules to the complexity of universal principles of justice suggesting that men arrive at higher moral maturity than women (1982).
According to Kohlberg’s research, women do not reach the highest levels of the moral development scale.

Conversely, Gilligan pointed out that Kohlberg, like many other psychologists, used only male children in his empirical research and then suggested his findings are universal (1982). Female subjects did not participate in Kohlberg’s study. Therefore, Gilligan argued that women were measured against a male standard, and were thus considered deficient when they did not reach the highest levels of morality on Kohlberg’s scale.

*Disserations about Women Superintendents*

A body of research about women in the American superintendency involved doctoral studies that included the following aspects: (a) demographics, (b) gender-based barriers, (c) lack of mentoring, (d) satisfaction with the position, (e) perceptions of school board members, (f) career paths and (g) leadership styles and or preferences. Several studies involving similar themes of this research included the use of Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientation Survey (1990) as well as studies specific to women superintendents in New Jersey.

The work of these dissertations was important to this study because it chronicled the history of women superintendents in New Jersey and other states as well as the findings related to their work experience. These studies were primarily conducted by female graduate students pursuing doctoral degrees in educational administration.

In 1982, a national study entitled Project Aware, sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators, identified 184 women who were superintendents nationally, or one percent of the total superintendents of public schools in the United
States (Coatney, 1982). In her dissertation, Coatney collected survey responses from 151 of these women to compile descriptive data about their personal characteristics, as well as their attitudes about their work. Of interest in this survey was a specific finding that at that time, 62% of survey respondents perceived no barriers in their career because of their gender (1982).

In 1986, Orland reported that the percent of women holding superintendents positions had risen to two percent. Her study investigated the career paths of six women in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. She found that these women had specific personality traits including self-confidence and assertiveness that led to their success. This statistic of two percent was confirmed in the literature elsewhere, indicating that by 1985 women constituted 2.4% of all superintendencies. At that time, women stated that they faced internal and external barriers to this position (Marshall, 1986).

In 1987, a Seton Hall University student interviewed 10 women superintendents in New Jersey to determine their perceptions of the jobs (Misner-Senyk, 1987). Among the findings noted were that women should expect obstacles to advancement. These obstacles included widely documented barriers such as lack of role models and difficulty in networking. At that time, Misner-Senyk determined that only 37 women were superintendents of public schools in New Jersey. Misner-Senyk also indicated that some women declined to be interviewed because of their fears of reprisals.

In Massachusetts, women superintendents were studied to determine their leadership roles (Greenfield, 1994). At the time of this study, only 38 of Massachusetts’ 361 superintendents, or 10.5%, were female. Greenfield classified these women superintendents as transformational leaders, who placed a high priority on nurturing and
caring for others. She also determined that this sample of women had a preference for collaborative leadership that empowered others (Greenfield, 1994).

Dulac (1992) studied 90 female superintendents from public schools in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware and compared their responses to a questionnaire that was also completed by 158 board presidents in the same states. Dulac noted different perceptions of the women superintendents from the Board presidents in role conflicts (Dulac, 1992). The women in the study were similar in demographics to the national literature. Among Dulac’s findings were that board presidents in this study were primarily middle-aged White males, with better than average incomes, who were considered gatekeepers of the superintendent position.

Frick (1996) studied both male and female superintendents utilizing Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) that revealed differences by gender and years of experiences when dealing with change in their organizations. According to the findings of this study, the political and symbolic frames were critical when the superintendents, male or female, faced change in their districts. Frick called for specific instruction and familiarity with the political and symbolic frames in administrative preparation programs to improve leadership skills.

Two additional studies using Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) provided relevant information regarding multidimensional leadership by school administrators (Davis, 1996; Durocher, 1995). First, Davis studied secondary school principals in Pennsylvania, to determine their leadership orientations using the self reporting format. The sample included all female superintendents in Pennsylvania at that
time \( n = 63 \) combined with a randomly selected sample of male superintendents \( n = 63 \). Her findings from the 70% who responded determined that secondary school principals, both male and female, reported using the human resource frame the most. The next frame they reported using was the structural frame.

The second study by Durocher (1995) used Bolman and Deal’s Survey (1990) to determine the leadership frames of highly effective superintendents in a national study reported in an issue of *The Executive Educator*. In this study she compared the mean differences between male and female responses using *t-tests*. Durocher found that female superintendents reported using the human resource and structural frames to a higher degree than the reports from male superintendents. The superintendents in this sample reported using the political and symbolic frames less frequently, although the female superintendents reported an emphasis on the charismatic elements of the symbolic frame more than males.

In a 1998 study, Isaacson presented findings that included women finding difficulty advancing to the superintendency because they could not overcome the bias of the male dominance in the position. Isaacson’s findings determined that mentoring helped their advancement as well as developing a sense of identity in the role of superintendent. In 1999, Scott studied female superintendents and concluded that preparation programs need to present the political nature and demands of the superintendency for women who aspire to the job.

Parent (2004) studied Oregon women superintendents and found that they are underrepresented in her state as well. She surveyed women superintendents and school board chairs to rank women superintendents on a variety of tasks. She found that women
superintendents ranked themselves high on instructional tasks. Parent also found that having a mentor and a supportive network were important to women superintendents in Oregon.

*Leadership, Power and Women*

Power is a key component in leadership, often equated with leadership itself (Yukl, 2006); hence, it must be addressed in this review of the literature. Many writers, (Grogan, 2000; Shields, 2005a), discussed the notion of power relative to women in the superintendency. Grogan relied on the philosophical work of Foucault to explain that knowledge and power are connected (2000). Using this theoretical premise, Grogan argued that women superintendents believe that “the basis of the relationship of power is in hostilities and that the mechanisms of power are those of repression” (p. 20). Thus, her position was that the predominant view assumes that power is most closely associated with subordination and dominance themes wherein one group or person is oppressed in the power relationship. Grogan advocated using Foucault’s definition of power as do Bolman and Deal (2003).

In the 1970s and 1980s, philosopher Michel Foucault presented his interpretation of power that appealed to feminists who were developing new ideas about women and their understanding of power (Grogan, 2000). According to feminist literature, cultural assumptions of power were coupled with masculinity, signifying that men had dominance over others. As such, the gender constructed definition positioned the term power as “power over” (Brunner & Schumaker, 1998). Foucault offered a new definition of power that rebelled against the traditional viewpoint that power is repressive (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Instead, Foucault argued that power is productive, and that this concept of power,
produces the subject. According to Foucault, power is everywhere and thus flows through social systems (Allen, 2005; Bolman and Deal, 2003; Felluga, 2003).

Thus, the stereotypical notion of power as masculine and dominant is a repressive concept to women (Grogan, 2005). Foucault's theory liberated those that were marginalized by the masculine construction of power (Shields, 2005a). Feminists, instead, looked toward a redistribution of power to provide equity of access for women in all forms of leadership roles in society. Hence, this view explained the usefulness of alternative definitions of power that may shape how women construct and exercise their use of power.

Another interesting interpretation of women's orientation to power was described in the work of Jean Baker Miller (as cited in Gilligan, 1982). Miller posited that women construe power in a relationship of dominance and subordination, and further, that women understand this order through the relationships of temporary and permanent inequalities of power in the family structure. Gilligan explained that power in the family is temporary when it concerns the inequality found in a parent-child relationship since power is used to develop the child, but permanent in its equality of the family formation. Based on the work of Miller, Gilligan stated:

Though subordinate in social position to men, women are at the same time centrally entwined with them in the intimate and intense relationships of adult sexuality and family life... Women, therefore, are ideally situated to observe the potential in human connection both for care and for oppression. (p. 168)

Differences in power were described in the literature about women superintendents specifically. For example, some have contended that women bring
natural talents in nurturing and building relationships in schools to develop a notion characterized as "collaborative power" (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006, p. 123). Former superintendents Bourisaw and Dana suggested, however, that strong women tend to make others feel uncomfortable. "This strength, if not exercised properly, can create discomfort and distance with school board members, school district staff, and the community" (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006, p. 123). They reported that in models of leadership where females have been studied, women who establish "power with" are successful as opposed to men who establish "power over" others.

Other researchers of women superintendents found value in Foucault's conceptualization. For example, Brunner and Schumaker's analysis of power concluded that there are two types of power: (a) power over, which constitutes domination over another; and (b) power to, which constitutes a collaborative form of power that helps communities achieve goals (1998). Power to is also constructed as the ability or capacity to do something (Allen, 2005). Carli found that women who possessed a higher degree of referent power were more able to influence others (1999). Referent power was described similarly to personal power in that it relied on task expertise and relationships as a form of power.

Another model of power that was relevant to this current research was termed three-dimensional model of power discussed specifically in Fowler (2004). An in-depth explanation of this concept revolved around the following elements:

1. First dimension: explicit exercises of power such as force, economic dominance, authority or persuasion.
2. Second dimension: mobilization of bias such as using mechanisms to disempower female educational administrators or other minorities that work in schools. This term also works to marginalize minority children in our system.

3. Third dimension: shaping of consciousness that includes communication processes, myths, and symbols. (p. 30)

Fowler’s model (2004) contained a range of elements that included concepts about power that predominantly shaped our thinking and behaviors. The dimensions also expressed the range in terms of bias that is often present with women, minorities, and children. Hence, this definition served as a parallel explanation regarding the marginalization of women and minorities in powerful positions as described in the second dimension.

Freeman, et al. (2001) argued that because recent research suggested that women in leadership roles are judged more harshly than men in the same roles, it was time to redefine society’s fundamental notions about leadership and gender. They further reported that women think about and exercise power differently from their male counterparts. For example, in interviews, 25 prominent women defined power as “getting things done” (p. 10). Furthermore, women attached the end result of their perspectives about power to producing a greater good for society. Therefore, according to the results of their research, power for women was not used for personal gain, but instead it was used to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization (p. 10).

Summary

The literature surrounding women superintendents and women in leadership roles formed a complex foundation for this study. It was complex because women in leadership
positions that are socially constructed as masculine, such as the superintendent of schools, encounter bias that complicates their ability to acquire the position as well as their subsequent ability to lead. These accounts of bias were partially explained by expectation states theory, role congruity theory, and other conceptual frameworks such as the mobilization of bias. Social scientists and psychologists suggested that it is society’s deeply held assumptions about the patriarchal structure of leadership roles that made the process of women reaching the most powerful positions more difficult than it is for men.

Complicated assumptions about power in the form of dominance over another pervaded the literature about women and power; therefore, these assumptions shaped the expectations of how women build relationships and manage employees in their organizations. Some reported that women lead through inclusive and participative forms of leadership. Others noted women’s use of referent power over positional power.

The body of research regarding women leaders is relatively new. Therefore, this research and studies beyond this one will continue to trace the evolution of women’s trajectory into the superintendent’s office. It is indeed a slow chronicle, one that is interwoven with assumptions, expectations, and biases that have shaped the history and work experience of female superintendents in this country for nearly 100 years.
Chapter III

Methodology

"I don’t think there is bias against women in New Jersey any longer.
It’s a thing of the past."

— Suburban Superintendent

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which the leadership orientations of women superintendents in New Jersey can be understood by applying Bolman and Deal’s four frame model (2003). To achieve the aim of this inquiry, a mixed-method design was used, consisting of qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting, organizing, and analyzing data.

It was my ultimate intention to capture the perspectives of the participants included in this study as well as to generalize a set of experiences about New Jersey women in the role of superintendent at the beginning of the 21st century. These perspectives were analyzed using Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003) as a set of assumptions to examine their leadership styles and behaviors. The frames and the metaphors associated with the frames served as the conceptual framework for this study and became the organizational themes that were emphasized in both the survey and the interviews. The leadership frames also provided a context for discussing findings around the research questions.

Since this study was open-ended in nature, an emergent design was incorporated as described by Leedy and Ormrod (2005). This approach was used in answering the research questions as information from the participants unfolded (Leedy & Ormrod,
2005). Thus, the nature of the methodology was subject to revision over the course of the study depending on the concepts and themes that emerged throughout the process.

Rigorous and systematic methods were followed to maintain objectivity throughout the analysis. I considered myself as an “instrument in the data collection and analysis process” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) as well as Rew, Betchel and Sapp (1993) as cited in Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 6). For the quantitative component of this analysis, Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) was used to collect data about the frames. Data from the surveys were analyzed through descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods provided direction for the research process resulting in two substantive components that form the basis of the analysis: data building and theory building (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Sample Population

All women superintendents’ names and addresses were identified in New Jersey using two methods: (a) a search of the New Jersey Department of Education’s School Directory Web site, and (b) a search of the Directory of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators 2006 Edition. At the time of this part of the methodology, the process yielded 146 names that became the sample for the quantitative component of the study. In addition, the names on the list provided the candidate pool for the selection of six women to send requests for permission to participate in the in-depth semistructured interviews.

Procedures for the Quantitative Component

The study examined experiences and responses of women superintendents currently at work in the state of New Jersey in 2006-2007. For the quantitative design, a
survey instrument created by Bolman and Deal entitled Leadership Orientations Survey (Self Report) (1990) was sent to all female superintendents in New Jersey. This mailing took place from February 2007 through May 2007. One hundred forty-six surveys were mailed. Included in the mailing were the informed consent forms, a copy of the Leadership Orientations Survey (1990), and a stamped addressed envelope. By the end of March 2007, I received 55 surveys.

In the middle of March 2007, a follow-up postcard was sent to all 146 addresses to thank those who responded already and to remind others who may have still wanted to respond to the survey. The postcard provided my e-mail address in the event that surveys were misplaced and another was needed. The second mailing occurred at the end of March and produced an additional 16 surveys. Therefore, a total of 71 surveys formed the sample for the quantitative component of the research design.

The demographic data for this component of the study were collected from specific questions at the end of Bolman and Deal's survey (1990). Questions on the survey that provided additional demographic data included, but were not limited to, the following: length of years in the superintendent's position; degrees earned; certifications earned; size of district; a description identifying the district as urban, suburban or rural; the district factor grouping; role models; age range at the time of the survey; and other items such as county groups. County groups were configured as follows: Group A: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem; Group B: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset; and Group C: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, and Warren. The purpose of collecting data about county groups was to determine clusters of returned surveys by the
northern, central, or southern geographic regions of the state. These data formed the demographic profile for this research.

Quantitative Instrumentation: Leadership Orientation Survey

In Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership (2003) Bolman and Deal organized the work of leaders and managers into four frames: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. The overarching concept of this book was that by analyzing situations through the lenses of the four frames, leaders in either corporations or education can apply artistry to their work context.

In 1990, Bolman and Deal developed the survey based on the underlying concepts of the frames and copyrighted the Leadership Orientation Survey instrument, presented in its entirety in Appendix A. There are two formats: (a) Self-Report and (b) Report for Others.

Permission is generally granted to researchers who wish to use the survey in theses or dissertations. As such, permission was granted to me in an e-mail dated May 16, 2006, from Dr. Lee Bolman. Many researchers have used this instrument for their dissertations for both corporate and educational applications. In exchange for permission to use the survey, the researcher must provide a copy of the thesis or dissertation when the results have been compiled. The Web site identifies the citations for those studies and dissertations that have used the survey instrument (Bolman, 2006).

There were three sections to the survey; (a) Behaviors, (b) Leadership Styles, and (c) Management and Leadership Rating. All items in the survey were presented in the same sequence: i.e., structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. There were two surveys found at the Web site: (a) Self: a self-reporting tool in which respondents rate
themselves, and (b) Others: a tool that allows for ratings of a leader or manager by other colleagues. This specific study used the self-reporting version of the Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990) adding demographic items at the end.

Validity and Reliability of the Survey Instrument

The survey instrument as constructed by Bolman and Deal (1990) has been tested for validity and reliability. It is not, however, a normed test. Extensive statistical analysis of each of the items on the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientations survey has been conducted in several ways. The authors of the survey used a variety of methods to validate this tool to find internal consistency that included the following: split half correlation, Spearman Brown coefficient, Guttman (Rulon) coefficient, and coefficient alpha. (Appendix B)

According to the Web site, these ratings were based on approximately 1300 colleague ratings for a multi-sector sample of managers in business and education. Further, Bolman stated on his web site that there was a low reliability of this instrument; therefore, the creators of the survey recommended that the companion survey should be used to improve the reliability. This, however, was not done for this current research to ensure the anonymity of the respondents.

The responses from this instrument were used for the quantitative section of this study, taking frequency counts for each of the superintendents' responses in each of the frame categories. Inferences about these responses related to women in this role were drawn from these frequency counts and are reported in chapter 6.

Survey results for the items in both sections were factor analyzed using a varimax rotation. This method allowed me to determine if the responses of the superintendents
clustered similarly around the frames as hypothesized by Bolman and Deal (2003).

Sample items from the Behaviors section of the survey and the Leadership Styles section of the survey are listed below.

This questionnaire asks you to describe your leadership and management style.

I. Behaviors

You are asked to indicate how often each of the items below is true of you.

Please use the following scale in answering each item.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Occasionally Sometimes Often Always

So, you would answer '1' for an item that is never true of you, '2' for one that is occasionally true, '3' for one that is sometimes true of you, and so on. Be discriminating!

Your results will be more helpful if you think about each item and distinguish the things that you really do all the time from the things that you do seldom or never.

1. _____ Think very clearly and logically.

2. _____ Show high levels of support and concern for others.

3. _____ Have exceptional ability to mobilize people and resources to get things done.

4. _____ Inspire others to do their best.

II. Leadership Styles

This section asks you to describe your leadership style. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.
1. My strongest skills are:
   _____ a. Analytic skills
   _____ b. Interpersonal skills
   _____ c. Political skills
   _____ d. Ability to excite and motivate

IV. Background Information

1. How many years have you been in your current job? ____

2. How many total years of experience do you have as a manager? ____

Analysis

The responses to the survey questions were entered into the SPSS 14.0 for Windows Student Version program in the data and variable view fields. The first step in the analysis was to determine frequency counts for the initial set of demographic questions. The results from these analyses were incorporated into the interpretation of the data in chapters 4 and 6 of the dissertation.

For the behaviors section, frequency counts that represented the positive responses of Often and Always were collapsed into one. Frequency counts representing the negative responses of Sometimes, Occasionally, and Never were grouped for each item. A mean percentage was calculated for each one of the frames; (i.e., one for the combined positive responses and one for the combined negative responses.) For the leadership styles section, participants were asked to rank order their styles into positive responses for Best Describes Me (4) and Next Best Describes Me (3). These positive responses for the items were grouped together. Similarly, the negative responses for Next Best Describes Me (2) and Least Like Me (1) were grouped together as well.
Factor analysis was used to determine patterns in the survey data and was used to answer the first two research questions:

1. To what extent can the leadership preferences of female superintendents be understood by applying Bolman and Deal's four frames?

2. What are the dominant frames women school superintendents employ in their roles?

*Qualitative Instrumentation: Semistructured Interview*

The qualitative component of the mixed-method design used grounded theory. To collect data for the qualitative component, I, with the advice of my committee members, developed questions related to Bolman and Deal's four frames model (2003). These questions were used in an in-depth semistructured interview format.

*Interview Subjects*

I conducted the in-depth semistructured interviews with six female superintendents who were currently employed in public school districts throughout the state. Of critical importance to this research was that context of the workplace played a key role in the interviews of these women and was considered carefully in the selection of the women superintendents who participated in this component of the study.

Thus, a purposive sample for the semistructured interviews was selected as follows: two women from urban districts, two from suburban, and two from rural districts. In addition, the superintendents were selected from across the state to allow for a wide cross-section of participants. The interview participants' locations were dispersed across New Jersey and came from the following counties: Bergen, Essex, Mercer, Camden, Hunterdon, and Salem Counties. Thus, there were two from counties in the
northern part of the state, two from the central part of the state, and two from the southern regions.

There was also a range of district sizes based on student enrollment. The smallest work context was a one-building district that served approximately 350 students in a Pre K-8 configuration. The next smallest was a two-building district with approximately 650 students in a PreK-8 configuration. The two suburban districts were regional districts. One consisted of a two high school district. The other consisted of a PreK-12 configuration. Both have student populations in the range of 2000 to 5000 students. Finally, both urban districts selected for the semistructured interviews were from PreK-12 configurations with the smaller district having a population between 2000 to 5000 students and the larger one with a population of over 10,000 students.

Table 1 displays the district profiles of the six superintendents in the interview sample. Data were gathered from the New Jersey Report Cards posted at the New Jersey State Department of Education's Web site.
Table 1

*District Profiles of the Six Interview Subjects*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>DFG</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Testing Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Abbott</td>
<td>PreK-12</td>
<td>10,000+</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>2,000+</td>
<td>Lit. 64 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math 46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Abbott</td>
<td>PreK-12</td>
<td>1774</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>Lit. 80.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math 77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>2429</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>Lit. 98.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math 93.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Pre-K-12</td>
<td>3988</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>Lit. 95.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math 88.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Pre-K-8</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lit. 79.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Math 88.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>GH</td>
<td>Pre-K-8</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Lit. 92.2%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math 90.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Collection*

To capture women’s “voices,” in-depth semistructured interviews were conducted with each superintendent individually. These interviews were conducted in person or over the telephone depending on the convenience of the participants. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. As a result of their preferences, two interviews were conducted in person, and the rest were conducted over the phone. Even though the sample size for
the qualitative part of the study was relatively small, the context of the work environment of these women was critical to the purpose of the study.

A standard set of questions was prepared in advance of this process. This standardization provided uniformity and consistency throughout the interviews. The questions were designed to prompt the subjects to think along the lines of the four frames which ultimately allowed for analysis based on the criteria of each of the frames as described by Bolman and Deal (2003). In addition, the questions were grouped by frame. This enabled probing around the metaphors of factory, family, jungle, and theater.

However, to determine particular nuances of responses or probe an interviewee’s reasoning, additional clarifying or probing questions were asked during the interview if I felt it was needed. All questions were open-ended allowing for reflection on the part of the superintendent and required that she relate her answers to her direct experience.

Each female superintendent was contacted first by mail to request the interview. Then, I contacted each woman by telephone to request permission to send the informed consent form. I followed up by contacting each superintendent’s office by telephone to schedule an in-person or telephone interview. The interviews were audiotaped. Each participating superintendent was identified by her county name to assure confidentiality and anonymity. The first six women who were asked to participate in the interviews agreed; therefore, no other women superintendents in the state were invited to participate.

Grounded Theory Process

Once the data were collected from the semistructured interviews, I transcribed each individually to prepare for the coding process required in grounded theory as
developed by Strauss and Corbin (Patton, 2002). This included a line-by-line analysis as the first step in the coding process.

The responses to the semistructured questions were organized according to the process recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1998). This was a systematic method of microanalysis involving coding and analyzing the data referred to as the "constant comparative" method (Patton, 2002). This process as described by Patton emerged from constructivist theory (p. 125) Further, as cited in Patton (2002), Charmaz noted that grounded theory "looks at how 'variables' are grounded--given meaning and played out in subjects' lives" (p. 128).

Strauss and Corbin described grounded theory as a "method of discovery" (p. 1, 1998). The coding process was defined as "the analytic processes through which data are fractured, conceptualized and integrated to form theory" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 3). I used the following questions as recommended by Corbin and Strauss to begin the coding process: "What do you notice? What is this? What is going on here? Does what I think I see fit the reality of the data?" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.125).

As such, I examined each interview transcript in a line-by-line analysis to begin the open coding process. This involved reading the transcripts multiple times to identify major categories that seemed to cross the six interviews to determine how their language seemed to fit the reality of their experience. I kept notes on these impressions in a journal and highlighted these lines in the transcripts. Throughout the coding process, I focused on what I noticed to determine "What is going on here?" and "What do I notice?"

Following this process, each section was divided, frame by frame, to identify properties and dimensions. Properties were the "characteristics of a category the
delineation of which defines and gives it meaning” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 103). Dimensions were “the range along a continuum which general properties of a category vary, giving specification to a category and variation to a theory” (p. 103). Therefore, I attempted to characterize the category with as much depth of meaning as possible. This process termed saturation was repeated until no new categories emerged.

Next, axial coding was used. In this process, I attempted to synthesize the relationships of the categories to the properties and dimensions in each of the frames. The results of the axial coding were phrased into a relational statement about the women superintendents’ preferences in each of the frames. For example, a relational statement was, “The six women superintendent had clear and purposeful preferences in the structural frame.” Finally, the researcher developed a conditional matrix to distill the data and represent the relationships found in the coding process through a graphic display. The conditional matrix is found in chapter 5.

The interpretation of the interview data attempted to answer the first two research questions. In addition, the following subsidiary questions subsumed under the second and third purposes of this research were also investigated. These subsidiary questions were as follows:

3. How do female superintendents interpret the role of these frames in contributing to their success or lack thereof?
4. To what extent do the dominant frames characterize the way women superintendents construct their use of power?
5. To what extent do women superintendents’ perceptions of their gender affect the manner in which they lead their districts?
6. Because the percentage of female superintendents in New Jersey is greater than the national average, have women superintendents broken the glass ceiling in this state?

From this detailed application of the grounded theory process, I attempted to build a theory about women superintendents’ leadership styles from the analysis of these data.

Four Frames and the Semi-Structured Interview Questions

The committee members and I developed a set of questions for this component of the study. They were reviewed by all members of the dissertation committee for face validity. The mentors and committee members approved these questions and offered suggestions and insights that sought to improve the quality of these questions and keep them relevant in relation to the purposes of this research. The same set of demographic questions was included at the beginning of the interview to collect comparable demographic data as requested in the survey instrument. A sample of some of the interview questions are presented below. The in-depth semistructured interview in its entirety is located in the Appendix C.

Prior to beginning the interview questions, the following description of Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003) was read to each interviewee. Each woman superintendent understood the concepts of the metaphors. One had heard Dr. Deal speak about the frames at a recent AASA conference. None, however, had read the book itself.

Description of the Four Frames Presented to Interviewees

The following script was read to each one of the six interview subjects to familiarize them with Bolman and Deal’s (2003) work and to help them understand the purposes of this research:
“Bolman and Deal (2003) are best-selling authors of a book on organizational theory entitled *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. They view organizations through the following metaphors: factories, families, jungles, and theaters or temples.

To help you understand the metaphors a bit better, here are some examples of how the metaphors are being used:

1. ‘factories’ suggest that the work of schools as an organization is similar to a well-oiled machine that can be adjusted through structures to operate smoothly and efficiently;

2. ‘families’ suggest that the work of an organization is primarily grounded in people and that the human resource is the most important resource;

3. ‘jungles’ represent the notion that the work of the leader relies most heavily on a power-play or political interplay in which building coalitions and leveraging power with stakeholders is critical; and

4. ‘theaters’ suggest that in order to motivate individuals in an organization, leaders must work through symbolism, metaphor and tradition. I will now ask you questions related to your leadership styles categorized by each of the four frames.”

**Examples of Interview Questions**

1. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart.

2. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district?

3. What is your definition of power?

4. What are the most important symbols in your school system?
5. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey?

After the interviews were conducted, a thank you letter was sent to each superintendent with a copy of her respective informed consent form enclosed in the mailing.
Chapter IV

Interpretation of the Data

Who Are They?

"Nobody wants to be superintendent anymore. It is a thankless job. It is our chance."

--Urban Superintendent

Compiling demographics about women superintendents in the United States has been a basic component of the literature related to this phenomenon (Shakeshaft as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995). Although some have conducted national research in the AASA studies, and others have studied regional demographics in various doctoral dissertations (Dulac, 1992; Glass et al., 2000; Greenfield, 1994; Orland, 1986; Parent, 2004), the demographics about women superintendents in New Jersey are scant (Misner-Senik, 1987). Therefore, the first part of the data analysis dealt with organizing, displaying, and interpreting the demographics from the combined information from the survey and interview responses in this study. This research was then compared to the data about their female counterparts in the national literature.

Attention to demographics comprised the first part of chapter 4 in an attempt to describe the characteristics of these women, or in essence to answer the following question, "Who are they?" A subcomponent of this investigation dealt specifically with the subsidiary questions that comprised the third purpose of this dissertation:

7. What are the basic demographics related to female superintendents in New Jersey?
8. What trends about women in educational leadership can be uncovered from these data?
Interview responses about the demographics of the six women superintendents were included at the end of this chapter to compare the characteristics of the smaller sample of 6 to the larger one of 71.

National Data: Female Superintendents' Demographic Profile

National figures garnered from the American Association of School Administrators' survey in 2000 found 13.2% of all districts were led by women superintendents, up from 6.6% found in the 1990 national survey conducted by AASA (Glass et al., 2000). In this study, regions identified as the Mideast and the Great Lakes were reported as having 18.9% women as superintendents at that time compared to only 9.1% in the New England region (Glass et al., 2000). A New Jersey School Boards Association article reported that from 2000 to 2002, the national average increased from 13.2% to 15.8% (Coumbe, 2005). A more recent study by Brunner, Grogan, and Prince (2003) reported that the national average had increased once again to 18%. In the national sample of 297 respondents, the largest percentage of women superintendents held positions in K-8 rural districts (Glass et al., 2000).

In 2005, the percentage of female school superintendents in New Jersey averaged about 22%. I determined this figure by identifying women superintendents in the state through a search of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators Directory (6th ed.) as well as the State Department of Education’s School Directory Web site. This percentage was confirmed in a 2005 article in New Jersey School Boards Association’s Journal, School Leader, “... 22 percent of the superintendents positions in New Jersey are filled by women” (Bishop, 2005, p. 35).

School District Context: Overall Survey Sample

In many respects, the 71 women superintendents in New Jersey who took part in this study possessed many of the same characteristics that were reported in the literature based on
data collected on the national survey under the aegis of the American Association of School Administrators (Glass et al., 2000). According to the data gathered in the present study, women superintendents worked in districts across New Jersey in a range of socioeconomic contexts (suburban, urban, and rural). They were leaders of districts with student populations as small as 350 students in one school building to as large as over 10,000 students in over 50 buildings.

This high percentage of women leaders in New Jersey was not always the case. In 1980, it was reported that there were only 10 female superintendents in the entire state (Bruno, 2004). Thus, New Jersey’s statistics have grown dramatically and have outpaced the national trends for years.

The series of tables that follow present the demographic data collected in the survey and are displayed according to the following categories: (a) New Jersey district context compared to the national data, (b) personal characteristics of the superintendents in this study, and (c) work-related characteristics of superintendents in this study. These tables and figures display data that were organized using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts using SPSS.
Table 2

*New Jersey District Context (n = 71) Compared to the National Data (n = 297)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>New Jersey Data</th>
<th>National Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban/rural</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*County Groupings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Grouping</th>
<th>New Jersey Data</th>
<th>National Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Counties</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Counties</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Counties</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Size by Student Population*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size Range</th>
<th>New Jersey Data</th>
<th>National Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1000</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-2000</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-5000</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000-10000</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10,000</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*School Configuration*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>New Jersey Data</th>
<th>National Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data in Table 2 display trends related to the district context characteristics in which women hold the position of superintendent. District contexts are labeled as suburban, urban, or rural. Nearly 70% of women in this survey sample are superintendents of suburban districts. Following this percentage are rural superintendents with 22.5%. The lowest percentage of women superintendents was found in urban districts at 8.5%.

The figures in this New Jersey sample differed in some respects from the national survey conducted by AASA in 2000 (Glass et al.). In the AASA survey \((n = 297)\), 48.5% of the women respondents characterized their communities as rural, with another 17.8% who described their communities as suburban/rural (p. 82). The category of suburban/rural was not a choice in this survey. As far as the rate of women leading suburban districts, 23.9% of the women in the national study identified their districts as suburban. In the national study, 9.1% of the women defined their districts as urban which closely paralleled the New Jersey sample with 8.5% (p.82). Therefore, the sample of 71 women identified their districts as suburban which is nearly 3 times the percentage of the national sample (i.e., 23% in the national sample compared to 69% of the New Jersey sample.)

Over 50% of women superintendents in this sample work in districts with student populations described in the lowest range of students (i.e., under 1000 students.) An inverse trend was noted in these data. Specifically, as the student population increases, the percentage of women holding the position of superintendent decreases. As a result, 73 percent of women who responded to the survey work in districts of 2000 students or less.

The national sample of 297 revealed a similar demographic profile. Nearly 37% reported their student populations as below 1000. In the next category, 1000-2999, the percentage of women in the superintendency increased to 31.6%. Therefore, the national sample consisted of
nearly 68% of the women holding positions in districts with fewer than 3000 students. The inverse relationship of women to greater student populations was also noted in the national sample.

A third category related to district context was described as the area of the state identified by county location. While the percentages of women responding to the survey by county categories were relatively the same, counties found in central New Jersey appeared to have the most female superintendents with 33.6% identifying themselves as employed in these counties.

Finally, 53% of the women reported that they were superintendents of a K-8 grade level configuration. Another inverse relationship noted in these data was that as the grade level configuration of districts increased to Grade 12, the number of women as superintendent decreased. These data were also comparable to some studies in other states. For example, in a recent doctoral study of women superintendents in Oregon, Parent, (2004) found that most of the women in her sample were superintendents of districts with fewer than 1000 students.

District Factor Groups

In New Jersey, school districts are categorized according to their socioeconomic characteristics and are designated as such by a term called District Factor Groups, more commonly known as DFG. According to the New Jersey Department of Education Website, District Factor Group designations began in 1974 and were updated in 1984 and 1992. Today, there are eight groups with the lowest socioeconomic group designated an “A” district, meaning that this district ranks highest in level of poverty in the state. District Factor Groups are calculated using census data (NJ Department of Education Website, 2007).

The wealthiest districts are grouped in categories of “I” and “J.” In between “A” and “J”, there is a range letters identified as follows from poorest to wealthiest: B, CD, DE, FG, and GH.
There are 105 “I” districts and 15 “J” districts indicating the degree of wealth in the state (NJ Department of Education Website, 2007). One hundred seventy-five districts are in the CD levels.

Some of the poorest districts in the state are designated Abbott districts, which qualifies them for specific funding formulas according to legal requirements of the landmark *Abbott v. Burke* decisions. These rankings are important in New Jersey because they are used to compare standardized testing data across districts that possess similar and defining characteristics. These comparisons are published widely in newspapers and on the State of New Jersey’s Department of Education Web site.

In classifying district categories beyond economic levels, other factors taken into account are the percentage of adults who completed high school, the percentage who completed college, the percentage who are professional or quasi-professionals, the percentage of adults who are unemployed unemployment and population density (NJ Department of Education Web site, 2007).

Figure 1 displays the district factor groups to which respondents in this study belong. District Factor Groups are represented by their respective letters. Please note that 00.00 indicates no response to this question.
Figure 1. District Factor Groups of superintendents in the survey sample \((n = 71)\)
As shown in the bar graph in Figure 1, respondents identified themselves most from the “I” category. This category is designated as the second wealthiest set of districts in New Jersey. The next highest count was found in the “FG” range followed by the “GH” range. Therefore, although women superintendents in this survey were found in all District Factor Groups across the state, most women superintendents led districts in the “FG,” “GH,” and “I” districts combined.

The question raised is whether or not professional people who tend to live in wealthier areas are more comfortable with professional women leading a school district. Only 16 of the women led districts in the poorest categories, A, B, and CD, raising a similar question that seeing professional women on a regular basis may not be the case in these lower socioeconomic District Factor Groups.

Seven women did not answer the DFG question at all. One woman wrote on the survey that by providing this information, she may reveal the identity of her district and thus compromise her anonymity. This was the only question that had a high rate of blank responses on this survey.

*Elementary Experience*

In the national statistics, there was a strong indication that many of the women in the survey have most of their experience in the elementary schools. For example, 43.8% of the superintendents in the national survey had their first full-time teaching position at the elementary level, and 38% of the women had their first administrative position in elementary schools (Glass, 2000). Gathering data about elementary experience was not a specific factor in this survey. However, like the national survey, most of the respondents in this survey, 58%, worked in K-8 district configurations in New Jersey.
Therefore, according to these data, women were more likely to be superintendents of smaller districts in terms of student population and were working primarily in suburban K-8 school districts in counties located in central New Jersey. In many ways, these data were parallel to the data on the national survey conducted in 2000 by AASA (Glass, et al.). The major exception was that most of the women superintendents across the country were leaders of rural districts compared to the women in New Jersey who were primarily leaders in suburban systems.

The next set of data represents the personal characteristics of the women in this sample including female role models, education, and age range.

Table 3

*Personal Characteristics of superintendents in the study N = 71*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal characteristics</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had a Female Role Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education prior to the superintendency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>54.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data found in the Table 3 entitled Personal Characteristics were parallel to the national demographic data found in the literature. Several doctoral studies and other reports indicated that women have too few female mentors who have helped them and supported them in their administrative careers (Brunner, 1997; Glass et al., 2000; Parent, 2004). As stated in the national survey, "Aspiring women facing inequities and inequalities need role models like themselves" (Glass et al., 2000, p. 77).
Figure 2. Classroom experience in mean number of years = 10.5634.
In addition to their personal characteristics, questions about their work experience were included on the surveys. These questions include their years of experience as a classroom teacher. As shown in Figure 2, the mean number of years spent in the classroom was just over 10 years of experience. The mode was about 6 to 7 years of classroom teaching. The highest number of years as a classroom teacher by one survey respondent was reported at nearly 30 years of experience. The shortest classroom teaching experience by one woman was reported at 3 years. Six women did not answer this question.

The data displayed in Figure 2 were similar to what was reported in the national literature. Essentially, women superintendents spent a good deal of time as classroom teachers prior to making a move to an administrative job. It was also reported in the literature that male superintendents generally spent fewer years in the classroom, on average, than women (Glass et al., 2000). In the national survey, 40.4% of the women noted that they spent 6 to 10 years in the classroom before entering administration (p. 83).

The next figure, Figure 3, displays the data related to the number of years of administrative experience that women had prior to taking the first superintendency. This figure revealed that the mean years of prior administrative experience is 11.9 years. The mode was eleven years.
Figure 3. Years of prior administrative experiences mean = 11.98.
The next set of data represents the demographics related to the women’s work experience in the role of superintendent.

Table 4

*Work-related characteristics of superintendents in the study  n = 71*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job characteristic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First superintendency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a contract renewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Title of position prior to the superintendency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant superintendent/ deputy</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business administrator</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal or vice principal</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 4 are clear. Nearly 70% of the women in New Jersey were in their first superintendency, and nearly 80% have had a contract renewed. For the purposes of this study, success as a superintendent means having a combined experience as superintendent for at least 3 years as well as having a contract renewed. Therefore, the
percentage of women who were successful according to the definition of this study was 77%. Women superintendents in New Jersey followed two traditional career paths: (a) classroom teacher to principal to superintendent, or (b) classroom teacher to principal to assistant superintendent to superintendent. In addition, personal characteristics of women in this sample, including age and the incidence of female mentorship, also follow trends reported in the national literature.

A look at the Figure 4 reveals that most women are in their early years in their current role. The mean for this figure is nearly 5 years of experience. The range of years is from one year in the current job to the longest at 19 years.
Figure 4. Years in current superintendency mean = 4.7254.
Summary of Survey Data: Female Superintendents’ Demographic Profile

In summary, these data revealed that women superintendents were more likely to be in their fifties, with 66.6% of the respondents describing themselves in this age range. In addition, they spent nearly 11 years as classroom teachers prior to entering administration. Most held administrative positions for nearly 12 years prior to rising to their first superintendency. More than half had a master’s degree prior to achieving the first superintendency with the remainder having completing a doctorate prior to assuming that role.

Eighty percent of these women reported that they did not have a female role model who helped them during their career as an administrator. Nearly half held central office positions such as director and assistant superintendent prior to rising to the superintendency. About 40% of women reported that they came from the role of principal or assistant principal directly to the superintendency. This traditional career path was also reported in the national literature.

School District Context: Interview Sample

Six women superintendents were selected to participate in the in-depth semistructured interviews. Questions for the interview were based on Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003). I developed the questions with the assistance of my mentor and members of the off-campus dissertation committee.

The superintendents were interviewed either over the phone or in-person depending on the convenience of the participant. The major consideration was to select two women from suburban districts, two from urban, and two from rural districts to provide a range of contexts. Another consideration was the location of the county across the state in order to provide the broadest range of experience. As such, these interviewees formed a purposive sample. The following New Jersey counties, from the northern part of
the state to the southern part of the state, were represented in this sample: (a) Bergen, (b) Essex, (c) Mercer, (d) Hunterdon, (e) Camden, and (f) Salem.

Another deliberate consideration for the purposive sample was the range of size of district described as student population. For example, the smallest district has 350 students, and the largest one had over 10,000 students. Also represented in this sample of six women were districts that were K-8, PreK-12 and regional configurations.

At the beginning of the interview, the women were asked a series of questions related to demographics that were identical to the ones asked in the survey. The tables and figures below display the demographic data from the six women superintendents.

Table 5

*District Context of New Jersey Interview Sample  \( N = 6 \)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>New Jersey Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban/rural</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*County groupings*

| Northern counties | 2       |
| Central counties  | 2       |
| Southern counties | 2       |

*Size by student population*

| Under 1000       | 2       |
The next set of data displays personal characteristics of the six women in the interview component. These data are then compared to the New Jersey sample of 71 and to the national survey where applicable.

Table 6

*Personal Characteristics of Superintendents in the Study  N = 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal characteristic</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had a Female Role Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education prior to the superintendency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data from the interview sample resembled the data found in the survey sample and in the national literature. These combined data indicated that, in many respects, women superintendents in New Jersey in both samples compared to the national picture regarding their personal characteristics. For example, in the national survey, 59.5% of the women identified their age range from 50 through 69 years. Nearly 57% of the women in the national sample held doctoral degrees (Glass et al., 2000). As such, comparisons about their experiences may be drawn from these data regarding their personal and district characteristics. The next set of data displays their job characteristics.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work-related Characteristics of Superintendents in the Study</th>
<th>N = 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job characteristic</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First superintendency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a contract renewed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of position prior to the superintendency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Assistant superintendent/deputy            | 2  
| Director                                    | 1  
| Business administrator                      | 1  
| Principal or vice principal                | 2  
| Supervisor                                  | 0  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current years on the job</th>
<th>8.3  mean # of years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years of administrative experience</td>
<td>11.2  mean # of years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of classroom teaching experience</td>
<td>9.5  mean # of years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In many respects, the six women superintendents possessed similar demographics to the larger sample of 71. For example, all of the women were in their 50s or 60s as were 81.2% of the women in the survey sample. In addition, all six women stated that they did not have a female role model who helped them during their administrative years. Eighty percent of the surveyed populations responded “no” to this question as well.

All reported that they had their contracts renewed, and all traveled a traditional career path to rise to the superintendency from either a principal experience in a building or a central office position such as a director, business administrator, or an assistant superintendent.
Prior to accepting their first superintendency, five of the women had completed their doctoral programs. The sixth woman had completed a master’s degree plus 30 credits towards a doctorate. At the time of the interview, she had not completed her doctorate. Another similarity was found in the length of experience as a classroom teacher. The larger surveyed population \((n = 71)\) reported a mean of 10.56 years in the classroom whereas the interviewed population \((n = 6)\) reported 9.5 years.

In terms of prior administrative experience, the results were similar again. The larger surveyed population \((n = 71)\) reported a mean of 11.9 years whereas the interviewed population \((n = 6)\) reported a mean of 11.2 years. Three of the women interviewed said they had announced their retirements and planned to retire by the end of 2007.

There was also a range of District Factor Groups found in the interview samples. Two women led “A” districts, one of which was an Abbott; one led a “B district, two led “I” districts, and one led a “GH” district.

**Summary of the Interview Demographic Data**

From the data collected in the interviews, the demographic profile of the females from both these samples can be summarized as follows:

1. five of the women hold doctoral degrees;
2. all ranged in age from 50 through their 60s;
3. all have had their contracts renewed;
4. all were in the current position for a mean of 8.3 years; and
5. all brought more than 20 years of combined experience to their current role both as a classroom teacher and former administrator.
These women worked in all types of districts across the state of New Jersey (i.e., K-8, K-12 and Regional). They also worked in a wide range of sizes and socioeconomic levels that were identified in terms of student population and District Factor Groups. The smallest district had a student population of 350 students in one school building while the largest population had more than 10,000 students in over 75 buildings. The district factor groups ranged from A, the poorest with one being an Abbott designation, to some of the wealthier districts such as "I."

None of the interview subjects reported that they had the help and support of a female role model during their years as an administrator in education. This aspect was included in the survey because of the high profile nature of this question in the current literature about women superintendents. While the percentage of women superintendents in New Jersey was greater than the national picture, the trends related to their district context, their personal characteristics and their work-related characteristics were relatively the same. Therefore, there is a strong likelihood that the findings of this research regarding these two samples may be generalized to other contexts of women superintendents in other parts of the country.
Chapter V

Female Superintendents' Construction of their Leadership Styles

"I think that women have to be very careful how they exercise strength and power."

-- Suburban Superintendent

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), qualitative researchers "try to portray the issue in its multifaceted form" (p. 133). They posited that the researcher uses his or her mind as an analytical tool in order to understand the phenomenon under study (p. 133). This chapter, therefore, presented a qualitative analysis uncovered through the grounded theory process to build data and theory about the leadership preferences of women superintendents in New Jersey.

The results of the microanalysis revealed that there were indeed multifaceted dimensions found in the language provided by the six interview subjects in the sample. The discovery of these understandings was limited only by my ability to uncover and interpret them. To aid in understanding the results, this chapter was divided into two major sections. Section I was data building and theory building from the interview questions about Bolman and Deal's four frames (2003). Section II was data building and theory building about other questions related to this research. The organization of the chapter into two major sections simplified the presentation of the data. More important, this analysis intended to present the storyline found in their responses.

Critical assumptions of this analysis were that the researcher's mind was an analytical tool, that language was the unit of analysis and that a truth or external reality about the phenomenon of women superintendents in New Jersey does indeed exist and may be revealed through the application of the grounded theory approach.
Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership preferences of female superintendents in New Jersey to identify factors that allow women to rise to the superintendency in a percentage that exceeds the national average. The overarching research question was the following: To what extent can the leadership preferences of New Jersey female superintendents be understood by applying Bolman and Deal’s four frame theory? To that end, I developed a series of questions to create the in-depth semistructured interview based upon Bolman and Deal’s four frames (2003). A major goal of this study was to interpret the responses that are connected to each one of the four frames: (a) structural; (b) human resource; (c) political; and (d) symbolic.

According to Bolman and Deal, the frames represent a set of lenses or assumptions through which managers can understand the situations around them. Since organizations are complex by their very nature, the frames provide “windows on the world of leadership and management” that can assist the leader in confronting problems (2003, p. 12). Researchers have used Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) to study preferences among leaders and managers in both educational and corporate settings (Durocher, 1995; Rivers, 1996).

Prior to asking the questions of the six women, I read a prepared statement that summarized each of the four frames in order to introduce them to the conceptual framework of this study. Some of the women were familiar with the concept and/or with the authors, but none had read Bolman and Deal’s text specifically. One of the women,
however, had recently heard Dr. Terrence Deal lecture on this topic at a national conference for superintendents in February of 2007.

*Organization of this Chapter: Section 1*

The interpretation of the data in Section 1 is organized in the following manner. Each frame from Bolman and Deal's *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership* (2003) is summarized prior to the interpretation of the data. A review of the questions is then provided followed by a brief introduction to the central categories, properties and dimensions. Tables that display the central categories from each frame are provided to promote clarity of the concept’s meaning as well as the properties and dimensions that are associated with that particular category and their subcategories.

Following the presentation of the central categories and subcategories, a full reflection, or storyline, about the concepts is presented to complete the interpretation that includes quotations from the interviews. To make the interpretation clearer and to ensure the anonymity of their identities, the six interview subjects will be identified as follows: Urban Superintendent Tanya, Urban Superintendent Marie, Suburban Superintendent Andrea, Suburban Superintendent Michelle, Rural Superintendent Denise, and Rural Superintendent Amy. To conclude this section, a conditional matrix is presented to clarify the relationships found in these data. This matrix distills the data and synthesizes the findings in a graphic display about the four leadership frames.

*Section 1: The Four Leadership Frames: Research Questions 1, 2, and 3*

The following research questions framed the inquiry related to the overarching statement of the problem:
1. To what extent can the leadership preferences of female superintendents be understood by applying Bolman and Deal’s four-frames?

2. What are the dominant frames women school leaders employ in their roles?

3. How do female superintendents interpret the role of these frames in contributing to their success, or lack thereof?

*Structural Frame or Factory Metaphor*

The structural frame is the first lens that Bolman and Deal describe in their book. An assumption posited by Bolman and Deal is that the “structural perspective champions a pattern of well-thought-out roles and relationships” (2003, p. 45). The structural frame is built on the principles of scientific management theory developed by Frederick Taylor (Bolman & Deal, 2003), as well as theories espoused by Max Weber suggesting that “patriarchy was the primary organizing principle” (p. 46). Elements of structure are frequently cited in the traditional body of literature pertaining to organizational theory.

In the structural frame, division of labor, rationality, and hierarchy are key concepts. The factory metaphor aptly describes this frame and includes such organizational structures as authority, rules, policies, meetings, agendas, roles, and responsibilities. Among the assumptions in Bolman and Deal’s (2003) explanation about the factory metaphor is that “Organizations exist to achieve established goals and objectives” (p. 45). Thus, Bolman and Deal treat the first of four frames as those structural features of organizations that influence the behaviors of employees.

*Questions about structure.* The questions about structure that were posed to the interviewees were as follows: (a) What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be
the line and staff chart. (b) Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring? (c) Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work.

1. The six interview subjects had clear, strong and purposeful preferences when reflecting upon their views regarding organizational structures.

Their responses indicated that key administrative positions in the district were the structures that most influenced the work of running the organization. For example, Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated, “I believe very strongly in strong, high school principals, in strong building principals … so everything I do involves the principals.” This concept of strong building principals was echoed by one of the urban superintendents. Urban Superintendent Marie stated several times, “I think the principal has to, well, the principal has to be able to manage his or her building and has to feel somewhat in control. I will let the principal call the shots. If you want strong people to run your buildings, then you have to give them power.” Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated, “I rely heavily on department heads and principals to conduct the routine day-to-day work in their areas of responsibility.” Thus, the principalship was considered one of the primary structures upon which they relied most.

Rural Superintendent Amy of a small district stated, “Since I only have three administrators who help me run the school district, I really rely on them. I have two principals and a director of special ed. So you know, among the four of us, we participate collaboratively in the running of the school…. It’s me and the principals, really.” Rural Superintendent Denise of a one-school-building district stated, “Well, the business
administrator and I because we are a small district, we just work hand in hand with
everything. I mean, I turn to her for advice and she turns to me. I really even wouldn’t
say there was a structure there.”

Each of the women explained their structures in terms of the central office staff,
committee members, principals, administrative councils, or other groups or individuals
such as members of the board of education or association leaders that they relied upon to
accomplish the goals of the district. For example, as Suburban Superintendent Michelle
mentioned, “I report directly to the board of education where I report to a lay public of
elected officials.” Thus, all of these structures consisted of people who worked
interdependently with the superintendent in decision-making positions.

*Central category for the factory metaphor.* I labeled the first central category of
the structural frame as follows: Strategic use of individuals and groups as structures.
Table 8 identifies the categories discovered from the structural questions and lists them
with the corresponding properties and dimensions.

Table 8

*Strategic Use of Individuals and Groups as Structures*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative positions</td>
<td>Running the organization</td>
<td>Hierarchy and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day-to-day operations</td>
<td>chain of command</td>
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</tbody>
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Subcategories
Board governance  Understanding the work  Confidence
Avoiding controversy  Filtering
and micromanagement  Protecting

Committee structures  Filtering biases  Filtering

Union leadership  Avoiding resistance  Building relationships

Policies and procedures  Operational guidelines  Urban context

In response to the questions about structures, each one of the superintendents began with a description of those key administrative positions that seemed most important to them. Their responses suggested a strong emphasis on the strategic use of and interaction with individuals and groups to run the district. More importantly, these structures were viewed as part of an ongoing strategy of their daily work as superintendents. For example, Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “I rely most on the personnel committee. I select one candidate and the board would, just so that they know who the person is, interview the candidate. I select the policy committee, and they review the policies.” The frequency of discussing administrative positions as a key structure response may have been influenced by the example provided following the first question which stated, “An example of an administrative structure might be a line and staff chart.”

Despite the fact that the interview question asked about a structure influencing their work, the women did not discuss how the work of the superintendent’s office is influenced by these individuals or groups. They limited their answers simply to identifying those structures in their organization and describing the activities of their
work together. They did not mention how the line and staff chart functions in relationship to their leadership in their particular organizations.

The dimensions in the central category identified as administrative positions ranged from an emphasis on hierarchy and chain of command in the larger, urban districts to more of a collaborative relationship found in the site-based committee structures of the two smaller, rural districts. For example, both urban superintendents relied heavily on the concept of chain of command. Urban Superintendent Tanya stated:

In terms of structures and line and staff charts or what have you, I think there has to be a well-defined hierarchy. Certainly in our schools there is some autonomy in terms of some of our principals stepping outside a little bit as defined as their element. One of the things that I feel is very important but it doesn't mean micromanaging because infrastructure is very, very important. … I can't have a hundred different ways of operating.

Urban Superintendent Marie echoed a similar theme. For example, she stated, “There needs to be a clear chart for efficiency.” She later stated, “There is a very clear delineation of how things should be.” In contrast, the rural superintendents spoke of collaborative relationships that can be stated as follows: “…because we are such a small district, we just work hand in hand with everything.”

The results of this analysis raised a question about the women’s sense of obligation to identify a shared responsibility with key individuals and groups in the organization. As Urban Superintendent Marie suggested, “I also believe strongly that you have to create an administrative team that works together so that in their individual
school they follow that model and create a staff team that works together.” For example, Urban Superintendent Tanya stated,

So, we do have policy and procedure, but it is not top down. It is generally committee driven. And once we have a policy in place, that’s what we all live with. Understand that this is a large district. I have got five leadership teams which means I have assistant superintendents responsible for as many as 12-15 schools, and so the delegation of responsibility is through school leadership teams.

Clearly these responses suggest that there is an interdependence found in those structures the six women superintendents identified in the factory frame.

By running the district, the superintendents used the phrase “the day-to-day routine operations” that coordinate work efficiently and effectively. For example, Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated that she spends a lot of time “educating the board to understand that what is happening in the day-to-day running of the schools and how that works toward meeting the organization’s goals.” Some specific details offered in the structural response included completing reports for the board and complying with Federal and State mandates. The notion of running the district was a repeated theme throughout the interviews about the structural frame.

**Board governance and micromanagement.** Another group identified as significant in the structural frame was the board of education. Board governance emerged as a specific structure during many responses. Both suburban superintendents mentioned an emphasis on the board as a structure in the factory frame. For example, Suburban Superintendent Andrea reported, “Obviously the board is critical. I work very closely
with the Board and keep them actively involved in goal setting and monitoring.”

Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated, “Well, certainly the line and staff chart is important. There is a governance structure as that is highly influential where you report to the board of governors, board members. … My work is probably influenced most by the governance structure. I report directly to the board of education where I report to a lay public of elected officials.”

Their work with the board entailed communicating regularly to ensure that there was no miscommunication about the work of the district or about the district leadership. Specifically, this process of communicating the work of the district connected to maintaining confidence in the system and in the superintendent as well. Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated, “I have a very close working relationship with the President and the Vice-President. They are both stay-at-home moms and have a lot of time during the day to touch base with me by phone or in person. … I e-mail them anything that comes up between that I feel they need to know that’s urgent.”

Urban Superintendent Tanya mentioned that she communicates regularly with many factions in her community. “I do structure routine conversations with different factions. I mean I have a parent advisory council. I have a student advisory council. I have a principal advisory council, and in terms of my structure, I have structured ways to communicate with my immediate neighborhoods. So I have town hall meetings.” She later stated, “My operating structure is defined in terms of staff and their performance and in terms of the expectations that the community has of me.” In her particular case, the board of education was used as a political stepping stone in the community. As such, she stated, “There is less board stability in larger districts than there is in smaller
districts.” Consequently, avoiding miscommunication and keeping controversy away from the board members were key concepts. For example, Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “I work very hard in school keeping controversy away from them and from parents.”

From the analysis, it may be suggested that the women in this sample characterized their role as an interpreter of information both upwards toward the board and then downwards towards administration, faculty, and staff. Their style of communication within and through these structures suggests that the superintendent serves as a gatekeeper of information in the organization. It raised the question as to whether there seems to be two separate worlds of the district in terms of communication processes: (a) one between the superintendent and the board of education; and (b) one between the superintendent and the employees of the district.

The notion of micromanagement by board members was a key property in the subcategory of board governance. According to several of the superintendents, goal setting was within the purview of the board members and not the daily operations of the schools. Micromanagement was to be avoided, and was mentioned in the structural frame. As Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated, “I spend a lot of time with the staff so that they understand that if they expect the Board to be involved in goal setting and not in the every day running of the school, then we have to demonstrate to them that we run the school efficiently and effectively.” Rural Superintendent Denise, who is in her position 19 years, stated, “There is absolutely no micromanagement here. I have control.”

Committee structures. Lateral structures were also mentioned in response to the factory metaphor. All the women spoke of committees that are involved in their work. In
the Abbott districts, the role of site-based committees was deemed important and critical to decision making. In addition, the extra layer of State mandates and structures was a key consideration. Committees consisted of site-based as well as ad hoc groups and parent groups. In the smallest district, the use of site-based committee structures was viewed as follows by Rural Superintendent Denise commented, “The committee does make a lot of decisions prior to going to the board of education. On that committee are four parents, one board member, two administrators, myself, and the principal and three teachers. Every major decision funnels through that particular committee prior to going to the board such as the pupil performance objectives, the technology plan, and the revision to the discipline code and that type of thing. That is a major structure.”

In the wealthier suburban districts, working regularly with parent groups and seeking input from the public was a consistent response in the structural frame that was not mentioned as frequently in the urban and rural districts. Parents were viewed as partners in these responses and were perceived as more demanding in the wealthier districts. For example, Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated, “Clearly, I believe that parents are partners in the school, and although they are not on the organizational chart, I value their input and seek it.” In the Abbott districts, government officials were a part of the structure. Parents were not mentioned as frequently as partners in the enterprise of educating their children in the poorer districts. However, one of the women in an “A” district stated that she never had parents complain about the education their children receive in their school district. For example, Rural Superintendent Denise said, “The parents that are here are very poor, but they also appreciate everything that we do for
their children, and they certainly do not think that they know more about education than I do...I have never had one complaint about the education their children receive here.”

*Association leadership as structure.* When asked if there were other structures that influence their work, most of the superintendents mentioned the structure of the association leadership. Many of them suggested that their work was collaborative in nature with the union president specifically. In fact, one described her role with the association president as a “co-leader” of the district and as such, went beyond the structural expectation of the administrators of the district. Suburban Superintendent Andrea described her relationship as a structure in the following statement: “The work with the president of the teachers’ association and his role as a teacher leader and my work with him as a co-leader in many ways.” This response about union leadership was characterized as a genuine structure that the superintendent used frequently in her work. These responses also implied that working with the association leader was a process of cultivating the working relationship in order to avoid teacher resistance and to support smooth and efficient implementation of district procedures.

Although not specifically stated, the superintendents felt a powerful influence on the part of the teachers’ association that may result in contentious relationships and, as a result, could impede the work of the district as a whole. Those who had good working relationships with the association president were proud of this accomplishment for their district and considered it a positive influence. These answers about the association leadership emerged only after additional prompting.

*Policy and procedures.* While the above structures all consisted of people, another structure emerged that was not. In one of the urban districts, policy and procedures were
identified as key structures that influenced the work of the superintendent. Urban Superintendent Tanya said, "Once we have a policy in place, we all live with it." This response raised the question that since the district was so large and access to the superintendent on a daily basis may not exist, there may be a need to codify expectations into formal mechanisms such as policy and procedures. Thus, policy and procedures may become the proxy by which others in the district understand the method of doing business without face-to-face direction from the superintendent. This specific structure of policy and procedures was the only non-human structure mentioned in any of the interviews.

Size of district made some difference in the responses to the structure questions related to the nature of working relationships with individuals and groups. In the smaller districts, the women spoke of one or two individuals that they relied on most. In the larger urban district, Urban Superintendent Tanya spoke of her senior staff as well as her executive council as important to her work. These council members numbered about 16 to 18 individuals on the team. In the larger districts, the superintendent worked with teams regularly for the purposes of decision-making and spoke of this organizational structure as a lateral structure using a shared empowerment model. As she stated frequently during the interview, "Much of what I do is done by consensus."

Not mentioned in any of the responses were the following structures that Bolman and Deal (2003) discussed in their chapters on the factory: schedules, meetings, agendas, board of education meetings, the curriculum and/or curriculum cycle, the budget and budget cycles. Therefore, although the interview question asked women to reflect on structures, they reflected on key individuals and groups in key positions as structures in their responses in the factory frame.
*Human Resource Frame or Family Metaphor*

The second frame in Bolman and Deal’s book is the human resource frame or family metaphor. This frame concerns “how characteristics of organizations and people shape what they do for one another” (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 111). Historically, organizations in the scientific management model were considered ‘alienating and dehumanizing’ environments (p. 113). In contrast to the factory, Bolman and Deal (2003) suggested, “The human resource frame offers another possibility: an organization can be energizing, productive, mutually rewarding” (p. 113). The literature and theories supporting the notion of the mutually rewarding relationship of worker and organization is found in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Another theory that relates to the family frame is McGregor’s theory x and theory y that represent the tension between the needs of the organization and the needs of the employees (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Among the assumptions found in Bolman and Deal’s construct about the human resource frame is that “organizations exist to serve human needs rather than the reverse” (p. 115). In addition, Bolman and Deal cited the work of Helgesen who studied women’s leadership figures prominently in the literature and known as the “web of inclusion” (p. 80). Helgeson concluded,

The women I studied had built profoundly different, integrated and organic organizations in which the focus was on nurturing good relationships; in which the niceties of hierarchical rank and distinction played little part; and in which lines of communication were multiplicitous, open, and diffuse. (p. 81)

Thus, Helgesen identified women’s preferences toward leadership mechanisms that did not rely on hierarchy, chain of command, or formal staff meetings. Instead,
communication and accessibility were identified as key components of the “web of inclusion” (Helgesen as cited in Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 81).

Questions about the human resource frame. The questions that were posed to the interviewees about the family frame were as follows: Describe your views on human resources in your particular district. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your board? How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents?

1. The six interview subjects had clear, strong and purposeful preferences when reflecting upon their views about family, specifically human resources in their district.

Their responses indicated that they place a high value on human capital in order to motivate and nurture individuals within their organizations. This viewpoint is reflected in many statements from all six women. For example, Rural Superintendent Amy stated, “Absolutely, positively, the most important part, in my opinion, is the ability to maximize the positives, the assets of the human beings and to develop the human beings to function at the best of their abilities, whether they be adults or children.” Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “It is the most valuable resource that you have. If the teaching staff itself is not working properly, then the whole system breaks down… so we value the improvement of the human resources that we have here and you know, making sure that they are happy and have the materials that they need.”

In the larger urban district, Urban Superintendent Tanya’s response was similar.

You are talking about people capital, and I think that is critical. I think that when you have the charge of running a school district, you know full well that you cannot do it without the people that work for you, and they need to feel they are a
part of the community they are serving... People need to be regarded for the value they bring.” The strength of their work in this frame directly related to their specific function as leader of the organization.

Central category for the family metaphor. The central category of the family frame is labeled as follows: Nurturing and maximizing human capital through fairness, equity and respect. Table 9 identifies the categories of the human resource frames and lists them with their corresponding properties and dimensions.

Table 9

Nurturing and Maximizing Human Capital through Fairness, Equity and Respect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value human capital</td>
<td>Nurture talent</td>
<td>Open door policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair compensation</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation/Supervision</td>
<td>Respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subcategories

Communication and trust

- Routine conversations
- Board updates

Relationships

- Healthy and happy

Consensus

- Team spirit

In Table 9, the central category focused on nurturing and maximizing human capital.

All six women stated that a key to this frame concerns promoting and supporting the talents and abilities of the faculty and staff. Urban Superintendent Tanya stated, “If you ever visit our schools, you will see that they are very nurturing. I try to encourage our
principals to make the kids part of the community and respect that. You get so much more.” It was important to many that respect for the children and pride in their school districts was understood by the faculty. This was especially true in the urban settings.

A key component in this central category was demonstrating respect for the professionals. For example, several of the women mentioned that it is important to be viewed as fair and consistent. One way to do so is through fair and equitable distribution of resources to teachers such as supplies. One Urban Superintendent, Marie, stated, “As soon as you show favoritism, you're done!” Another stated that fair compensation was another key element in this frame.

Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated,

The culture of how people are treated here in this district is one of extreme respect and is shown in a variety of ways including compensation packages, the process and product of negotiations, the instruction materials and supplies and other kinds of support that we give people here. I think that makes an incredible difference in the culture compared to other places where I have been where labor relations are not nearly as positive and teachers and leadership are not as respected here.

The notion of fairness was a common theme in the family frame. It raises a question about how fairness applies to a family metaphor suggesting that all siblings will get equal or equitable resources from the family, including but not limited to attention and love from parents. This concept is reflected in the literature and is associated with the female leadership trait of nurturing and maximizing the talent of the district. In a study conducted by the Wellesley Center for Women’s Studies, 60 noted women leaders were interviewed, and they suggested that mothering or the mothering metaphor was a part of
their leadership style (Erkut, 2000). Erkut’s findings included elements of the democratic, people-oriented style as well.

Urban Superintendent Marie mentioned that valuing human capital is also found in respecting the children who come to the school. In her experience, the teachers and community members at large did not have high expectations of children in urban settings. She set out to build a culture that values the children and promote their academic achievement. This superintendent did so by purchasing new band uniforms and reaching out to families to increase the rate of college attendance. She also implemented a dress code for the teachers in the schools. All of these deliberate strategies to respect the human factor improved the situation in her district which now has one of the highest graduation rates of Abbott districts in the state. She stated, “This is an extremely prejudiced community. I brought in a bunch of programs on tolerance and that kind of stuff. We were twice the state average in dropout rates, too, when I came here. Now we are less than 1%. … The whole idea was to get people to value their children. The whole idea is to get them to value their children and the children to value themselves. But it takes time.”

Another element described by one of the superintendents was to place a high value on the quality of the observation and supervision process. Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated that this action supports and values the work of the teachers, treating them as true professionals. “Observations need to be done to a high quality

Subcategories. As subcategories of the human capital concept, the superintendents spoke about the following ideas in response to the additional questions in this human resource frame: (a) communication and trust building; (b) relationships, and
(c) consensus-building and building team spirit. In terms of board relations, several of the superintendents mentioned that it takes a great deal of time to engender trust with board members. For many, engendering trust involved continual attention to formal and informal meetings, routine telephone conversations as well as e-mail updates, and weekly updates to communicate the work of the district. As Rural Superintendent Denise stated, "Well, the number one thing is that you are honest. I am honest with them even if I think something is a potential problem, I inform them of that. I think that many superintendents get themselves in trouble because they try to hide problems that they think they are having in the organization."

All of these communication mechanisms attempted to instill confidence in the superintendent’s ability to manage the district and to maintain the board’s confidence in her ongoing work. For example, Rural Superintendent Denise said, “I don’t have many problems that go to the board of education. If I did, I would feel that I wasn’t doing a very good job.”

To repair relationships, most of the women favored face-to-face interaction as the best method to resolve conflicts among stakeholders. Hosting meetings and serving as a mediator were viewed as important strategies that worked. Identifying the problem and solving it together was the method of choice in this frame. As Urban Superintendent Tanya stated, “I would probably bring them in and have an open conversation.” In one case, the superintendent felt that she did not necessarily need to mediate at the meetings, but instead asked for individuals to meet and solve the situations themselves. Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated, “I don’t need to mother them.” Although she did not want to negotiate the situation, she still used the family metaphor of mothering in this
response. These notions considered “mothering” are congruent with the findings of the Wellesley study (Erkut, 2000).

In both urban districts, the superintendents reported that it is necessary to build consensus. In response, the superintendent indicated that it was important to appear as if one is hearing everybody’s input, and that the mere appearance of consensus building is an expectation of women’s leadership. As Urban Superintendent Marie concluded, “You have to be strong, but at the same time appear like you are getting consensus and trying to hear everybody out. That is just the way society is.”

Thus, the family frame was cited frequently among the six interviewees as the most important lens to view the district. In four of the six responses, this frame was identified as a key component to describing the most important frame in their district. As Rural Superintendent Amy commented, “We care about kids and we care about human beings. Education is all about helping all levels of human beings be the best they can be.”

*Political Frame or Jungle Metaphor*

The third frame described in Bolman and Deal’s text is the political frame characterized as the jungle metaphor. This frame looks at the work of a leader in terms of making decisions, resolving conflicts and allocating resources in the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2003). They posited that there is a basic group of skills associated with this frame: “1) mapping the political terrain, 2) networking, 3) building coalitions, and negotiating” (p. 184). In addition, Bolman and Deal (2003) also included ethical issues and morality as a part of the political frame. They base their discussion of power within this frame and reference the work of leadership theorists such as Kanter, Pfeffer, and Kotter (as cited in Bolman & Deal, 2003) among others to explain how coalitions within
an organization use power to compete for scarce resources. One of the basic assumptions grounded in the political frame is that “Most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources” (p. 186). Therefore, this frame is characterized as having complicated layers that often confound the leader if she or he is not prepared to analyze them through the “jungle metaphor.”

Bolman and Deal (2003) also cited the work of Foucault and other theorists, whose notion about power indicate the negative assumptions that people, both men and women, often hold about this concept. The question they pose that encapsulates the ambiguities involving notions about power:

How does each group articulate preferences and mobilize power to get what it wants? Power, in this view, is not necessarily bad: We have to stop describing power always in negative terms: as in it excludes, it represses. In fact, power produces; it produces reality. (Foucault, as cited in Bolman and Deal, 2003, p. 192)

Questions about the political frame. The six interview subjects were asked five questions about the jungle. They are the following: (a) What is your definition of power? (b) Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? (c) Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? (d) Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? (e) How do you control the balance of resources in your system?

The central category that emerged from these questions about the jungle produced this preference:
1. The six interviewees expressed clear and similar definitions of power that revealed a strong preference towards “getting things done” or otherwise described as task accomplishment. The rural superintendents spoke of control.

However, while they realized how powerful their office is, some indicated a reluctance to use or more specifically misuse power within their organization. For example, Urban Superintendent Marie stated, “You know, absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Instead, some of the women preferred to rely on the intrinsic motivation of employees to work towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the district. This preference may also be stated as a reliance on the use of personal power over positional power. Thus, the six interviewees felt a degree of discomfort or tension with the power of their office. In addition, this was the only frame where some of the women discussed male superintendents and contrasted how men and women exercise power differently. For example, Urban Superintendent Marie explained,

   Women are supposed to lead by consensus. That is acceptable to everybody — to men -- to society. Men are supposed to lead by dictatorship and that’s acceptable. I mix it because of where I am. And I also think that somebody’s got to make the decision. I try to get consensus, but I know I am never going to.

She later emphasized the same sentiment in other words, “If you cry, you may know this as a principal, then they think you are weak. You can’t be too emotional. It is a career, not brain surgery. Nobody is going to die.” In essence, when asked how they view their methods of exercising power, they compared themselves to what they know about male superintendents’ use of power. These comments about gender-based stereotypes emerged in spite of the fact that the researcher did not pose questions related
to male's use of power in the role of superintendent. As Rural superintendent Denise stated, "Men are from Mars and women are from Venus."

The following research question was considered in the jungle metaphor related to the manner in which women superintendents construct their views about power: To what extent do the dominant frames characterize the way female superintendents construct and exercise their use of power?

_Central category for the jungle metaphor._ The central category of the jungle frame is labeled follows: Uncomfortable tension regarding the use and misuse of power. Table 10 identifies the categories of the political frame and lists them with the corresponding properties and dimensions.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task completion</td>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (rural)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcategories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>Discomfort with power</td>
<td>Negative trait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoiding misuse of power</td>
<td>Masculine trait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male v. female's use of power</td>
<td>Bossy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritizing</td>
<td>Equitable allocation of</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Avoiding coercion</td>
<td>Preferred method</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 outlines the categories and subcategories that emerged from the coding of questions found in the political frame. By and large, the interviewees’ definitions of power suggested a central category of “getting things done.” Below are listed the responses of these women when questioned about their definition of power.

*Rural Superintendent Denise:* My definition of power is having the control – having the authority to make decisions. I think that’s it.

*Rural Superintendent Amy:* Power is the ability to make things happen the way you want them to happen and the control of human beings in that they use order to get to the end.

*Suburban Superintendent Andrea:* The ability to get things done through formal and informal leadership positions.

*Suburban Superintendent Michelle:* Well, there is the authority that one has by the nature of the job. I guess every superintendent has the power to make decisions that influence people positively or negatively.

*Urban Superintendent Tanya:* My definition of power is getting everyone of my, let’s say staff or executive staff, to understand what the problem is, to chart a course and work together.

*Urban Superintendent Marie:* Love it! I think power – to me, it makes me feel I can get things done.

*Power and context.* Whether the superintendent was leading a one school district, or a district of 50 schools, attitudes and perceptions about power were embedded in their responses. These responses reflect cultural understandings such as those mentioned in the previous discussion of Foucault. As a result, their responses were similar in many ways. Power was defined by the rural superintendents as having authority and control over
others. This was a unique comment to these superintendents in the rural context. Their definitions raise a question whether they feel more direct control over employees and their behaviors because of the small size of their districts. In one case, the district is a one school building with approximately 350 students. The second rural district has two buildings with a student population of approximately 650 students.

The other four interview subjects described power specifically as having the ability to get things done. Another similar theme was the notion of “making things happen.” Many of these definitions seemed to place the locus of control related to task completion within the superintendent herself. Therefore, there were similar attitudes about power and the jungle metaphor across district context and district size.

On the other hand, when illuminating their definitions, the process of working together evolved during their responses suggesting a notion of shared empowerment or what is referred to in the literature as participative decision-making as their preferred model of leadership style. For example, most of the women talked about working with committees and developing policy, practice and procedures through consensus. As Urban Superintendent Tanya stated,

There is a senior staff. There are five of us. We meet every Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. We talk about issues that we’re confronted with. We can make some preliminary decisions at that point, and we will take those and then present them to a larger audience, maybe my executive staff and them present them to the principals, and then I get feedback. What’s going to work – that’s what is important.
Once again, the concept of fairness permeated many of the answers in the power frame as it did in the human resource frame. As such, there is little difference among these six interviewees related to their perceptions surrounding power and its relationship to their work in school districts regardless of context. There seemed to be a reliance on a notion of “power with” rather than “power over.”

Another component of their responses to power involved the concept of authority. In several of the definitions, the interviewees combined authority with the ability to get things done. This concept of authority and gender is treated by Heifetz (2003) who stated that the concept of leadership without authority is both “new and perplexing” (p. 184). Heifetz further states that since women have been denied formal authority roles not only in this country but in others, that women have learned other methods of leading without authority instead of the traditional strategies of “power with”, and now are recognized for this leadership style and accomplishment.

These responses regarding a sense of ambiguity about power raised an interesting question. Why did some of the women talk about avoiding the misuse of power and/or avoiding the use of power as direct? It seemed as though their responses indicated cultural assumptions and biases related to the stereotypes of the office, including the dominance of male leadership in the school superintendency. This concept was amplified by one of the women who mentioned that society allows women to lead by consensus. Urban Superintendent Marie also mentioned that it is socially acceptable for men to lead by dictatorship. Her comments reveal stereotypical attitudes about men and women and the uncomfortable tension that permeates the central category of the power frame:
Women will not succeed if they are bossy – I don’t know the word I want -- too dictatorial. Men can get away with that a little bit more. They are almost respected for it. Women are resented for it. You have to be strong but at the same time, appear like you are getting consensus, and you are trying to hear everybody out… If you cry, then they think you are weak. ... You have to have a thicker skin.

Power, as suggested by feminists in the literature, is stereotypically associated with the masculine tendencies of the role and hence, the traditional female persona is most unlike or opposite of the male tendencies that are perhaps considered patriarchal (Skrka, 2000.) One comment from Urban Superintendent Marie cautioned the researcher as follows, “Never cry. Don’t ever let them see you cry.” Fowler (2004) posited in her description of the second dimension of power that there is a mobilization of bias disempowering female educational administrators and marginalizing them in our society.

Power and authority seemed to be synonymous in the minds of the six women who were interviewed. Accomplishing tasks and not wasting time were also mentioned in this section. Thus, they voiced ideas that suggested a more pragmatic view toward the use of power. Their responses indicated that they prefer to rely on forms of personal power rather than positional power.

Building coalitions. Coalitions, for the purposes of this research, are organized groups. In Bolman and Deal’s (2003) work, building coalitions is a critical component of the power frame related to leveraging support in the organization. As such, I posed two questions that asked the women to consider their relationship with coalitions: (a) What coalitions support the superintendent? and (b) What coalitions do not support the superintendent?
In response to this question, the women offered a number of coalitions that help that include the following: the board, key administrative or executive staff, school improvement teams and in two cases, the teachers' association president. Teachers, the teachers' associations, and then specifically high school teachers were identified as coalitions that work against the superintendent of schools. This was true of the urban and rural superintendents. These statements were coupled with themes about resistance to change. High school principals were also identified as resisters followed by parents in one case. For example, Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated, “Teachers, I would say the teachers’ union is the most reluctant, I would say. They are still in denial about S1701.”

Thus, building coalitions as a tool of leadership was not apparent from their answers. Coalitions were already formed and were already noted as with the superintendent or against. However, Urban Superintendent Tanya structured routine conversations with factions to maintain communication, promote confidence in the system and build strong coalitions.

Controlling the balance of resources. Another question in the jungle frame is as follows: How do you control the balance of resources in your system? Many of the women spoke of working through a process of prioritizing what is important and then balancing everything against the list of priorities. For example, Urban Superintendent Tanya stated, “I think that we are fair and equitable. We have budget hearings. We look at student populations. So, it is not the one who cries the loudest. You look at what the needs are. And you are trying to provide resources based on need... But I think that at the end of the day, everybody feels that they have been treated fairly.”
According to Suburban Superintendent Michelle, one method was to use a structure such as per-pupil allotments as a method of budgeting school resources. “Well, I have implemented just this year a per-pupil allotment for schools that is ratioed for higher amounts for the middle and high schools. That’s the first time that has been done in many years. It was way out of balance. When I make cuts, I make cuts across all categories. We make sure we cut administration and secretaries when we cut teachers. We try to do it fairly and equitably.”

A repeated theme included priorities and prioritizing in order to make decisions fairly and equitably. Creating a list was one method of forming a priority. Rural Superintendent Amy offered the following explanation,

By prioritizing what’s important, and then you know, making a list. Whether it be a list or a list of things that you have identified within the structure of your organization that are important down to not so important -- not that anything is not important. You have to prioritize so that is how you balance resources because most of the time, especially in our district and in many small districts, you feel a pinch when it comes time to budget because of the tax structures in New Jersey.

It is frequently noted in the literature that women lead by consensus or through shared empowerment (Glass et al., 2000). The responses in the power frame tended to reveal a parallel notion expressed by the interview subjects. However, a surprising response is that some noted that they “loved” power. Yet, when probed further about their preferences, their explanations moved toward committee structures to get things done as well as working fairly and equitably through a process. As was seen earlier in the human
resource frame, there was again a preference towards treating people fairly and equitably that was repeated in the political frame.

*Frames and power.* One aim of this study investigates the political frame as it relates to women's perceptions about power and their use of power as the chief executive officer of the school district. The research question that guided this aim was the following: To what extent do the dominant frames characterize the way women superintendents exercise and construct their use of power?

It is clear from the responses to the jungle metaphor, that the women in this sample communicated tension when confronted with the notion of power and their use of power in this role. For example, Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated,

> Well, obviously a lot of my power is positional. But for the most part, I don’t consciously use it. I use power that I hope comes from the respect that people have from knowing me, and my abilities and my knowledge and from the thoughtfulness and kindness and respect people that I hope I exhibit to other people throughout the organization and therefore, I expect that it would be returned to me also.

Suburban Superintendent Michelle repeated a similar theme.

I try to be objective and fair and not misuse power. But certainly I reward people for good work. I let them know when I am not satisfied with their level of work… Well, I try to make decisions based on what I think is best for the organization and the students. And I don’t like to use the power of the office. I like to use professionalism and motivation of the staff to do the right thing rather than be ordered to do things.
Rural Superintendent Amy reflected as follows, "I view my methods of executing power as – um – I don’t consider myself a person who relies on power to get things done. So, I don’t think I use methods of power to accomplish things. It’s really not part of my repertoire of administrative or personal characteristics."

Rural Superintendent Denise expressed some confusion about her staff’s perception of her power. She stated, “Well, I may think that I seek input from others, but I know that is probably not the perception of me. I think that a lot of the staff thinks that it is ‘my way or the highway!’ And I don’t see that. You know, I try to see that but I don’t see that. I feel like I seek input.”

While there were strong and direct preferences in the factory and family frames, the six interviewees felt a need to express their unwillingness to use power as a frame of choice and in some cases, abdicate the power of their office and instead, use another strategy to accomplish goals. Rural Superintendent Amy reinforced this notion with this statement, “Power is an area I’ve never been comfortable in and don’t generally use.” As such, the use of power in the political frame was not a leadership preference of these women.

It was also surprising to find that they women spoke about male leadership and male superintendents when questioning them about the methods they use to exercise power. I specifically did not pose questions during the in-depth semi-structured interview that asked women to compare the leadership of women to the leadership of men in any aspect. The questions were specifically designed to avoid comparisons between genders. Yet, during questions about this frame, women offered their notions about the masculine nature of power. In most cases, male superintendents were viewed as a part of the “good
old boys’ network” and as such, were corrupt in some ways. Indications about male
superintendents being corrupt in their use of power also emerged during this phase of the
interviews.

These attitudes that have a foundation in our cultural assumptions associated with
the superintendents of schools over the 20th century. This finding is confirmed in the
work of Brunner and Grogran who stated among their findings that “gender power
differentials in educational administration must be acknowledged (2003, p. 27) In
addition, Bolman and Deal (2003) described power as “inherently ambiguous” (p. 283-
284). These findings, therefore, are confirmed in the interview research of this study.
Ambiguity about how their construct and exercise their use of power is a common strand
across the interviews. Hence, the women in the interview sample appear to be conflicted
when questioned about topics in the political frame.

*Symbolic Frame or Theater Metaphor*

The symbolic frame is the final lens that Bolman and Deal treated in their book.
An assumption posited by Bolman and Deal was that the “symbolic frame focuses on
how humans make sense of the messy, ambiguous world in which they live…Meaning is
not given to us; we have to create it” (2003, p. 240). According to Sergiovanni (2001),
symbolism is a critical component of the work of leaders that cannot be underestimated.
In fact, he stated, “… the symbolic and cultural aspects are more powerful than the
instrumental and behavioral aspects of influencing things…” (p. 23). In the symbolic
frame Bolman and Deal (2003) described myths, traditions, rituals, and ceremonies as the
core examples of how the symbolic frame exists in organizations. While this frame is
vastly different from the rationality of the structural frame, it is as important to
organizations as the others because it helps people find “purpose and passion in their personal and work lives” (Bolman and Deal, 2003, p. 243). Among the assumptions of the symbolic frame, Bolman and Deal cited the following idea: “What is most important is not what happens but what it means” (p. 243). Therefore, purpose and meaning are the key components of the theater frame.

*Questions about symbolism.* The questions that comprised this part of the semistructured interview were as follows: (a) What are the most important symbols in your school system? (b) How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? (c) How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? After the microanalysis was completed, the following preference emerged from the results of the axial coding: 1. The women in this sample discussed the symbols and traditions that were most important to the stakeholders. In the urban cases, documents, such as a diploma and a set of guiding principles, influenced the work of the leader. Symbols were context specific.

*Central category for the theater metaphor.* The central category of the jungle frame is labeled follows: Symbols are important to stakeholders. Table 11 identifies the categories of the symbolic frame and lists them with the corresponding properties and dimensions.
### Table 11

*Symbols Are Important to Stakeholders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Mission statements and Strategic plans</td>
<td>Important to people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mascots and school colors</td>
<td>Context specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diplomas and logos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcategories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation</td>
<td>Recognition of Work</td>
<td>Formal and informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confirming the importance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>Modeling affects people</td>
<td>Work ethic and dedication to children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses to these questions varied across the six school districts. Many cited their school colors and mascots as recognizable symbols of their districts. Others found a variety of symbols, including buildings. As such, responses to the questions in this frame were context specific in terms of the types of metaphors, traditions, or symbols that were important to the stakeholders. In four out of the six cases, symbols were not treated as specific tools of the superintendency. In fact, Rural Superintendent Denise was confused by the question. She stated,
Well, I am not sure if this is a symbol or not. I guess one would be a mission statement. We do have a mission statement. Does that serve as a symbol? Okay, we actually review that periodically. … Good grief! What other symbols could you have? I can’t even think of one.

In terms of symbolism, Urban Superintendent Tanya made the following statement, My mission statement when it talks about empowering students to understand that academics are important because it gets you to the end game. And that is whatever you want to do. Our graduation rate is up. It has gone from 48% to 73%. They are still struggling academically, but they are staying with us.

Urban Superintendent Marie spoke of similar themes about symbolism. She stated, One of the things that I am very proud of is last year all the streets were jammed trying to get into the city on graduation night. And I didn’t know what was going on and the police told me later that this has become the single most important event in the city – graduation. So, I guess the symbol now is education – getting a diploma.

Although the symbols varied, those identified were very meaningful to the stakeholders in their particular districts. As a matter of fact, in one case, simply changing the shades of the school colors inflamed parents and students. When that particular principal who changed the colors left the district, the district bought new uniforms in the original shades. Suburban Superintendent Marie remarked, “It’s kind of funny, but the former high school principal did not like the color of the gold, a kind of wake forest gold, gold and black, and he lightened the colors of the athletic uniforms to a softer gold, and you would think that he was trying to kill school spirit. They are still talking about that. It was a powerful symbol.”
In addition, many stated that school mascots were used frequently in titles of groups, clubs, or newsletters. Mascots were often found in the gymnasium floors and in other structures around the school buildings. They were used in school newsletters and for naming sports teams. Therefore, outward displays were important to promoting school spirit, pride, and unity rather than to achieve the goals of the district.

What is interesting to this researcher is that some of the women were unable to identify symbols with hearing a few examples first. For example, Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “I can’t even think of any symbols.” Several others asked for examples of symbols cited by the other superintendents before they were able to respond about their specific location. Therefore, the notion of using symbols deliberately and consciously as a part of their work was not a common understanding among the six women in this sample. When prompted, however, they discussed those areas that are symbolic and meaningful to the stakeholders in their organizations.

In one case, the school buildings themselves stood as metaphors for the district. One was named after the individual who donated acres of land to build the school. The other was named after the township itself. Rural Superintendent Amy explained, “Our schools and the names of our schools are really important to our community because they are symbols of who they are and where they are. All our evening and our recreational and childhood activities meet.” As such, families were very connected and felt very comfortable in the two building where many community activities were held alongside school functions.

Others felt that documents as the high school diploma, the district’s strategic plan and mission statement played a symbolic role in accomplishing the goals of the
district. In this urban district, a logo that displays a hand reaching for a brass ring is a part of the inspiration for young people to strive to do their best despite the disadvantages inherent in an urban school setting. This symbol is also displayed with the district’s guiding principles.

Strategic plans and mission statements were also cited as inspirational components of the superintendents’ work. In some districts, for example, the mission statement is read at the beginning of each board of education meeting. “Obviously our mission drives the work and our strategic plan and when we make cuts, we try to make cuts that don’t impact core values or the mission of the district,” Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated. She continued, “The district very much has a good sense of school spirit. The principals dress up. I think I mentioned that, as the school mascot sometimes when they have parties at school.” In addition, the guiding principles found in these documents represented the priorities that would be used to promote student achievement. Therefore, these symbols helped the superintendents more directly with their work with boards of education as well as in their communication with the public. Thus, they viewed mission statements as helpful towards achieving goals.

Subcategories. An important question revolving around motivation was asked of all the women. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Suburban Superintendent Michelle called this question the “quintessential question.”

In all six responses, women spoke of the ongoing process of affirming the hard work of teachers and administrators, both formally and informally. This could be found in thank you letters and e-mails. Putting a letter in one’s file was designated as the most
formal method of affirmation. Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “To remind them also that, you know, that what they do really matters. This is really, really important work. You know, to remind them on a daily basis, or a weekly basis, that you are making a difference… So, I continually try to thank them for doing a good job even if it is really not considered to be a part of their regular job. These are the kind of things that go a long way.”

The superintendents also talked about recognizing people for doing their job and doing it well even if it is a part of their job. Years of service awards were cited as important ways to recognize employees. Giving people a voice at the table was another suggestion. Urban Superintendent Tanya stated,

When you give them a voice at the table, they’re motivated. I would say that most of them are motivated. There is just so much to do. They are motivated to do it. At the end of the day, you can’t last as long at what we do. I say that’s good if you go home tired. If you go home tired, then it means that you worked hard.

Two of the women spoke of modeling as a critical method of helping to motivate employees to put their hearts and minds in their work. By this they meant deliberately putting employees who model a strong work ethic in front of them in the work place. Urban Superintendent Tanya stated, “You motivate them by putting motivated people around them.” Rural Superintendent Denise stated, “Well, I think that the number one thing is modeling. If you have an administrator that doesn’t do that, then everybody who works under you doesn’t feel that they have to do it either.” Therefore, the more others saw the superintendent and others demonstrating their dedication and commitment to the system, the more motivated others in the system became.
Another said that most often teachers are already motivated. The process of recognizing and affirming employees' efforts helped to sustain their motivation even if teachers are faced with difficult challenges. In the urban setting, Urban Superintendent Tanya noted that many teachers were “burned out.” She stated that it was critical to remind people in the organization about how important the work is that they do in schools each day.

In the two suburban districts, both superintendents mentioned that there is an ethic of motivation already built into their systems. For example, in one of the two districts, there is a rivalry among the principals to see who can work the hardest. Suburban Superintendent Michelle also stated that the teachers know that “you are expected to be an outstanding teacher here, and if not, you will not be working for the district any longer.” Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated that there is a strong work ethic in the district that is demanded by the parents. Taxes are high in this district, and teachers are compensated handsomely. As a result, administrators and teachers are very motivated in this specific suburban context.

Therefore, these responses indicate that with the exception of the mission statement and guiding principles, symbols and traditions of the district were more important to the stakeholders and not viewed as specific tools by the superintendents themselves. Several of the women used their mission statements and strategic planning documents as deliberate tools at board meetings, at budget hearings, and in district documents. Beyond that, this frame had greater importance when it involved inspiring employees. Through affirmation, modeling and recognition, these women helped people...
keep their hearts and their minds in their work. Using the tools of symbols, myths, and metaphors were not as important in their responses to the interview questions.

*Conditional Matrix of the Four Frames*

As a part of the grounded theory process, the researcher develops a conditional matrix to distill the data and synthesize it in a graphic display to represent the emerging story line. As stated in Strauss and Corbin (1998), one purpose of a conditional matrix is stated as follows: “To enable the researcher to organize materials and present a more complete and persuasive explanatory account of the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 191). The conditional matrix that follows displays the preferences by frames from the analysis of the interview data and the relationship of the four frames from less predominant to more predominant.
Figure 5. Conditional matrix of the four frames (n = 6)
Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of Section I of chapter 5 was to analyze the interview data to determine the leadership preferences of women superintendents in New Jersey by applying Bolman and Deal's Four Frames. Grounded theory was used to discover the narratives found in the language of six women superintendents. From this analysis, it is noted that women superintendents in this sample had clear and strong preferences in two frames of the four frames: (a) structural and (b) human resource. Their responses were direct, comfortable and specific when speaking about these two frames. Thus, the two arrows for factory and family in the conditional matrix point towards the more predominant range representing the strength of these two metaphors.

However, attitudes about the political frame, as demonstrated in the conditional matrix, revealed tension, specifically as it applies to exercising methods of power in a coercive context. Therefore, the tension regarding the political frame is demonstrated with an arrow pointing downward toward the less predominant range. The arrow in the political frame, although pointing downward, still resides in the most predominant part of the matrix demonstrating their ambiguous answers to these questions. Lastly, the symbolic frame is represented with an arrow the only partly located towards the predominant frame.

As a result of the grounded theory process, women superintendents in the sample from New Jersey primarily use two frames, structural and human resource, as their predominant leadership preferences. Although most theory suggests that women use participative, or shared empowerment methods as a rule, this analysis indicates that
reliance on structures is a strong preference as well and is combined with their preference for the family.

Section II: Analysis of Questions 5 and 6: Data Building

A critical finding of other research studies about women superintendents was that women as well as other minorities are marginalized and silenced in their leadership roles. This is partially explained by the mobilization of bias (Fowler, 2004). Therefore, it was essential to the current research to provide an opportunity for women superintendents’ voices to be heard through the process of the in-depth semi-structured interviews. Thus, the concepts of voice and storyline are found in the remaining set of interview questions.

According to Hoffman Davis, the researcher is listening “for a story” in the process of creating the narrative during the qualitative research process (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997 p. 120). In addition, the careful construction of a storyline is a key component of the grounded theory method when building theory.

The second section of this chapter, therefore, involves the microanalysis of the other questions related to this research beyond the preferences determined through the frames. These questions served as the basis for investigating women superintendents’ perceptions regarding the effect of gender bias in their role as chief executive officer of their districts or at other times in their experience as a school administrator. The research questions for Section II were the following: To what extent do women superintendents’ perceptions of their gender affect the manner in which they lead their district? Because the percentage of female superintendents in New Jersey is twice the national average, have women superintendents broken the glass ceiling in this state?
Female Role Models that Serve as Mentors

In the literature, a variety of barriers have been identified that thwart females who aspire to the highest positions in organizations. Among the barriers frequently cited is a lack of female role models who mentor young female administrators and assist them in their journey as they pursue positions of power (Brown, 2005; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Glass et al., 2000; Parent, 2004). This topic has been addressed nationally as well in a variety of statewide studies. For example, in a doctoral study entitled Women Superintendents that sampled female superintendents in Oregon, the researcher found that barriers these women faced included not enough role models (Parent, 2004). She further recommended that women superintendents, “become highly visible not only in their districts but in state and national organizations and by mentoring women with leadership skills” (Parent, 2004).

Dana and Bourisaw, former superintendents of school districts in Missouri, explored the concept of mentoring as it relates to gender (2006). For example, they confirmed Parent’s findings, “Because of gender disadvantage, it is increasingly important for women to pursue active participation in networks that will provide information, professional development, and ultimately advocacy” (2006, p. 196). Dana and Bourisaw also referenced the Glass Ceiling Commission’s finding that “One of the internal structural barriers to women accessing a CEO position, identified by the Glass Ceiling Commission, was the lack of mentoring” (p. 195).

This topic about female mentors was a question that was a part of both the in-depth semistructured interviews as well as a question on the survey. In the survey sample of 71 women, 80% responded “no” when asked if they had a female mentor who helped
them. Additionally, each of the six interview subjects immediately responded “no” when asked if they had a female role model who mentored them. All noted that no one helped them directly as a mentor. However, some did mention that male administrators served as their mentors.

While not unexpected, these results concur with the findings of other studies about women superintendents, and are, therefore, predictable. Further, these results surrounding a lack of female role models are not surprising to the women in this sample. Nonetheless, their discussion involving their experiences regarding methods of aspiration is enlightening. Three of the six interviewees mentioned that a female superintendent at a distance to them provided a model to aspire towards. One of whom was a woman superintendent of a New York State district, Joan Raymond, who advised female administrators to obtain a doctorate and acquire a position as a principal of an urban high school in order to achieve a superintendency. Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated,

The only role model that I had and that was quite a distance was hearing Joan Raymond speak who was superintendent of the Yonkers City School District I would say back in the 70s or 80s. And I heard her speak about becoming a superintendent and this was the advice she gave. If you were a woman and you wanted to become a superintendent, these are the things you needed to do. You needed to get experience in an urban setting, you needed to be a high school principal, and you needed to have a doctorate from a top name institution. I did all three.

Suburban Superintendent Michelle stated that Mary Lee Fitzgerald, former Commissioner of Education in New Jersey, was a distant role model. Fitzgerald also
founded the Northeast Coalition for Educational Leaders, NCEL, whose purpose was in part to provide a networking experience for women educational administrators. Both of these examples came from the superintendents of suburban districts.

Rural Superintendent Amy indicated that in one of her districts, a woman was named superintendent when she became an assistant principal who took her “under her wing.” She did not, however, identify this woman specifically as her mentor. Others mentioned that they had worked for a female superintendent whose leadership style was one that they would not emulate. They felt they had seen men lead more compassionately than this particular woman. Rural superintendent Denise stated, “Oh no- ha, ha – I don’t think there was a role model. There was a male role model but not a mentor.”

The other three women did not offer any other examples of women who provided a role model opportunity. In fact, Urban Superintendent Marie stated, “Females don’t mentor other females as a rule.” She added that today as a successful superintendent, she personally helps other women administrators pursue their goals and specifically hires women as administrators in her district. Urban Superintendent Tanya simply responded “No. No one helped me,” when asked about female mentors.

In light of this fact, Rural Superintendent Amy mentioned that she will extend efforts to help other women progress in their career. Rural Superintendent Denise also stated that she feels that women administrators should have specific training at the post graduate level in networking in the hopes that women administrators in New Jersey will eventually have the same networking opportunities that men have had traditionally in this state.
Testing the Limits of Leadership

In this segment of the in-depth semistructured interviews, the interviewees were asked to reflect upon a scenario in which the limits of their leadership were tested, and they were successful. Following this question, the superintendents were asked what frame they thought conceptualized their scenario. All of the women were able to produce a scenario, all of which were noteworthy in terms of the kinds of challenges these successful women faced during their tenure in this position.

Four narratives that tested the limits of their leadership involved situations requiring change in the adaptive sense (Heifetz, 2003), meaning that cultural assumptions and values were challenged in the process. Each of these narratives fell into the political frame, with one of the narrative falling into the political and symbolic frame. Thus, many of these scenarios involved power struggles between or among stakeholders.

Suburban Superintendent Andrea experienced a crisis that tested her leadership when several of the board of education members violated an ethics law. She stated, “Who had the power? Was it going to be me or was it going to be the Board members who were having conversations with the principals about things they should not be talking about?” Although she did not discuss the details, she indicated that a few of the board members were talking with building principals without the prior knowledge of the superintendent. Although a difficult conflict ensued, the offending board members eventually resigned. Her description of the frame can be found in her words, “Bottom line, this was a power struggle.”

Suburban Superintendent Michelle faced a political crisis regarding a Religious Right faction that was gaining momentum in her school community. Essentially, the
district had been working long and hard on a strategic plan to direct the work of the
district for the next 5 years. On the evening of the vote, over 100 members of the
Religious Right attended the board meeting to protest the strategic plan stating that
outcome-based education was evil. “We had a group come forward that was saying our
program was outcome based and evil, not their values. They came out in full force. It got
people terrified about what we were doing through propaganda.” Previously, they had
not appeared during any of the meetings nor did they take an opportunity to become
members of the committees that was originally offered to the entire community. To
remedy this situation, she and the board president re-opened the planning process to
include members of the faction and allowed for revisions to the strategic actions to
incorporate their issues. She further stated, “There was a period of years where they
gained seats on boards and municipalities. And they could influence local decisions.” As
she summed up this scenario, she stated, “It was a jungle.”

Urban Superintendent Marie faced a public vote of “no confidence” at the board
meeting during her first year in the district. Her building principals at that time arrived en
masse to protest her leadership and called for a vote of no confidence. She had asked
them to work during the summer months instead of only 10 months per year. In response
to their action, the board called for a vote “of confidence” by the board members that was
successful. She, too, stated that this was the political frame.

Urban Superintendent Tanya spoke of her decision to ask building principals to
work 12 months as other districts do instead of 10. This action was grieved by the
principals and eventually went to arbitration. This superintendent asked for 24 days
during the summer and in the end, got 24 days awarded from the administrative law
judge. This scenario was also characterized as the political frame. She also recollected a defining moment in her district. She stated,

Maybe at my second or third principals’ meeting. I think I was very passionate, but I was very demanding. And I thought that when my principals left, they would be annoyed with me, but instead, I got a standing ovation. So, it said to me that I had a right to have high expectations and be demanding. I think what they recognized is that I am a very fair person... That was a moment.

Rural Superintendent Amy mentioned that in a former urban district, she had to release 75 employees because of a $3 million budget cut. In order to conduct this process, she met with each individual to explain the situation personally and guide them through the process. She recalled, “The way I handled it was I met with each person individually to talk to them about it. I didn’t send a letter. I didn’t send someone else to do it. I felt that it was on my shoulders, and I needed to try to tell them as truthfully and as honestly with as much heart as I could about what was about to happen.” It took her weeks to accomplish this task, but she stated that this caring process protected the dignity of the employees. She characterized this scenario as follows, “I think this was the family frame I think it was probably the family frame because that was the philosophy that I sort of leaned on because it was more like me than any other frame.” However, she also mentioned that in this previous district, she met resistance from male central office personnel who reported to her. She stated that their resistance to her leadership, overt and contentious, was a difficult experience for her. “They were small minded, very jealous human beings, and they did whatever they could to sabotage my progress.”
Upon reflection, Rural Superintendent Denise identified a time in her district when nearly 25% of kindergarten students were being retained regularly. To remedy this situation, she formed a committee of teachers to study the situation, identify the problem and suggest a course of action. The teachers created K-1 multiage groupings that nearly eliminated all retentions in the district. “That was probably 8 years ago, and it has been so successful that now we only get one sometimes that needs to be retained.” This superintendent characterized this scenario as the factory frame. The multiage groupings are still in existence in that particular district.

Therefore, these scenarios were characterized as the factory, family and political frames by these women.

Research Question #5: Gender Bias in the Role of Superintendent

The following research question guided the analysis of this component regarding gender: To what extent do women superintendents’ perceptions of their gender affect the manner in which they lead their districts?

Although the number of women in the role of superintendent in New Jersey continues to climb, there are still instances of gender bias that these women discussed during their interviews. Some considered their experiences blatant while others contend that gender bias is “a thing of the past in New Jersey.” In all six interviews, women were able to produce an example, or several examples, of incidents that they felt were attributed to their gender.

Rural Superintendent Denise served in this position for 19 years, rising to this position from her previous post as vice principal of this one school district. She was unanimously promoted to the role of superintendent when the former individual, a male,
left the district for another job. In response to gender, she stated that there were times that she would make suggestions and they would be ignored by others, thus expressing the notion of feeling marginalized or “silenced” at meetings with her male superintendent colleagues. She stated,

I’ve seen how the suggestions of females are not treated the same was as the suggestions from the males. I have actually had times where I have suggested something, and you know, something that is “pooh-poohed” and then ten minutes later a man will say the same thing and the – ooh!—what a good idea! I am amazed...now I am very aggressive and I will say – hey, I just said that 10 minutes ago ... they don’t even react to it.

The concept of silence or not being heard is echoed in the work of Belenky et al. (1986) and others who contended that society values the words of males and male authority. They state, “Some women told us, in anger and frustration, how frequently they felt unheard and unheeded – both at home and at work” (p. 146). Even among women who feel they have found their voice, problems with voice abound.

In her Salem County location, the number of women superintendents is decreasing. She believes that this is due, not solely but in large part, to the fact that there are so few professionals living in this county. She also recalled a gender-based situation that occurred early in her career as superintendent, stating,

When I first came to this county, I am sure you are not going to believe this but it is true, that the township committee when they first came to meet me – now these are like three men in their seventies with guns and wearing suspenders and you know what I mean. And they actually said to me that they didn’t understand why
I needed a salary anyway. Doesn’t my husband work? I think that it is even harder for women in the rural counties in particular because we don’t have that many professional people at all, and for women professionals here – is just, you know, it just doesn’t happen much.

Another example of gender bias was found in the experience of an Urban Superintendent Tanya who is African American. She stated that she feels more bias regarding her gender rather than her race. “More often I am discriminated against because of my gender and not because of my race.” For example, she stated that her position was advertised at a particular salary rate. A man from East Orange was offered $30,000 over the starting salary, and he refused the position. Then when it was time to negotiate her contract, she was offered the position at $10,000 below the advertised starting salary. She stated that she almost walked away from this offer as a result of this blatant example of gender bias.

Urban Superintendent Tanya mentioned that she also faced gender bias from other CEOs in her large urban district. On many occasions she called meetings of these individuals and instead of coming themselves, the male CEOs sent female representatives who have lower status in their organizations. Again, she felt that these situations were blatant examples of gender bias. While this is one experience, the literature indicates that African Americans who aspire to the superintendency face regular and ongoing discrimination because of their race. According to Jackson who researches the phenomenon of minorities in the superintendency confirms findings of marginalization (2006). These findings include both male and female African American candidates who are marginalized it this leadership role.
Suburban Superintendent Andrea noted that women cannot react emotionally in this role. “If a woman yells, for example, people will think she has lost her emotions. If a man yells, people will instead think that he is a strong leader and will be admired for this display of strength. “I think that women have to be very careful how they exercise strength and power.”

The two suburban superintendents reported that they experienced gender bias as well. Suburban Superintendent Andrea stated that when the male administrators saw her stature, they acted as though she would be “chewed up and spit out.” Suburban Superintendent Michelle recalled that a female board member asked her the following question, “Honey, you’re so petite, how can you possibly lead a school district?” Despite these experiences, both stated that they felt these sentiments are no longer prevalent in New Jersey.

Thus, each of the women was able to identify a situation where they felt discriminated against because of their gender. Despite these experiences, they were able to persevere and continue on their successful experiences as superintendent of schools. Themes related to the stories of women in New Jersey are repeated in the sample of the Wellesley study, Inside Women’s Power: Learning from Leaders, indicating that the women interviewed all faced incidents of gender bias as they aspired to positions of power (Erkut, 2000).

Research Question 6 – The Glass Ceiling.—Is it broken in New Jersey?

Because the percentage of female superintendents in New Jersey is greater than the national average, have women superintendents broken the glass ceiling in this state?
Although the glass ceiling metaphor may seem hackneyed to some, its effects persist. For example, in 2005, Harvard University President Lawrence Summers remarked that women faculty members in science and math have low numbers because of a biological inability to excel in these areas. As such, the author noted that in academia there persists a glass ceiling (Drew, 2005). It is no surprise that the women in this study were well aware of the term and its effects on women in leadership roles.

Each of the six women was asked to describe how women were handling the leadership challenge of the 21st century in the New Jersey and if the glass ceiling is broken due to the statistics in the state. Their comments indicated positive responses to both questions.

Rural Superintendent Amy noted, “I think that we are going –we’re going to be the reason why New Jersey succeeds and moves forward, and you know, rises to the top. I think that we are a motivated group of people. I think that our priorities are where they need to be. I think that the status of women in New Jersey is good. I see this only getting better.”

Urban Superintendent Marie stated,

I think that the reason we have been able to be successful because in New Jersey we are a bit more liberal, but also because no one wants to be superintendents in this job. I think it is our chance. No one is banging down the door to be superintendent. It is a thankless job. It is a lot of work for a little bit of money.

And I think that in New Jersey there are many women who are educated and who are willing to tackle the job. This is our opportunity to get into that field.
Several of the women declared that women superintendents in New Jersey have brought a high degree of professionalism to the position, and that the future of public schools in New Jersey will depend on the effective leadership of women. One of the six mentioned that when you give women leadership opportunities, then they will do a good job. Another stated that the reason why women are achieving these roles is because they have proven their worth. Others noted that women have comprehensive backgrounds in curriculum and the men do not. This gives women an edge in the current climate of standards based education and accountability.

Lastly, some of the women pointed to the corruption of the good old boys’ network as a reason to rely on women superintendents. Urban Superintendent Marie noted, “They better start relying on women in New Jersey because the good old boys network is very corrupt, and nobody has the backbone to take it on.” In essence, their responses can be summed up as women bring a lot to the table.

Suburban Superintendent Michelle indicated, “We have been ahead in New Jersey for a long time. I am convinced that it is a ceiling that is there because of our… it is a result of our own lack of effort to take more positions. And for the reasons I said before. I think that some don’t have the same level of confidence that men do – probably because they were reared that way, probably because of responsibilities. They have other lives to lead. But, I don’t think there is a bias against women in New Jersey any longer.

Therefore, these women felt that the glass ceiling for the most part is broken in New Jersey, that gender bias may still be felt when women are applying for the position initially but once they are on the job it disappears, and that if the glass ceiling persists, it is because of women’s own lack of efforts to take these positions. Clearly, there is a
sentiment that women superintendents in New Jersey are not only up to the leadership challenge in the 21st century, they will also lead to high levels of achievement in their respective districts throughout the state. More important, these sentiments were expressed broadly and across all district contexts.
Chapter VI

Interpretation of the Survey Data

"I have spent a lot of time to get everybody to understand that the village is us."

-- Urban Superintendent

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership preferences of women superintendents in New Jersey using Bolman and Deal's (2003) four frames as the conceptual framework. For the quantitative component of the study, Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) was used. Information about the validity and reliability of this instrument is presented in chapter 3. This instrument has been used in the past to determine the preferences of managers and leaders in both corporate and educational settings (Bolman & Deal, 1992; Heimovics, Herman, & Jurkiewicz, 1995; Mosser & Walls, 2002; Rivers, 1996; Thompson, 2005). The survey, (Self-Reporting), is organized in a Likert-scale format. A total of 71 surveys were returned which represents a response rate of 48.6%.

Composition of the Survey

There are two main sections to Bolman and Deal's (1990) Leadership Orientations Survey: (a) behaviors and (b) leadership styles. Part 1 of the survey consists of a section identified as behaviors. There are 32 questions in this section; eight questions for each one of the frames. To make the interpretation of the data easier to understand, the item numbers on this part of the survey are regrouped, sorted by frame and presented in tables. Mean scores are reported by grouping percentages in each one of the corresponding frames.
The prompt for the behaviors section of the survey is as follows: “You are asked to indicate how often each of the items below is true of you. Please use the following scale in answering each item: 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, and 5 = Always. Examples of items found in this part of the survey include:

1) _____ Think very clearly and logically.

2) _____ Show high levels of support and concern for others. The respondent is asked to place one of the numbers, 1 through 5, on the corresponding blank indicating how often the respondent engages in the behavior as described in the phrase.

Part II of the survey is a section entitled leadership styles. This part of the survey asks for the respondent to rank order herself in each one of the four frames according to the following descriptions:

4 = Best Describes Me,
3 = Next Best Describes Me,
2 = Next Best Describes Me, and
1 = Least Like Me.

The prompt is as follows: “This section asks you to describe your leadership style. For each item, give the number “4” to the phrase that best describes you, “3” to the item that is next best, and on down to “1” for the item that is least like you.” Therefore, this section consisting of 6 questions was a forced choice. An example of a question from the leadership styles section is as follows: My strongest skills are: a. Analytic skills, b. Interpersonal skills, c. Political skills, and d. Ability to excite and motivate.
Reporting Process

The tables that follow display the responses for each item. The items are re-sorted and grouped according to the frame metaphors (i.e., factory, family, jungle and theater.) At the end of each table, the mean percentage is established for the columns.

For the section on behaviors, the percentages are collapsed as follows: (a) Always and Often and (b) Sometimes, Occasionally and Never. For the section on leadership styles, the responses for the answers Best Describes Me (4) and Next Best Describes Me (3) are grouped together as are the responses on Next Best Describes Me (2) and Least Like Me (1). At the bottom of these tables, the overall mean is presented.

Table 12

Behaviors: Percentage for the Items in the Factory Frame (n = 71)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Always/often</th>
<th>Sometimes/occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Think logically</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Careful planning</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Logical analysis</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Clear policies</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Facts and logic</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Specific goals</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Attention to detail</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Chain of command</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean percentage</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>19.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13  

*Leadership Styles: Percentage for the Items in the Factory Frame (n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Best describes me (3) &amp; (4)</th>
<th>Least like me (2) &amp; (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a.</td>
<td>Analytic skills</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a.</td>
<td>Technical expert</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a.</td>
<td>Good decisions</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a.</td>
<td>Attention to detail</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a.</td>
<td>Logical thinking</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a.</td>
<td>Analyst</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean percentage</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 12, 95.8% of the women in this sample stated that they often engage in behaviors where they think logically as described in the prompt for item # one. This response rate of 95.8% is the highest for all items on the structure frame and is equal to one other behavior item on the entire survey found in the human resource frame, which is item #6 concerning behaviors that are open and collaborative. Thus, 95.8% of the women in this sample identified these items as the top behaviors they engage in always or often.

Next, the women responded that they often engaged in behaviors as described in item #17 about facts and logic with a response of 88.7% and item #9 about logical analysis with 87.3% of the women stating that this is a behavior they engage in often or always. In contrast, of all the items in this frame, only 62% of women felt that attention to detail was a behavior that they engaged in often or always. Overall, the women
superintendents who responded to this survey had a mean of 79.6% for all eight items related to the factory frame in this section of behaviors.

The second part of the structure questions were grouped in the leadership style section found in Table 13. In terms of their leadership styles, the women stated that making good decisions best described them with a response rate of 73.3%. This item was ranked the highest in the structure frame of all the items in this group. Next, the women felt that item # 5a about logical thinking best described their leadership style. On the other hand, only 26.8% of the women in this sample responded that item 2a about being a technical expert was like them. Conversely, 69% of the women responded that this leadership style was least like them. Hence, the women ranked themselves lowest on this leadership style item in the factory frame. Overall for this section in leadership styles, the mean was 47.7% for all six items in the factory frame which was the second lowest of all four frames.

The next set of tables display data about the family frame.

Table 14

*Behaviors: Percentage for the Items in the Family Frame (n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Always/often</th>
<th>Sometimes/occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>High levels of support</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Open and collaborative</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sensitivity and concern</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Helpful and responsive</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Listen well</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
26. Personal recognition 85.9 14.1
30. Participation 93.0 7.0
Mean percentage 91.0 8.975

Table 15

*Leadership Styles: Percentage for the items in the Family Frame (n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Describes me (3) &amp; (4)</th>
<th>Least like me (2) &amp; (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1b.</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b.</td>
<td>Good listener</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b.</td>
<td>Coach people</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b.</td>
<td>Concern for people</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b.</td>
<td>Caring and support</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b.</td>
<td>Humanist</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean percentage</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 14, more than 85% of the women associated themselves with items described in this frame, stating that that they frequently engage in these behaviors often or always. For example, 95.8% of the women in this sample stated that they often engage in behaviors where they are open and collaborative as described in the prompt for item # six. This response rate of 95.8% is the highest for an item on the family frame and is equal to only one other behavior item on the survey in the factory frame, item #1 think logically, as described in the interpretation of the data in the previous frame.
Next, the women responded to five additional items in the family frame with a high response rate in the 90% range. For instance, they stated that they often engaged in behaviors described as follows in descending order:

1. item #2 about high levels of support with a response of 94.4%;
2. item #30 about participation with a response rate of 93%;
3. item #18 about helpful and responsive with a response rate 91.6%;
4. item #10 about sensitivity and concern with a response rate of 91.5% and
5. item #22 about listen well with a response rate of 90.2%.

There were only two items in the family frame that fell into the 80% response range: item #14 about involvement and item #26 about personal recognition. For both these items, 85.9% of the women stated that they engaged in these behaviors often and always. Overall, the women superintendents who responded to this survey had a mean of 91.0% for all eight items related to the family frame in this section of behaviors. This frame was ranked highest by the overall percentage of women.

The second part of the family questions was grouped in the leadership style section found in Table 15. In terms of their leadership styles, the women stated that interpersonal skills (item 1.b) and concern for people (item 4b) best described them with a response rate for both of these items at of 80.3%. These two items about leadership styles were ranked the highest of all items on the leadership styles sections of the survey. Next, the women felt that item # 5 b about showing caring and support best described their leadership style. This item was closely followed by item 2b about being a good leader with 76.0% of the women stating that this leadership style best described them.
On the other hand, the women felt that item 3b coach people was least like them with a response rate of 57.8%, the lowest in this family frame. Overall for this section in leadership styles, the mean for positive responses was 60.5% for all six items in the family frame. Therefore, the women in this sample associated themselves most closely to the family frame over the other three frames: structure, political and symbolic.

Table 16

*Behaviors: Percentage for the Items in the Jungle Frame (n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Always/often</th>
<th>Sometimes/occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mobilize people</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Shrewd negotiator</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Persuasive and influential</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Organizational conflict</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>6.8 / Never = 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Influence and power</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Politically sensitive</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Develop alliances</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Succeed in the face of conflict</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mean percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>61.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17

*Leadership Styles: Percentage for the Items in the Jungle Frame (n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Describes me(3-4)</th>
<th>Least Like me (2-1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c.</td>
<td>Political skills</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c.</td>
<td>Skilled negotiator</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Table 16, there were only two items that received responses in the 90% to 80% range. In item # 3, 90.1 % of the women in this sample stated that they often engage in behaviors where they mobilize people as described in the prompt as well as item # 31 in which 87.3% of the women stating that they often and always succeed in the face of conflict. Next, 77.4% of the women responded that they often engaged in behaviors as described in item #27 about develop alliances and item # 11 about being persuasive and influential with 73.2% of the women stating that this is a behavior they engage in often. Only 70.4% of the women felt that item #11 about organizational conflict was one they engaged in always and often with one respondent answering in the never category.

In contrast, fewer women responded that they engaged in several behaviors in the political frame as they did in the factory and families frames. For example, only 69% of them responded that influence and power was a behavior that they engaged in often or always followed by 56.3% responding positively to item #23 about being politically sensitive.

There were additional items that received low responses in the political frame. For example, item #7 shrewd negotiator only received 35.2 % of the responses with
respondents stating that they engaged in this behavior often and always. Thus, 64.8% responded that this behavior was least like them. Overall, the women superintendents who responded to this survey had a mean of 61% for all 8 items related to the political frame in this section of behaviors. Thus, the political frame was the lowest for all four frames.

The second part of the political frame questions were grouped in the leadership style section found in Table 17. When questioned about their leadership styles, 56.3% of the women stated that succeeding the face of conflict best described them. This item was ranked the highest of all on the political frame. On the other hand, most of the women felt that most of these items were least like them. For instance, item # 2c skilled negotiator received a response rate of 28.2%; item # 3c build strong alliances received a response rate of 28.2%; item # 1c political skills receiving a response rate of 25.4%; and item # 5c being described as tough and aggressive received a response rate of only 22.5%.

When asked if women thought they would describe themselves as a politician, only 16.9% of the women responded positively. As a result, 73.2% of the women identified this phrase as a leadership style that was least like them. Hence, the women ranked themselves lowest on this section of the survey with a mean percentage of only 29.6% of the women in this sample stating that these styles were like them. Thus, in both sections, behaviors and leadership styles, women ranked themselves lowest in the jungle of all four frames.
### Table 18

**Behaviors:** Percentage for the Items in the Theater Frame (n = 71)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Always/often</th>
<th>Sometimes/occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Inspires others</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Inspiration</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Sense of vision</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>New opportunities</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Loyalty and enthusiasm</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Aspirations and values</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean percentage</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>18.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 19

**Leadership Styles:** Percentage for the Items in the Theater Frame (n = 71)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Describes me (3) &amp; (4)</th>
<th>Least like me (2) &amp; (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1d.</td>
<td>Excite and motivate</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d.</td>
<td>Inspirational leader</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d.</td>
<td>Energize and inspire</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4d.</td>
<td>Charisma</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d.</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6d.</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18 displays data for the fourth and final frame, the symbolic or theater frame. In this frame, over 80% of the women in this sample stated that they often engage in behaviors where they use symbols, traditions, and metaphors. For example, 94.3% of the women identified loyalty and enthusiasm (item #28) as a behavior in which they always or often engaged. This item was closely followed by item # 4 inspire others. For this item, 92.9% of the women identified this behavior always and often. Next, the women responded that they often engaged in behaviors as described in item #32 aspirations and values with a response rate of 88.7% item #24 new opportunities with a response rate of 87.4%; and item #12 inspiration with a response rate of 84.5%.

In contrast, the women felt that of all the items in this frame, two of them ranked lower. Only 64.8% of them responded that imaginative was a behavior that they engaged in often or always. When asked if they engage in charismatic behaviors, only 59.1% of the women responded always and often to this prompt. Overall, the women superintendents who responded to this survey had a mean of 81.6% for all eight items related to the theater frame in this section on behaviors.

In terms of their leadership styles in Table 19, the women stated that being an inspirational leader best described them with a response rate of 70.5%. This item was ranked the highest of all leadership styles items in the symbolic frame. Next, 64.8% of the women felt that item # 6d visionary best described them followed by 53.5% of women stating that item # 1d about excite and motivate best described their leadership style.
On the other hand, the women felt that several items in the theater frame were not associated with their leadership styles. For example, they ranked themselves the lowest on the following three:

1. item # 3d energize and inspire with a response rate of 46.5%;
2. item # 5d imagination with a response rate of 39.5%; and
3. item # 4d charisma with the lowest response rate of 38.1%.

Overall for the symbolic frame related to leadership styles, the mean was 51.15 for all six items. This mean was the second highest of all the frames with only the family frame ranking higher at 60.5%. Therefore, the women in this sample closely associated their behaviors and leadership styles with items found in the symbolic frame that were lower than the family frame but higher than the factory and jungle.

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for the Four Frames

The table below displays a summary of the mean percentages for each section.

Table 20

Summary table of mean percentage for behaviors and leadership styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always and often</td>
<td>Best describes me and Next best describes me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>79.76</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>81.67</td>
<td>52.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus, the female superintendents in this survey sample ranked themselves highest overall in the family frame and lowest in the jungle. In summary, they believe that the family frame best describes their behaviors and leadership styles, followed by the theater, factory and finally the jungle.

Factor Analysis

A factor analysis using Varimax Rotation Method was conducted on Leadership Orientations Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990) responses as found in this sample of female superintendents. The goal of the factor analysis was to see if the items in the four frames loaded similarly to Bolman and Deal’s (2003) conceptualization and to determine how these items clustered together, or to see if items loaded on more than one factor.

The following tables display the factor loads for each item. Factors one through six are identified for the purposes of this analysis. Items that loaded on two factors are listed in the same row. The items in the behaviors section of the Leadership Orientations Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990) are displayed first in Table 21 followed by a separate table that displays the items in the leadership section (Table 22).

Table 21

*Behaviors: Items Using the Varimax Rotation Method*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item &amp; Frame</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Load</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1. Factory</td>
<td>Think very clearly and logically</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2. Family</td>
<td>Show levels of support and concern</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4. Theater</td>
<td>Inspire others to do their best</td>
<td>.709</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5. Factory</td>
<td>Emphasize careful planning</td>
<td>.615</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Open and collaborative relationships</td>
<td>0.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>Am highly charismatic</td>
<td>0.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Approach problems through logical analysis</td>
<td>0.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Show concern and sensitivity for others</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Jungle</td>
<td>Unusually persuasive and influential</td>
<td>0.596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>Inspiration to others</td>
<td>0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Clear logical policies</td>
<td>0.645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>High levels of participation</td>
<td>0.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>Highly creative and imaginative</td>
<td>0.607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Approach problems with facts &amp; logic</td>
<td>0.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Consistently helpful and responsive</td>
<td>0.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Set specific measurable goals</td>
<td>0.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Extraordinary attention to detail</td>
<td>0.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Generate loyalty and enthusiasm</td>
<td>0.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>Clear structure and chain of command</td>
<td>0.604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Participative manager</td>
<td>0.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>Influential model of aspirations and values</td>
<td>0.623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When looking at Table 21, it is noted that all eight items in the factory frame loaded on either factor two or three. Four of the factory items loaded on factor two, while three of the factory items loaded on factor three. Only one item, item #13 which asked about clear and logical policies split on both factors two and three. Thus, the factors in the factory frame cluster similarly to Bolman and Deal's (2003) conceptualization of this frame with all 8 items on this section of the survey falling into factors two and three; although it is clear that this frame, rather than being unidimensional, has two subcomponents for this sample at least.

The next frame that has multiple dimensions is the family frame where six items loaded on either factor six or four, and where a seventh item loaded on factor five. Two items loaded on factor six and three loaded on factor four. One item split, consistently helpful and responsive, loaded similarly on factors six and four. Of all 8 items in the family frame, the item related to listen well and am usually receptive to other people's ideas, did not load on any factors. Thus, the seven items in the family frame clustered similarly to Bolman and Deal's (2003) conceptualization of the family frame.

The jungle frame, or those items related to power, presents a different picture from the previous frame. Only one of the 8 items in the jungle frame split on factors one and five, unusually persuasive and influential. Factor one loaded at .596 and factor five loaded at .405. None of the other seven items clustered on this section of the behaviors section. This may suggest that Bolman and Deal's (2003) conceptualization of the political frame or the jungle differs from the women who participated in this study.
Lastly, five of the theater items loaded in this factor analysis. Three loaded on factor one, one loaded on factor five and one split on factors one and five. These items, therefore, loaded similarly. However, fewer items loaded than in the factory or family frames. The next table displays the factors for the items in the Leadership Styles section.

Table 22

*Leadership Styles: Items Using Varimax Rotation Method*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item &amp; frame</th>
<th>Key terms</th>
<th>Load</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1a. Factory</td>
<td>My strongest skills are analytical skills</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1b. Family</td>
<td>My strongest skills are interpersonal skills</td>
<td>.626</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1c. Jungle</td>
<td>My strongest skills are political skills</td>
<td>.798</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1d. Theater</td>
<td>My strongest skills are the ability to excite and motivate</td>
<td>.857</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2a. Factory</td>
<td>The best way to describe me is as a technical expert</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2b. Family</td>
<td>The best way to describe me is as a good listener</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2c. Jungle</td>
<td>The best way to describe me is as a skilled negotiator</td>
<td>.874</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2d. Theater</td>
<td>The best way to describe me is an inspirational leader</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3a. Factory</td>
<td>What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>make good decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item &amp; frame</td>
<td>Key terms</td>
<td>Load</td>
<td>Factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3b. Family</td>
<td>What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to coach and develop people</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3c. Jungle</td>
<td>What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to build strong alliances.</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3d. Theater</td>
<td>What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to energize and inspire others</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4a. Factory</td>
<td>What people are most likely to notice about me is my attention to detail</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4b. Family</td>
<td>What people are most likely to notice about me is my concern for others</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4d. Theater</td>
<td>What people are most likely to notice about me is my charisma.</td>
<td>.508</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5a. Factory</td>
<td>My most important leadership trait is logical clear thinking.</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5b. Family</td>
<td>My most important leadership trait is caring and support for others.</td>
<td>.821</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5d. Theater</td>
<td>My most important leadership trait is imagination and creativity.</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6a. Factory</td>
<td>I am best described as an analyst.</td>
<td>.638</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6b. Family</td>
<td>I am best described as a humanist.</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6c. Jungle</td>
<td>I am best described as a politician.</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6d. Theater</td>
<td>I am best described as a visionary.</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is interesting to note that in the leadership styles section 22 of the 24 items loaded in on factors one through six. Only 2 of the 24 items did not, both of which were in the jungle frame. The first item in the jungle frame that did not load was item #4c, What people are most likely to notice about me is my ability to succeed in the face of conflict. This item loaded, however, on factor seven with a value of .950. The second jungle item that did not load was item # 5c: My most important leadership trait is toughness and aggressiveness. Therefore, the other 23 items section clustered similarly to Bolman and Deal’s (2003) views. In essence, the items loaded as follows:

1. Factory items = all eight on factor two;
2. Family items = six on factor three and two on factor five;
3. Jungle items = three on factor one and one was split on factors one and five; and
4. Theater items = four loaded on factor four, one on factor one and one of factor six.

Summary of Quantitative Findings: Research Questions 1, 2, and 3

From the results of this survey sample, it is clear that Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990) proves to be a useful tool to examine the leadership styles and behaviors of female superintendents. As a result of the descriptive statistics and the factor analysis on the survey items, there is much that can be described as organized and defined by the conceptual framework of Bolman and Deal’s (2003) four leadership frames.

Most women superintendents who participated in this research indicated that their behaviors and leadership styles were multidimensional. Of the four frames, the female
superintendents in the sample placed a high value on human capital and associated themselves with the human resource frame as the most dominant of the four. According to these results, the next highest frame was the symbolic frame followed by the factory frame.

The least dominant was the political frame with only 29% of the superintendents noting that their leadership style mirrored the political frame, in contrast to 61% who selected the human resource frame, 50% who chose the symbolism frame, and 49% the structural frame.

When asked to identify the behaviors on the survey that they most frequently demonstrate, 91% of the superintendents selected family, 81% theatre and 80% factory. Only 61% selected the jungle frame or behaviors that are synonymous with the political frame.

When asked to rank order their leadership styles on the survey, stating the categories that best describe me or next best describes me, 60.5% selected family highest, 52.15% selected the theater, 47.7% factory and 29.5% selected the jungle. Therefore, this pattern reflected the same rankings as the behaviors section reported above. Of all the items on the survey, the item with the least responses was the following in the leadership styles: What Best Describe Me is 6c Politician with 16.9% positive responses. Therefore, the women in this sample tended to rank order themselves last in this characteristic of the political frame. Hence, a politician is least like them.

The factor analysis provided interesting results as well. In the behaviors section, all 8 factory frame items loaded on factors three and two. The next frame, the family frame, had 7 of the items loading on factors six and four. Thus, these two frames clustered similarly to the work
of Bolman and Deal. The next frame, the theater, loaded on factors one and five. Only one item in the jungle frame split on factors one and five.

Thus, women superintendents in this sample in New Jersey ranked themselves high on three categories of the behaviors and leadership sections of the survey, and highest of all in the human resource frame. It is clear from these results that the political frame is the least dominant frame, indicating a conflicting orientation or resistance to this category of leadership as defined by Bolman and Deal (2003).
Chapter VII

Findings, Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion

“If a glass ceiling is still there, it is because of our lack of effort to take more positions.”

--Suburban Superintendent

Introduction

Much of the literature about female superintendents of schools describes their demographic profile, the history of their role in education, and the increase of this phenomenon in our nation’s schools (Shakeshaft as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1989). Many believe that women superintendents “tend to be more concerned with teachers and marginal students, are more motivational, and value working with parents and the community” more than their male counterparts (Glass, et al., 2000, p.17). Studies indicate that women superintendents tend to have a leadership style that is participative and inclusive, allowing for different perspectives to be heard (Grogan, 2000).

Despite the qualities of their leadership styles and the evidence of their growing numbers, well-educated and competent women continue to be underrepresented and underutilized as leaders in our schools since the superintendency was established in 1837 (Blount, 1998). Some contend that a glass ceiling exists which marginalizes women in this role and that there is a “conspiracy of silence” that prevents women from achieving this position (Freeman et al.: 2001; Scott, 1999; Shakeshaft as cited in Schmuck & Dunlap, 1995; Skrla, Reyes & Schuerick, 2000; 5). Therefore, it was the specific intention of this researcher to provide female superintendents in New Jersey a “voice” in the literature in order for them to contribute their knowledge and experience to the field.
The primary purpose of this study was to broadly examine the leadership styles and behaviors of female superintendents in New Jersey using Bolman and Deal's (2003) four frame model. A second purpose was to investigate how women construct and view their methods of exercising power in this role. In addition, a third related purpose was descriptive and included collecting data to determine trends about the demographic profile of female superintendents in this state.

The overarching research question posed for this inquiry was stated as follows: To what extent can the leadership preferences of women superintendents in New Jersey be understood by applying Bolman and Deal's (2003) four frames?

To accomplish the aims of this inquiry, a mixed-method design was used that included both quantitative and qualitative methods. First, Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientations Survey (Self-Report) (1990) was the instrument for the quantitative component. This survey consisted of two major sections: (a) behaviors and (b) leadership styles. In the behaviors sections, the women were asked to identify how often they engaged in behaviors such as think very clearly and logically using a Likert-type scale format. The choices included the following: (5) Always, (4) Often, (3) Occasionally, (2) Seldom, and (1) Never. In the leadership styles section, women were asked to rank order themselves on a variety of topics such as, my most important skills are analytical skills, using a forced-choice method. The choices were as follows: (4) Best describes me, (3) Next best describes me, (2) Next best describes me and (1) Least like me. A total of 71 surveys represent a return rate of 48.6% of the 146 surveys that were mailed.

The results from the quantitative portion of the study were amplified by the analysis of the transcripts from the in-depth semistructured interviews of six standing
female superintendents. Questions were based on the assumptions that underlie each of
the four leadership frames: (a) structure, (b) human resource, (c) power, and (d)
symbolism. Since this was an emergent design, the questions for the in-depth
semistructured interviews were open-ended to allow for probing around the concepts of
the four leadership frames. A systematic and rigorous process of grounded theory was
used to analyze the language found in the transcripts. Through microanalysis, central
categories were developed around the organizational concepts of the frames.

Findings

An analysis of the survey data combined descriptive statistics and factor analysis which
revealed several important findings. To begin, most female superintendents in the study indicated
that their behaviors and leadership styles were multidimensional, ranking themselves highest in
the human resource frame (family) and lowest in the political frame (jungle). When asked to
identify the behaviors that they most frequently demonstrate, 91% of the superintendents
selected items found in the family frame, 81% in the theatre frame and 80% in the factory frame.
In terms of specific items, nearly 96% of the women identified two behaviors as those they
engaged in most frequently as described as always or often. These are the following: (a) item #1
which is, think very clearly and logically in the factory frame; and (b) item #6 which is, build
trust through open and collaborative relationships in the family frame.

When asked about the leadership styles that best described them, female superintendents
associated themselves most with the family frame. According to their responses, 61% selected
the human resource frame, followed by 50% who chose the symbolism frame and then 49% who
chose the structural frame. However, the least dominant was the political frame, with only 29% of
the superintendents describing themselves best in the jungle. Thus, the second section of the
survey on leadership styles confirmed the results of the first section on the survey about behaviors, indicating that women associated themselves with the four leadership frames in the following order: (a) family, (b) theater, (c) factory and (d) jungle. Factor analysis supported these findings in that most items with a strong load in value were the factory, family and theater frames. Therefore, the items clustered around the frames as Bolman and Deal (2003) hypothesized.

The finding that women leaders’ predominant style is found in the family frame is congruent with the literature. For example, Gilligan’s work in female psychology suggested that women most often view themselves through attachment, intimacy, and affiliation known as an ethic of care (1982). In addition, two dissertations using Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Survey (1990), (Davis, 1996; Durocher, 1995) found that female superintendents reported that their leadership style was multidimensional with the human resource frame ranking highest followed by the structure frame.

The results from the survey were buttressed by the data garnered from the in-depth semi-structured interviews. The six female superintendents who were interviewed tended to describe their styles of leading as participative and inclusive, with an emphasis on allowing for teacher voice to be included in their decision-making. Further, they felt that modeling professionalism and acknowledging employees’ efforts were critical to their work in motivating people.

From the detailed process of microanalysis of the transcripts, I identified the following central categories based on responses to the in-depth semistructured interview questions:

1. Structure/factory: Strategic use of individuals and groups
2. Human resource/family: Nurturing and maximizing human capital through fairness, equity and respect
3. Political/jungle: Uncomfortable tension regarding the use and misuse of power

4. Symbolism/theater: symbols are important to stakeholders

In essence, all six female superintendents in the interview sample placed a high value on human capital and use the human resource frame as the most dominant of the four. Three of the six identified the family frame as most important in their organizations. One identified a combination of factory and family. One stated factory only. The last identified a blend of all four. A central theme of nurturing and maximizing human capital is confirmed in one of the basic assumptions in the literature about women’s psychology: “Women should devote themselves to the care and empowerment of others while remaining self-less” (Belenky et al.; 1986, p. 46). These findings are also supported in the role congruity theory that suggests that women will be accepted if they display communal qualities such as caring (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

According to the six interview subjects, the next most important frame was the factory frame. The six interviewees identified individuals such as the principals, the administrative council or board of education as the most important structures in their organizations. Further, women in smaller districts worked hand in hand with colleagues to “run the district.” Following the factory frame, the six interviewees noted the theater as important. They used mission statements, guiding principles and school colors as important to their stakeholders. As noted in chapter 5, the women in this sample identified concepts in the theater frame that were context specific.

Lastly, in describing their viewpoints about the political frame, it was clear that the superintendents’ conceptualization was in contrast to Bolman and Deal’s (2003) notion. The interviewees defined power as task accomplishment as opposed to building coalitions and
alliances, networking, and negotiating or mapping political terrains as outlined in Bolman and Deal's (2003) description of the frames. In addition, there was a difference in the response of the rural superintendents. Both rural superintendents identified power with the term "control." I speculate that perhaps in smaller rural districts, the leader has direct oversight of employees and thus gives a sense of control over others. This condition was one of the few areas where there was a difference in response by context.

Women's identification of power with task accomplishment is congruent in the findings of Freeman et al. (2001) who interviewed 25 prominent women leaders who characterized power as task accomplishment as well. In Brunner's research, her interviewee refused to speak about her use of power, and preferred calling it "style" instead (1998).

Although I specifically and deliberately avoided asking women about men's leadership styles, the women during the interviews tended to contrast their methods of exercising power with that of men. Indeed, many of their responses were consonant with Foucault's argument that power is viewed culturally as a negative trait (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Felluga, 2003). Several of the women indicated that they avoided power or politics in their practice because they did not feel comfortable in that arena, a sentiment that was found in the survey data. The lowest item on the survey was in the political frame, item # 6 d in which only 16.9% of the women felt that I am best described as a politician. Thus, from the data provided by the interview participants, women tended to rely more on using forms of personal power rather than their positional power. Hence, a central theme of this research is that women tended to feel an uncomfortable tension when discussing the jungle frame.

From the perspectives of six women superintendents, women educational leaders work harder than most, are more ethical than men, and have confronted and overcome blatant and
outright instances of gender bias as they worked their way up to the position of superintendent. All six were able to point to specific experiences that they felt were related to their gender. Most said, however, that gender bias seemed to be a thing of the past. This stance may be a reason why there is a greater percentage of female superintendents in New Jersey than the national percentage. When asked to describe a scenario that tested the limits of their leadership, all six interview subjects were able to produce examples. These scenarios included such conflicts as ethics violations by members of the board of education, public confrontations with members of the Religious Right, laying off 75 employees, grievances with principals, high rates of retention in kindergarten, and a vote of no confidence by the principals at a board of education meeting. When asked how they would assess these situations by frame, four of the six responded, “The jungle.” One responded that the family frame pertained to her scenario, and the final scenario remaining was assessed as the factory frame. They recognized that although they were successful in these situations, power struggles were at the base of these situations that they faced.

The data also indicate similarities with the national profile based on the research questions related to the demographic profile of women superintendents in this state. From the results of the survey, there appears to be gender stratification in the superintendency in New Jersey. Nearly 58% of the women lead K-8 school districts in mostly suburban settings. There are fewer women leading K-12 districts, especially in urban settings. As the populations of students increase, the percentage of women leading these districts decreases. As such, the likelihood that a woman will lead an urban high school district with a large enrollment is a rarity.

In terms of their background, 80% of the survey sample indicated that they did not have a female role model who helped them in their administrative career. All six of the interviewees did
not have a female mentor who helped them. Among superintendents who stated that they did have a mentor, all indicated that the mentor was a male. The lack of same-sex role models is repeated frequently in the literature as a barrier to advancement (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Glass et al., 2000).

Implications

Women comprise nearly 75% to 80% of the work force in public schools (Harris et al., 2004). Yet, they continue to be underrepresented in the role of chief school administrator (Blount, 1998; Shakeshaft, 1989; Young & McLeod, 2001). Part of the reason they are marginalized is due to the fact that the superintendency is socially constructed as a male’s role and has been so since the 1800s (Blount, 1998; Skrla, 2000). Therefore, the uncomfortable tension regarding the use or misuse of power is both a major finding and an important theme that has implications for our understanding of women’s leadership in the most powerful position in schools. Hence, the findings from this study may prove useful to the field in a number of areas and are explored in the implications of this research.

Preparation Programs in Educational Administration

Graduate schools of educational administration may find this information useful when training in Bolman and Deal’s (2003) four frames to prepare female students who aspire to the top administrative positions in public schools. Understanding and using aspects of the political frame, such as the power inherent in the office, are just as important to successful leadership as well as understanding and using the other three frames. Thus, a direct presentation of the intense requirements of the superintendency is needed to develop women’s ability to lead using each of the four frames equally well. In addition, a review of the subset of items in the political frame as
posed in the Leadership Orientations Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990) may be a foundation for making curricular changes in these programs.

Training specifically in aspects of power or the political frame such as networking, allocating resources, building alliances, and negotiating are critical functions of a successful superintendent that may be understated in current preparation programs. Avoiding this frame and considering these functions as different from men’s leadership style serves to perpetuate the myth that men make better leaders than women and contributes to institutional bias and stereotyping that characterize women as deficient leaders. Therefore, this omission in superintendents’ preparation programs sustains a silent, but enduring cultural assumption that men make better leaders in the most powerful position in America’s public schools.

Teaching women to network has been omitted regularly from the formal curriculum. Male superintendents typically network on a regular basis and have networked historically as evidenced by the reports of a good old boys network that some, including several of the interview subjects, claim exists in New Jersey. The absence of female mentors is often cited in the literature as a barrier to aspiring women. To assist women, school of educational administration should encourage and support same-sex mentoring programs for female students and provide networking systems to help them cultivate and build alliances in their field.

*School Board Awareness and Policymaking*

A second implication lies in the area of school board members’ awareness. As gatekeepers when hiring superintendents, school board members may benefit from understanding the implications of women’s leadership preferences and how these styles may provide benefits to their particular district’s situation. As such, gender neutrality in the selection of superintendents should be a goal of school boards’ efforts to find a superior superintendent, male or female, and
thus, should be addressed in local, statewide and national school boards associations’ policy making. This component should be included in training programs provided by statewide school board associations for new and current school board members. Understanding a neutral concept of power may also reduce political tension and assist in healthier relationships between school board members and the superintendent. This may also shed light on the reasons for power struggles that may occur in the board/superintendent relationship.

Societal Implications and the Reconceptualization of Power

Perhaps the most compelling implication of this research is that access to the highest positions of power, both in educational and corporate settings, continues to be marginalized for women, despite gains in recent years. The argument that schools and the family perpetuate power inequities is critical to our understanding of this phenomenon, and ultimately, to resolving the current gender bias that silently pervades our school systems. For children who attend our schools, gender roles are clear: women are teachers and men are administrators. The bias that they witness each day is the norm; one that is not contested. Therefore, opportunities for female children to aspire to be leaders, not just of schools, but of Fortune 500 corporations, are diminished on a daily basis.

There are many similarities to the findings of this research related to the opportunities for females in the role of college president. Although the percentage of females who are college presidents continues to rise, women are still underrepresented in the role of president in our nation’s universities, specifically among those institutions that grant doctoral degrees (Brown, 2005). It would be worthwhile for colleges and universities to understand the benefits of female leadership styles and behaviors in order to foster greater opportunities for qualified women to lead their institutions. Thus, policy needs to be addressed at this level of leadership as well that
adopts a stance of gender neutrality in seeking qualified candidates for the college presidency. In addition, universities need to support programs that mentor aspiring females to professorships and the presidency so that there are more highly qualified and credentialed women seeking higher positions of leadership earlier in their careers. Thus, similar implications apply to the research on female college presidents as are stated in relation to female superintendents.

Until we create policies that reconceptualize our notions of power, that recast power in neutral terms, and that redistribute power more equitably, the odds are that women will continue to be subordinates in school districts, on college campuses, and in the board room. Schools of educational administration, schools boards of education and aspiring women administrators need to confront these issues in order to improve opportunities for women. Framed in these terms, all of us lose the value of women leaders’ capacity to improve schools and increase student achievement. As such, we need to work proactively with young women who aspire in order to “change the social realities that foster marginalization and inequality” (Gosetti & Rusch as cited in Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995, p. 12).

Recommendation for Further Research

The growing phenomenon of women leading school systems in this country deserves further study. While there is a growing body of evidence about their leadership, female leaders are underrepresented and underutilized in the field (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Continued examination of women’s leadership using the leadership frames as well as other conceptual frameworks will provide more information beyond the findings presented in this current research and continue to build a body of evidence that is needed to improve our understandings of females’ leadership.
Understanding power and influence is a key to leadership; more important, understanding one's use of power in the role of leader is critical. As a result, there should be additional studies related to women school administrators and their use of power. This work should be done on a national level and then compared to women's use of power in the corporate world. For example, a recent study conducted by Catalyst suggests that only 15.6% of senior managers' positions in Fortune 500 companies are held by women (Demmed or Doomed, 2007). Thus, Catalyst's research as well as the findings from the field of education should be combined to complement and enlarge understanding of their respective subsets of evidence. These similarities and differences may help us understand changes in the perceptions of women's leadership abilities over time. Finding commonalities between the corporate world and the educational world may be an important next step in understanding women's leadership.

Another recommendation of this current research is to study how women construct their use of power through a variety of theoretical models other than Bolman and Deal's to gain better insights into the full dimensions of their preferences or tensions related to power. These insights can then be compared to the findings of this research. Another recommendation is to replicate this study with a national sample to determine differences by regions across the country. There is more to learn about why women defer the power of their office and instead rely on their personal power rather than their positional power.

This current study did not examine differences in leadership preferences between male and female superintendents. Hence, an important recommendation for further research is to conduct a comparison study of male and female superintendents to examine their leadership preferences using the Leadership Orientations Survey (Bolman & Deal, 1990). Comparisons of this nature will help us to understand the nature of these differences, if any exist, particularly in
relation to the political frame and how male superintendents construct their notions of power and exercise the use of power in their roles.

Understanding the prevalence of gender bias may also be helpful to universities, school boards, and education policymakers as they determine the effectiveness of affirmative action policies as well as the effectiveness of Title IX. Replication of this study with a focus on the experience of non-White female superintendents may be useful to understanding their leadership preferences. Ultimately, these findings may influence policymakers in all fields of education.

Conclusion

When analyzing the results of the surveys and interviews, one comes to understand that female superintendents are exceptional leaders in this state. They contribute to high levels of student achievement in New Jersey’s school systems based on the breadth and depth of their knowledge of curriculum and instruction as well as their understanding of human relationships. They lead their districts with a high priority on human resources, a keen sense of the importance of structure, and a preference for using personal recognition that motivates employees to put their hearts and their minds in their work. As one interviewee stated, “We care about kids, and we care about human beings. Education is all about helping all levels of human beings be the best they can be.”

Among the women interviewed, most felt that the glass ceiling has been broken in New Jersey. Some reported that women in New Jersey bring a lot to the table and have brought a high degree of professionalism to the position in contrast to the kinds of leadership that are sometimes exhibited by their male counterparts who were referred to as the good old boys’ network. Two of the women felt that gender bias in the role of superintendent was a thing of the past, although they met bias on the road to the top. One
superintendent of color, however, reported that she does not receive respect from other CEOs in her community that she feels a male leader would receive if one were in her position. Another felt that women had the commitment to take on corruption in New Jersey’s schools and save public education in the state. Clearly, these are strong statements that support the value that women bring to educational administration.

Women superintendents in New Jersey are not only leaving their imprint on education in the state, but they are modeling effective and accomplished female leadership for young women in our nation’s schools. Despite their relative success, women continue to be underutilized and underrepresented in this position. I believe that based on research involving expectation states theory and role congruity theory, women may be undervalued and underestimated as well.

Perhaps the most critical finding in this study, women’s uncomfortable tension with the political frame, suggests that this specific area should be addressed in preparation programs, awareness training and policy implementation. This finding confirms Bolman and Deal’s (2003) assertion that women are conflicted in their executive roles. Heifetz’s (2003) position about women’s recent entrance to leadership positions suggests the same phenomenon (2003) that is leadership without authority is new and therefore uncomfortable for women.

Thus, the results from the survey and the interview transcripts using Bolman and Deal’s (2003) four leadership frames provide rich and useful information that may help educators, graduate schools of education, and school board members to reframe their understanding of female superintendents’ leadership styles and behaviors. Preparing aspiring female administrators to harness the intense and complex demands of the
political frame will not only assist women in current administrative programs, but may also inspire female administrators in the future to reach for the highest levels of leadership. If these changes were to occur, there may be a time when gender is neither an obstacle nor a predictor of one's ability to lead.
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Appendix A

Leadership Orientations Survey
LEADERSHIP ORIENTATIONS (SELF-Reporting Form)

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This questionnaire asks you to describe your leadership and management style.

1. Behaviors

You are asked to indicate how often each of the items below is true of you. Please use the following scale in answering each item.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Occasionally Sometimes Often Always

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

Be discriminating! Your results will be more helpful if you think about each item and distinguish the things that you really do all the time from the things that you do seldom or never.

1. ____ Think very clearly and logically.

2. ____ Show high levels of support and concern for others.

3. ____ Have exceptional ability to mobilize people and resources to get things done.

4. ____ Inspire others to do their best.

5. ____ Strongly emphasize careful planning and clear time lines.

6. ____ Build trust through open and collaborative relationships.

7. ____ Am a very skillful and shrewd negotiator.

8. ____ Am highly charismatic.

9. ____ Approach problems through logical analysis and careful thinking.

10. ____ Show high sensitivity and concern for others' needs and feelings.

Continued on the reverse side of this page...
11. __ Am unusually persuasive and influential.

12. __ Am able to be an inspiration to others.

13. __ Develop and implement clear, logical policies and procedures.

14. __ Foster high levels of participation and involvement in decisions.

15. __ Anticipate and deal adroitly with organizational conflict.

16. __ Am highly imaginative and creative.

17. __ Approach problems with facts and logic.

18. __ Am consistently helpful and responsive to others.

19. __ Am very effective in getting support from people with influence and power.

20. __ Communicate a strong and challenging sense of vision and mission.

21. __ Set specific, measurable goals and hold people accountable for results.

22. __ Listen well and am unusually receptive to other people's ideas and input.

23. __ Am politically very sensitive and skillful.

24. __ See beyond current realities to generate exciting new opportunities.

25. __ Have extraordinary attention to detail.

26. __ Give personal recognition for work well done.

27. __ Develop alliances to build a strong base of support.

28. __ Generate loyalty and enthusiasm.

29. __ Strongly believe in clear structure and a chain of command.

30. __ Am a highly participative manager.

31. __ Succeed in the face of conflict and opposition.

32. __ Serve as an influential model of organizational aspirations and values.

Continued on next page...
II. Leadership Style

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

1. My strongest skills are:
   _____ a. Analytic skills
   _____ b. Interpersonal skills
   _____ c. Political skills
   _____ d. Ability to excite and motivate

2. The best way to describe me is:
   _____ a. Technical expert
   _____ b. Good listener
   _____ c. Skilled negotiator
   _____ d. Inspirational leader

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:
   _____ a. Make good decisions
   _____ b. Coach and develop people
   _____ c. Build strong alliances and a power base
   _____ d. Energize and inspire others

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:
   _____ a. Attention to detail
   _____ b. Concern for people
   _____ c. Ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition
   _____ d. Charisma.

Continued on next page...
5. My most important leadership trait is:

   ____ a. Clear, logical thinking
   ____ b. Caring and support for others
   ____ c. Toughness and aggressiveness
   ____ d. Imagination and creativity

6. I am best described as:

   ____ a. An analyst
   ____ b. A humanist
   .   c. A politician
   ____ d. A visionary

III. Overall rating

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

1. Overall effectiveness as a manager.

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<th>5</th>
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   Bottom 20%  | Middle 20%  | Top 20%  |

2. Overall effectiveness as a leader.

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</table>
   Bottom 20%  | Middle 20%  | Top 20%  |

IV. Demographics

1. How many years have you been in your current job? ____

2. How many total years of experience do you have as a manager? ______

3. Did you have a female role model who was a superintendent of schools before you took your first position as a superintendent? Yes _____ No ____

4. How many total years have you been a superintendent in NJ, either in this district or another? ____
5. Is this your first superintendency? Yes ____ No ____

6. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent? ______

7. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes __ No ____

8. Did you first become a superintendent in the same district where you were employed? Yes __ No ____

9. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? ______

10. What was the official title of your position prior to this experience? ______

11. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? ______

12. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? ______

13. Please describe the context of your current district: Urban __ Suburban __ Rural ___

14. Please identify the size of your district:
   a. under 1000 students ___ b. 1000-2000 students ___ c. 2000-5000 students _____
   d. 5000 - 10,000 students ____ e. over 10,000 students ______

15. Which of the following best describes your district: K-8 ____ K-12 ____ Regional ______

16. What is your district factor grouping? ______

17. In which county is your district located? (See groupings below)
   ____Group A: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, Salem
   ____Group B: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset
   ____Group C: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, Warren

18. Which of the following best describes your age range? A. 29 years and under ______
   b. 30 to 39 ________ c. 40 to 49 ________ d. 50 to 59 ________ e. 60+ ______

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please return in the self-addressed stamped envelope within one week.
Appendix B

Validity and Reliability
Validity and Reliability

Structural Frame (Section 1)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All items .920

Human Resource Frame (Section 1)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All items .931

Political Frame (Section 1)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All Items .913

Symbolic Frame (Section 1)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All Items .931

Structural Frame (Section 2 – Forced Choice)
Internal Consistency
Coefficient Alpha All Items .841

Human Resource Frame (Section 2 – Forced Choice)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All Items .843

Political Frame (Section 2 – Forced Choice)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All Items .799

Symbolic Frame (Section 2 - Forced Choice)
Internal Consistency Data
Coefficient Alpha All Items .842
Appendix C

In-Depth Semistructured Interview Questions
Interview Questions: In-Depth SemiStructured

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? ________

2. Is this your first superintendency? ________

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent? ________

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes ___ No ______

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? Yes ___ No ___

6. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience?

7. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? ________

8. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? ________

9. Please describe the context of your current district:

   Urban _____ Suburban _____ or Rural _______

10. Please describe the size of your district:

    under 1000 students ________ 1000-2000 students ________

    2000 and 5000 students_______ 5000-10,000 students_______

    over 10,000 students _________

11. Please identify your district as one of the following:

    K-8___, K-12_____, or regional _________
12. What is your district factor grouping? 

13. In which county is your district located? 

14. What best describes your age range?
   a. 29 and under 
   b. 30 to 39 
   c. 40 to 49 
   d. 50 to 59 
   e. 60 + 

The following description of Bolman and Deal’s Four Frame Theory was read to each interviewee prior to asking the questions of the semi-structured interview. Each woman superintendent understood the concepts of the metaphors. One had heard Dr. Deal speak about the frames at a recent AASA conference. None, however, had read the book itself.

Description of the Four Frames

Bolman and Deal are best-selling authors of a book on organizational theory entitled *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership* (2003). They view organizations through the following metaphors: factories, families, jungles and theaters or temples.

To help you understand the metaphors a bit better, here are some examples of how the metaphors are being used:

1) ‘factories’ suggest that the work of schools as an organization is similar to a well-oiled machine that can be adjusted through structures to operate smoothly and efficiently;
2) ‘families’ suggest that the work of an organization is primarily grounded in people and that the human resource is the most important resource;
3) ‘jungles’ represent the notion that the work of the leader relies most heavily on a power-play or political interplay in which building coalitions and leveraging power with stakeholders is critical; and

4) ‘theaters’ suggest that in order to motivate individuals in an organization, leaders must work through symbolism, metaphor and tradition.

I will now ask you questions related to your leadership styles categorized by each of the four frames.

Questions about Structure: Factories

15. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring?

16. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work?

Questions about Human Resources: Families

17. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district?

18. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board?

19. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents?

Questions about Power: Jungles

20. What is your definition of power?

21. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district?

22. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you?
23. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change?

24. How do you control the balance of resources in your system?

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

25. What are the most important symbols in your school system?

26. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system?

27. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work?

28. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why?

Other questions related to the purposes of this research:

29. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? Describe one briefly and how this individual may have affected your career.

30. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district?

31. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender?

32. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent?

33. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey?
34. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in?

35. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the twenty-first century?

36. In your best judgment, do you believe that women in New Jersey have broken the 'glass ceiling' in the public school systems of the state? Revised to state the following:

37. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the 'glass ceiling' as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey?

Closing Question:

38. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn't?
Appendix D

Interview Transcripts
Interview Transcript – Salem --Rural -- Denise

Date: March 12, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? 19 years

2. Is this your first superintendency? Yes

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent?

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes I have, but I also have tenure -- real tenure. There are very few left. As a matter of fact, I think I was the last superintendent in New Jersey to get it because the law went into effect August 14th, and I got tenure on August 1st.

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? Yes, I did.

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? Master's Degree

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience? Vice-Principal

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 6 years

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? 8 years

10. Please describe the context of your current district: Rural

11. Please describe the size of your district: under 1000 students

12. Please identify your district as one of the following: Actually, it is a PreK
to 8 – just one building. I have a principal.

13. What is your district factor grouping? A

14. In which county is your district located? Salem


Questions about Structure: Factory Frame

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. What kind of administrative structures? I can’t even think of an administrative structure. Well, the line and staff chart certainly does. You know, we follow that as far as the chain of command and that type of thing. We also have site-based management which I think would be a form of a structure where we have a committee that is very important. It does make a lot of decisions prior to going to the Board of Education. On that committee is four parents, one board member, two administrators, myself, and the principal and three teachers, and every major decision funnels through that particular committee prior to going to the Board such as the pupil performance objectives, and the technology plan, and the revision to the discipline code and that type of thing. Other than that I really can’t think of any of structure that we use. That is the major structure. Probably, we rely more on that than on the line and staff. Although the fact that you brought that to mind I know that we do follow that because during negotiations one thing that was brought up that the teachers wanted to us, I know would not comply with our line and staff chart. So we just reviewed that. I think those are the main structures.
17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring?

No, we haven’t done any restructuring.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work? Oh, my gosh! I wish I had like a list here. Well, the business administrator and I because we are a small school district, we just work hand and hand with everything. I mean, I turn to her for advice and she turns to me. I really even wouldn’t say there was a structure there. With the board, I think because I’ve been the superintendent here for so long, I do have a lot of control and power and authority which sometimes the teachers do not like because you know they would like to complain about things and want to go directly to the board. Well, the Board understands the chain of command and how that would be ineffective for the running of the school district. So they do not listen to them. So, you know, in turn, they don’t go to them. The Board itself, we do have committees; however, the committees I rely on most would be my personnel committee. I select only one candidate and the Board would -- just so that they would know who the person is -- interview the candidate. I select the policy committee and they review the policies. Let’s see what other committees we have. I think I am having difficulty just because and it may be interesting for your study and maybe it won’t be with this but I have so much power and authority here. I run the show. You know what I mean. I love it. The Board doesn’t bother me. They let me do my job. There is absolutely no micro management at all. And for a small school, that is because I know that most of my colleagues, especially if they have been there only one or two years, I find that sometimes that’s who Boards hires -- they hire people that they think they can micromanage.
Questions about Human Resources: Family Frame

19. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district? Well, it is the most valuable resource that you have. You know, if the teaching staff itself is not working properly, then the whole system just breaks down. So we do a lot here to maintain, let's say, the human resources. We believe in spending a lot of money on professional development. We have consultants which some of the larger districts do not have that actually go into the classrooms. We have just spent about 8 years revising our literacy program with in-classroom consultants who come in and observe and give the teachers suggestions. It has nothing to do with the evaluation process. So, we value the improvement of the human resources that we have here and you know, making sure that they are happy and that they have all the materials that they need. I mean that's the most important. The teaching staff and then, of course, the support staff underlying them to support their function as a teacher.

20. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board? Well, I think the number one thing is that you are honest. I find many superintendents get themselves in trouble because they try to hide problems that they think the organization is having. You know they want to tell their Board members that there isn't anything wrong. I have never done that with my Board. I think that is why I have been successful for so nineteen years. I am honest with them even if I think something is a potential problem, I inform of them of that. So, I am honest, and I'm very capable. I think that if you have someone who is honest and still not capable, it still isn't going to work. I have taken this particular district from the bottom of the barrel in test scores to the top of the county and
for an A district factor group; we are also a governor’s school of excellence. I think that they see the honesty and that I am capable. For the most part, because I worked with some of them for many years, you know, they’re my friends. I don’t know that all superintendents can say that. I don’t know whether that’s the right thing or not, but you know, because you know I have worked with them for so long. I can’t say that I’m friends with all of them. You know, I’ve had many different boards but there are several board members that have been with me the entire time.

21. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? How do I repair?

Administrators: So it would be like— I really haven’t experienced problems with administrators because I only have the business administrator and the principal. So, in all those years I really haven’t—I mean, there have been times when I felt that they have not done the right thing. Or they have a recommendation on their evaluation and so forth. I’m just honest with them about it, and also offer them suggestions as far as how they can improve. That is one of the keys when you are working with anybody. Just to tell them that they have done something wrong that doesn’t do any good at all. You have to offer them suggestions on how to improve. So, I never really experienced a failing or problem relationship with administrators. With faculty—are you talking about faculty amongst themselves or faculty with me? Well, I just had a problem today and I didn’t do a very good job with it. You know, I thought I was solving the problem. I think that’s where I went wrong was that I talked to both factions separately instead of together and when in fact I created a problem is worse than the one that had started. So, I think my answer to that question is that you have to have all the people involved and whatever the problem
may be and to sit down and talk it out-- find out what the perceptions are because when I
was talking with both of them you can have a room and an administrator and four people
and they all leave the meeting and think that something different was said. Usually I
don't solve problems that way and I am thinking about it, I am thinking, why in the world
did I do that? When people are having problems and I normally sit the person down
unless the person doesn't want me to. And I have a lot of --I think that being a woman
and my husband is an administrator as well and he does not get the people coming to
them with problems as they do to me. And he is really closer to them as the principal, you
know, than I am as the superintendent. I just think that they just complain more to
women. Well, they love him! They love him, because he doesn't make them do what
they are supposed to do. But, I think the answer to that is what I try to do when there are
problems amongst the faculty is to sit down with them --perhaps separately to begin
with-- to find out what the perceptions are for them and ultimately, sit down with
everybody and discuss it with them. Sometimes the problems do work themselves out.
Sometimes just the somebody coming to me and telling me the problem and giving them
some advice and sometimes just that does work and just them, talking about it makes the
think about it and resolve the problem themselves. I think that it has a lot to do with being
open and being able to listen to what they are trying to say. As far as the parents, believe
me in all the years I have been here, I have had so many problems with parents, bussing
and that sort of thing. And there are some things that you can resolve and they are some
things that-- that you cannot. I am fortunate to know that the Board will support me in my
decisions I think that some administrators make different types of decisions because
they think that parent or whoever will go to the Board and the Board will not support
them. I do not have that particular concern because I know the Board will support me. I try as best as I can to explain to the parent why the rule is in place or why their child had to be disciplined. So, I think with parents it is more of trying to explain to them why something occurred. Because most of the time the problems you have with parents that is what it is related to you know something like the attendance policy or the discipline policy or a bus stop issue or something of that concern. So I think that it is just sitting down with them and trying to explain and sometimes they don’t understand, but I always look at it as my job as trying to resolve the problems before they go to the Board. I don’t have many problems that go to the Board of Education. If I did, I would feel I wasn’t doing a very good job.

Questions about Power: Jungles

22. What is your definition of power? My definition of power is having the control--having the authority to make the decisions. I think that’s it.

23. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? Well, I may think that I seek the input of other, but I know that—that probably is not the perception of me. I think that -- I think that a lot of the staff thinks that it’s ‘my way or the high way.’ And I don’t see that—you know, I try to see that but I don’t see that. I feel like I seek input. If I do have a major decision, I do try to seek input from others. For instance, I serve on the pupil assistance committee, too, not as the chair person but as a member. I am only a member of the school improvement so my vote only counts as one, and the School Improvement Team brought up the idea of having an early morning organizational homeroom where we could put students in there
and we would pay a staff member there so when I had money in the demonstrably effective program fund. How would you like to organize it? On things like that I am always seeking input on procedures and process and those types of things. Curricular decisions, I mean, the teachers select if they are getting a new program and things of that nature. But I know that that's how they feel. They think that it is 'my way or the highway.' I am not quite sure where they got that idea. I don't see myself that way. And I don't win every time. For instance, when we were doing the last revision of the discipline code and the principal at that time wanted to get rid of -- and we have a 40 page discipline code it is very, very strict -- and he wanted to get rid all of the verbal warnings. You know there is a progression to for every single offense that's there and I didn't want to get rid of the verbal and I think that is something that the parents like. Before the child goes home with a referral for an internal suspension or something and I lost. So, all of the verbal warnings in the discipline code went. So, you know, I am only like one vote on those major issues and all of the objectives and the discipline code. And we have a mandatory uniform policy here which I thought was a great idea but I wasn't the initiator of it here. The school nurse and the principal, you know they wanted to see it come into effect. We've had mandatory uniforms for six years. No, we are not an Abbott district. We are an A district factor group. We were actually a part of the Bacon Case where we tried to get the Abbott funding. The only school district that came out of that case successful was the Salem School District. We were in that case, but we didn't win because our test scores were so high. It doesn't make sense, does it?

24. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? Well, I think the School Improvement Team for one – can that be a coalition? The school improvement team went
into effect after there was an office of civil rights investigation here when I was still the vice principal and that particular group was put into effect after that to give the parents the feel, you know, that they have a say in the organization here and that particular group has really served me well because anytime -- you know, the technology plan-- you have to have a group to approve it. The early childhood plan and others. So, I use that group for every single decision that has to go before the Board. So that is --and it gives me -- you know, when the people say, well, you know this is your decision. Oh No-- this was developed by the School Improvement Team which consists of da-da-da-da-da da-da. That has been the most helpful to me. Well, as far as running the school, the Pupil Assistance Committee does a lot of good to me personally. Is that what you are asking me? So, I would say the Pupil Assistance Committee as well because through the Pupil Assistance Committee I have been able to drastically reduce the number of child study team referrals. We used to have like 25% classified and now we have 10%. Pupil Assistance Committee-- I guess that's really about it. The teacher's association certainly doesn't help in any way.

25. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? Well, the teachers' association, but I think it's because of the president. He's very much into NJEA. I think he is a negotiator for other school districts. I think he really wants to create a name for himself and he wants to go higher in the organization. So, he just tries out, you know, anything he can on the teachers here. Other than that, the teacher association itself has never really been -- in 19 years that I have been the superintendent, I think I have only had 3 or 4 grievances. You know, I really look go through the contract and I understand it and I know all of the little innuendos and everything there, and i have been
a part of so many negotiations that I know the history to it. I am able to avoid many of those things. You know, I could say, too, the Board of Education for the previous one. -- only because they worked so well together, and they do support me. I know the research on that shows that the best you can hope is that they don’t hurt you. But, I think the Board-- they really help me only because -- well, they don’t really help me in my job -- but they believe that I do a good job, and they give me a lot of affirmation on that. You know, I’ve had outstanding evaluations for 19 years and I mean, you really look forward to that. And they say that, too. Like, when we are at a meeting or something like that they’re always saying that they think they have a really good superintendent and so forth. So, not that that helps me in my job per se, but it helps be come back everyday with you know with the inspiration to know that people who function as my boss collectively, like what I’m doing. I would say those three and I think that the teachers’ association is the only one that is resistant.

25. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? I guess in a larger district that would be a lot more difficult because you are divvying up resources between schools. I don’t really have that problem. The teachers all get their -- they have to put in for whatever supplies that they want and those types of things. Only if I go over a certain amount do I start deleting from the teachers. I never really had a problem with that, I would say you put in $1000 but the average is 300 so could you cut your supplies by a couple hundred dollars. You know, we follow the five-year curriculum plan so people know that during this year they’re going to get new text books and so forth. They all have equal access to all of the technology equipment. I can’t really think of a problem with that. You do it through discussion. You know so that they understand how you are
dividing up the resources. It is not really a problem. I can see it in larger school districts. And I have heard it from my colleagues where especially if it is really a larger school district and one school may be a Title I school and the other school that is not and the Title I school seems to get more. I really don’t have that problem here with a one school-district. I have 360 students.

Questions about Symbolism: Theater Frame

26. What are the most important symbols in your school system? Well, I am not sure if this is a symbol or not. I guess one would be the mission statement. We do have a mission statement. Does that serve as a symbol? Okay, we actually review that periodically. It was developed by the School Improvement Team through input from the community. And we received a lot of input on that. We take it out and use it whenever we are making budgetary considerations and those types of things -- so that’s a very important symbol here. Good grief! What other symbols could you have? Can’t even think of another symbol. We have a mascot-- I was thinking about that --to tell you the truth, I am not sure if that would have that much of an effect. I mean, they use it and for like sports and things like that but the sports here are run by the rural league. They’re not run by the school. So, I wouldn’t say that that would have that much of an effect. I could be wrong. Maybe the people might come screaming at me and string me up by the nearest pole. But I can’t see that having --I mean the mission statement means more I think to people here than the wildcat. I cannot think of any other symbols.

27. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Anytime there is a budgetary decision and when we are making our public
hearing, the first thing that we go over is the mission statement. We use the mission statement and the School Improvement Team when we are developing the Comprehensive School Survey. We really use it for everything. That and the alignment with the goals of the school district. It is really the foundation for all of the decisions.

28. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Well, I think the number one thing is modeling. If you have an administrator who doesn’t do that, then I think everybody who works under you doesn’t feel that they have to do it either. I think that the number one thing is to model that yourself to show that the work really matters. To remind them also that you know, that what they do really matters. This is really, really important work. You know, to remind them of that almost, you know, on a daily basis or a weekly basis—you’re making a difference. You’re doing a good job. I try to whenever somebody does anything that is even little bit more than they are supposed to; I write little notes or a letter for the personnel file. So, I continually try to thank them for doing a good job even if it is really not considered to be a part of their regular job. You know, sometimes we get too busy and forget to do that. These are the kind of things that go a long way. Also being a person -- trying to remember that everybody has problems — you know, personal problems and trying to-- you know, trying to give people a little bit of leeway for that. I have very, very high expectations and sometimes forget that everybody is not a workaholic you know, like I am. So, I try to put those things in perspective, but I think that being a role model for them and praising what they do -- not just saying thank you, but really like in written form to let them know they’re appreciated and you are going above and beyond to tell them, you know, that they are doing a good job.
29. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why? Which of those four --the factory, the family, the jungle, and the theater? Well, my own perception is, I think the family because you know, that is what it is all about --the people. If you ask them, they would probably say the jungle. (ha, ha, ha) But I --you know, I think it is the family.

30. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? Describe one briefly and how this individual may have affected your career? Oh, no --ha, ha --I don't think that --there was a role model and but not a mentor and was not a female.

31. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district. Oh, my gosh!—you're talking 19 years ago! Weww! Not really. Let's see. I really can't think of a defining moment.

32. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender. Oh, my gosh, yes! There's -- You mean anything at work. Oh parents, I mean, I have seen it. When I went from the vice-principal to the superintendent. -- Now we have a principal. Back then it was a vice principal. We have since changed the title. I was how parents when I was vice principal would come into my office non-stop, and would relate to superintendent and would not stop complaining. When it was a man they don't complain as much they don't do it as much. Now they don't do it to me now that I have established myself now and they know that I am not going to change my mind to discipline. I saw such a difference with the way people act between disciplinary measures with me as a female than with a male. I've seen-- I've seen differences just with things that I have seen that they tell me with my husband and
with the principal too and especially with the men. The men will not complain in a sense to the male principal and they will come in, and I have this one who will come in and like tattle tales. I don’t think -- I know he doesn’t -- I think that they feel that with a man that that is not macho or something like that. He will come in and tattle tales on people and like, you know, people are leaving early or something like. I think that there are huge differences in the way people react to the female, but I think that there is something to do with the personality of the superintendent, too, but not just having to do with gender. But also when I am with colleagues because there aren’t very many female superintendents, of course, I’ve seen how the suggestions of females are not treated the same way as the suggestions from the males. I have actually had times where I have suggested something, and you know, something that is pooh-poohed and then ten minutes later a man will say the same thing and then -- ooo!!! -- what a good idea! I am like amazed. I would always say -- and now I am very aggressive -- well maybe not 19 years ago, but now I am -- and I will say -- hey, I just said that ten minutes ago -- what’s going on? -- it’s just kind of like -- they don’t even react to it.

33. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? You are not giving me a choice??? Oh sure—sure-- okay I was hesitating because I thought you were going to say this, this -- well, because I think that I did a really good job. And as a matter of fact when I was here and the other superintendent who was here before me -- I think that they started to see that I did a better job here than the superintendent and I wasn’t trying to -- he actually got another job some place else and that was not what I was trying to do. But, I just found that I am a workaholic and a perfectionist and sometimes this can be a detriment. I am not saying that this is healthy
either. But, you know, I just make sure that everything is there. I started to do things that they had never seen before. I mean I brought the computers in and I was giving them computer generated discipline reports. I was coming to all the functions. That was the type of person that they wanted as the superintendent. I think it was the work that I did. The fact that they saw that a female could be as aggressive and handle herself as well as a male could. And that meant something here in Salem County because you know, there is still-- when I first came, I am sure you are not going to believe this -- but, it is true that the township committee when they first came in to meet with me-- now these are like three men in their seventies with guns and wearing suspenders and you know what I mean. And they actually said to me that they didn’t understand why I needed a salary anyway. Doesn’t my husband work? Yes, that’s Salem County for you. I think that it is even harder for women in the rural counties in particular because we don’t have many professional people at all, and for women to be professionals here—is just, you know, it just doesn’t happen as much.

34. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey? I think that there are broad differences stemming from the size of the school district. I think that superintendents whether they may be male or female are -- their experiences are just so much different in the larger school districts than in the smaller school districts. I really don’t have anything to relate to women per se. Female Superintendents in New Jersey -- I am not sure what to say about that. I think that there are such wide differences between the superintendents in a larger school district and the superintendents in the smaller school districts because we really have to do everything. I am the curriculum person and so forth. I think I guess could say that in with all schools, I
think it is more difficult for the females to prove themselves. You know, that they are
going to do a good job. I think it is more difficult for females to get hired. I mean, right
off the bat, you’re at a deficiency. And you know, you are going for an interview and you
have to really prove yourself and that you can handle yourself as a well as a male.
35. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your
leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that
particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? Well, I am not sure -
-well I will give you mine and you can tell me if it’s okay. It wasn’t an instantaneous
thing. But, we were facing a problem where we were retaining about 25% of our
kindergarten students, and it was becoming, you know, a real issue here because children
were coming from low socio-economic backgrounds and they were coming really not
ready for school. And at that point we did not have a pre-school. So at the end of
kindergarten, teachers wanted to retain them. All the research on retention is not the best
ting for their children. We embarked on a study; it took us for over a year and a half. I
worked with not only all the kindergarten teachers and but also all the first grade teachers
because it affected them as well. As a result of the study, we actually decided to
implement multi-age education as a remedy for the increase in retention. We
implemented the multiage education in first and second grade. There are no traditional
first and second grades here and that was with the understanding that in kindergarten
there would be no retention. That probably was about 8 years ago, and it has been so
successful that when we did implement the pre-k, that is a multiage program as well, you
know, the prek and k together. And the retention that was about 25% and probably now
you can only retain in the end of the second year in the primary program and at most we
only get one and sometimes not even that. It was really a crisis because you can’t retain 25% of your students and I really couldn’t say “You can’t retain them any more,” and without giving them any kind of a solution. They would just retain them at the end of first grade. We had standardized tests previously. To tell you the truth, I really don’t know what really caused the increase. We might have had some staff changes there. It had been occurring for like 3 or 4 years. We never went into why it occurred. We only went into what the potential solution could be, and we really understood why it was occurring because they really weren’t ready to move into the traditional first grade but changing it to the multi-age setting you know, it changed everything. Is that a very good example? What frame would that be? I think that would probably be more structure because you are using a structure there to study, to revise, to change. I mean my first instinct was maybe the family, but we were not just sitting around shooting the breeze. I think I guess it would be factory. It is definitely not the jungle, and it definitely was not the theater either.

36. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the twenty-first century? I know that in Salem County the female superintendents have decreased. We are down to 2. At one point, we used to have 5 or 6. I think that the females that are there, are meeting the challenge very well. To tell you the truth, while I am thinking about it, I am hard pressed to think about any female in administration that is not doing a good job. I find it very easy to find males who are not doing a good job. But the females that I have come into contact with and heard speak and I’ve been colleagues with that I have come in contact with and served on committees with, I think that they are meeting the challenge very well. I just wish there were more of them.
37. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey? How about that? You mean, will it continue to rise???? Well, I think it will continue to rise, I think that this might just be-- I am not sure what to think – ha. Ha. The rural counties-- it is just so different-- you are up against such a wall here when it comes to women leaders. I think that they have more ability to, you know, work with committees and so forth but they are just not regarded the same as males. I mean, I hope to see it increase. There are so many females in education when you look at the number of the teachers that are there. Almost all of the teachers I have are females -- some male teachers but almost all are female, and yet only the males are thinking about going into administration. I do not have one female here who is a teacher who is thinking going into administration. There is no one that -- I have teachers who are going for master’s degrees but they are getting Master’s Degrees in literacy or elementary education or technology. No one has ever expressed a desire to be an administrator. They are going to -- We have always had a principal that is a man. The business administrator is a female.

38. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn’t? I think you covered it pretty well. I can’t think of any. These are pretty difficult questions. I had trouble with the symbols -- ha, ha -- oh my God, I hope the questions get easier. You know, it is the end of the day – it’s testing week -- and we have the technology plan, and these were difficult questions – I couldn’t think of any symbols. And I will say this, I would not want to work in a Haddonfield --believe me -- The parents that are here are very poor, but they also appreciate everything that we do for their children and they certainly do not
think that they know more than I do about education... And having some colleagues in
other places – dear God – everybody who walks through their door thinks they know
more about education -- In some of these other things, I have never ever had one
complaint about the education their children receive here.
Interview Transcript – Hunterdon - Rural - Amy

Date: March 15, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? 8 years

2. Is this your first superintendency? No

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent? One other school district

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes, but I am retiring on August 1st. My contract was renewed two years ago to run up to November 2008, but I am retiring in a couple of months.

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? Yes.

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? Master’s Degree and I was in my first year of my doctoral program -- Nova Southeastern University.

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience? Middle School Principal.

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 9 years and two months

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? I had 10 years -- 6 as a principal and 4 as an assistant principal at both the elementary and high school level.

10. Please describe the context of your current district: We are rural.
11. Please describe the size of your district: under 1000 – 655 students

12. Please identify your district as one of the following: K-8

13. What is your district factor grouping? GH

14. In which county is your district located? Hunterdon


Questions about Structure: Factories

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. Oh man, I am not sure how to answer this because I’m not really sure if I understand how I am supposed to answer it. Since I only have 3 administrators who help me run the school district, I really rely on them. I have two principals and a director of special ed. So, you know, among the four of us— we participate in the running of — we collaboratively run the district for the most part. I have a business administrator, but I don’t consider her an administrator as far as the running of the district. She runs the business office. As far as the personnel aspects and the school issues, there is not a lot of interaction there. It’s me and the principals, really.

17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring? Yeah, I would say this past summer we instituted this additional position which is director of special ed and that has been a very positive -- positive change. In the past the special ed department was run part time by the elementary principals. And you know, I have been here for almost four years, and in the first couple years, I realized that the
principal really does not have the kind of time and energy to run the special ed
department with all its rules and regulations, and things and complexities within that
department. So, I restructured that department, and we really thing that it’s a much better
situation for the district. So, it’s been positive.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your
work. I think that the um-- we have two head custodians. We have a head custodian in
each school to help with the basics of the schools. So I think that is part of the structure
that I think is important. And, I think that the internal structure that the principals have set
up is very important. Each school is set up to have teams so they have team meetings
with the principal where the principals and the grade level teams can talk and converse
you know, weekly on issues and things going on in the school, and I think that structure
is extremely important. The teams are composed of teachers.

Questions about Human Resources: Families

18. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district? Absolutely --
positively the most important part, in my opinion of a school district, is the ability is to
maximize the positives -- the assets of the human beings and to develop human beings to
function at the best of their abilities, whether it be adults and children. And that’s
teachers, aides, that goes to parents, administrators, everybody. It is a business that
depends on the effective coordination and communication between human beings.

19. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board?
Ha, ha, ha. You develop and maintain relationships with members of your Board by
whatever you can --having an open and honest line of communication with them. And I
try to be -- I try to be as informative as I can about what's going on in the district
sometimes to a fault, I think. But I think that for me, my style is such that I would rather
be open and honest and let everyone know pretty much what's going on rather than have
it be a surprise. I rather not have a breakdown. If the Board members think that you
haven't told them because you are trying to keep it some kind of secret that way. So, I try
to be open and honest with them. We have a committee structure so that lends itself to
regular communication whether it be 3 or 4 Board members every week. We have one
formal Board meeting a month. And we spend time with that and we have a very
respectful and collegial relationship. We also have at least once a year a retreat and where
we are able to sit down and have a more relaxed atmosphere and talk about issues and
plans for the following year for the district. We have a 9 member board. Since I have
been here we have done it at various times. Actually we have never actually done it in the
summer. We have either done it the fall or the winter. I don't have a reason for that. It
just happens.

20. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among
the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? It is all the same. It's the same.
You are confronting the issue in a respectful way. And being a good listener and making
sure that you have clarified what the issue is. By talking eye to eye, face to face about
what the concerns are and trying to reach some consensus and some agreement on where
things are going to go. Human beings are such that you are never going to have 100%
agreement on 100% of the topics. But if you are open and honest and truthful with one
another, then you can respect that there will be differences from time to time, and I don't
handle this any differently with anyone. I don't know of any other way to do this.
Questions about Power: Jungle

21. What is your definition of power? What is my definition of power? Power is the ability to make things happen they way you want them to happen and the control of human beings in that they do in order to get to the end.

22. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? I view my methods of executing power as — um, I don’t consider myself a person who relies on power to get things done. So, I don’t think I use methods of power to accomplish things. It’s really not part of my repertoire of administrative or personal characteristics. It has never been a place that I’ve been comfortable in functioning.

23. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? I would say the Board is important. The PTA is important and the teachers’ association. Those are the three most important units in our district.

24. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? The teachers’ association. Quite ironic actually because it is not what they expound, but it’s been my experience.

25. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? By prioritizing what’s important and then, you know, basically making a list — whether it be a written list or a list of things that you have identified within the structure of your organization that are important down to not so important. Not that anything is not important — You have to prioritize so that is how you balance the resources because most of the time especially in our district and in many small districts, you really feel the pinch when it comes time to budget because of the tax structures in New Jersey. The prioritization becomes extremely
important because you must make decisions of one thing over another because you know, you only have so much money because in the H, I and J, most of that money comes from taxpayers’ dollars. We have to be very careful how we use it and we have make sure that we keep the district functioning at a high level and at an acceptable level to provide the best education for children.

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

26. What are the most important symbols in your school system? What are the most symbols in the school system? Can you give me like an example? I think, let’s see --the two school buildings I think are extremely important symbols in our school system. The community holds these two buildings in the highest of, you know, value in their community. They are the community center of our town. They are where our cub scouts meet and our girl scouts meet. Where our town committee and all our township committees -- all of those meetings occur. All our evening and our recreational and childhood activities meet. Our schools and the names of our schools are really important to our community because they are symbols of who they are and where they are. The one is named after a community member who lived in the community for 100 years and donated many acres of land in order to build a school building on his own land. And then the other building is named for the town of Alexandria so that is their identification of who they are and where they are and that is very important to them.

27. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Well, all of our activities are held in our schools from, you know, community activities to school activities and because of that, the level of comfort that parents have in our schools is very high. And so, I think that the success of the school system is partly
due to the fact that parents and community members feel such a strong bond with the schools, and it really has created a positive working relationship with all the entities that come in and out and support the school system.

28. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Well, you do the best you can to affirm good things that people do. You know, informally or formally. Informally would be, you know, a simple note over e-mail or in the mailbox. Formally, some kind of thank-you letter. Every year we have an employee’s years of service award. Employees get a little reward depending on the number of years, for their number of years of service. So, you reward them; you thank them. You try on a regular basis – to let them know, even if it is the smallest thing -- something positive that they have done because everybody responds to positive reinforcement. But, really when you get down to brass tacks, it is extremely important to motivate. It is extremely difficult to motivate a person. I believe that a lot of that motivation has to come from within. You can quickly tell if someone is intrinsically motivated or not to do their best.

29. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why? If I had to choose one, I think it would be family.

30. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? Describe one briefly and how this individual may have affected your career? No -- except when I got to be an assistant principal. Up to that point, there were really no mentors for me. There weren’t many female administrators in my school district at the time that I went through the ranks. But when I became an assistant principal, the Board did acquire a female assistant superintendent who I was very grateful for. She sort of took me under her wing and you know welcomed
me to the club so to speak. Paid some attention to me and gave me some advice which I really appreciated. And I think that really left an indelible mark on me because I vowed that I would do my best throughout the rest of my career to try to reach out to my fellow female espousing administrators or administrators to be supportive and positive and try to be helpful.

31. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district. Ha ha ha. Oh boy, I think that probably – you know probably something that just sort of stands out in my mind as we’re speaking would be -- I took over my first superintendency – I started in January of 1997, and I probably was sort of like the deer in the headlights for a while But the defining moment my first year was when I had to get up and give that speech at my high school graduation and affirm the requirements of the high school graduating class and give my speech. And you know, I think that was a pretty defining moment in my realizing that, oh my God, I am the big maha here. I am the one who they are looking at and listening to and looking up to and it sort of hits you square between the eyes sometimes. This is probably one that is on my mind right now. There were probably others that happened before that, but this is what stands out in my mind.

32. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender? Oh, well in my first superintendency, every piece of resistance that I had in my central office came from the men in my central office. I had two assistant superintendents who were so covert and unloyal, it was scary. They were very small-minded, very jealous human beings, and they did whatever they could to sabotage my progress. But by the same token since I was the first female superintendent
of the district, I did get resistance, too, even from women, parents and even teachers alike, I think, because they weren't used to having a woman in charge, and it was something very new to them. So, I don't think that they really understood how to deal with a woman in charge. They weren't used to a woman. It was easier for me because I had been in that district for 20 some odd years and I had gotten to know so many people so that I knew many people from all walks of life in the educational spectrum that I had developed very positive relationships. I actually -- I really didn't have that much resistant up to that point. But when I got that job, those couple of people in my central office were really very terrible, very terrible. They just couldn't handle it -- they just couldn't deal with it. They were openly -- to my face and behind my back. There just wasn't any loyalty there. It was really sort of sad. They still did their work but then they did whatever they could at any turn to sabotage. Both of them wanted the job themselves, but they didn't have the courage to apply for it. So of course, it's easy to criticize. I haven't felt too much resistance here. A lot of that was really dealing with was my first superintendency. The first one was tough because you have a learning curve. Doesn't matter if you are an assistant superintendent or a principal. The superintendency is a very different job. Regardless of how much you think you know about it, the superintendency, until you sit in that chair, you really don't know exactly what it is like. That's with any job. Because I have so much more experience with all of that, it made me so much more aware of the dynamic. I haven't experienced much of it at all here where I am now. It is a wonderfully pleasant atmosphere. But, I think that in dealing with that stress and in dealing with those negatives, it made me a better person. It made me more aware. It made me stronger. Even though it wasn't very nice when it was happening, it made me a better
and stronger person and administrator and a better superintendent. The former setting was in an urban setting, an Abbott school district -- large Abbott school district.

33. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? I think I am a driven person. I think I have natural abilities. I think I have always had natural leadership abilities and tendencies. I played sports when I was a kid -- high school and college. I became a leader among my peers, and I was motivated to become a teacher because my teachers were such positive role models. And then when I became a teacher, I became a leader among my teacher peers. To me, it was a natural progression to seek leadership in a larger context. And so I just followed the plan. It wasn’t really ambition that took me there. It was more my tendency of being a leader. So I just followed that path.

34. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey? Most of the women I have met who are superintendents enjoy their jobs and have the same complaints and stresses that my male counterparts have. I find that I have come into contact with many more female superintendents who are superintendents of K-8 districts that than the larger high school or regional districts. Most of those seem to say they like the smaller community type atmosphere. Others of course, some of them were driven by making more money. That was unfortunately never my desire really to become rich. You know, it is the quality of life and my quality of my feeling good about making a difference that drove me to where I am. I found them to really enjoy their jobs. Sometime I guess maybe the internalize things more than men do. But that’s just the way. Men are from Mars and women are from Venus. We really deal with things differently. We deal with things on more on an emotional level. Sometimes that is a benefit to us and
sometimes that is a liability to us in the situation. We take things to heart. Sometimes we are too tough on ourselves. Men seem to be able to get it in and get it out and move on. Sometimes I wish I had more of those qualities because I wouldn’t put myself through the ringer too much.

35. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? The frames are those four things? Okay. I think that—what was the last one again, the theater? I think that first of all, one of the first things that I dealt with was a problem that I think I dealt with to the best that anyone could have dealt with it—was when I became superintendent—into my first superintendency, I was faced with having to cut $3 million out of my school budget in order to make ends meet. I knew that along with many other things, that had to be reduced from the budget and a large part of what had to go was staff. So we developed a schedule to reduce staff. The way I handled it was I met with each person individually to talk to them about it. I didn’t send a letter. I didn’t send someone else to do it. I felt that it was on my shoulders and I needed to try to tell them as truthfully and honestly with as much heart as I could what was about to happen. I met with each one. It was very difficult. It took probably about a week and a half because I had about 75 people that I had to meet with. You know, we got through it—we got through it. And probably the family—I think the family frame— I think the family frame was probably the one—the philosophy I sort of leaned on because it was more like me than any other frame. I went to what I felt was going to be the most comfortable for me. And it was easier for the other side to deal with. I tried to make it a very personal thing. I wanted to be honest and up
front with the people and let them know what the deal was. It was hard. Probably the hardest part of any job is when you have to tell somebody is that, you know, that they are not going to have a job next year whether it is performance or for, you know, some other issue – it’s hard --for me anyway.

36. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the 21st century? I think that we’re going—we’re going to be the reason why New Jersey succeeds and moves forward and you know, rises to the top. I think that we are a motivated group of people. I think that are priorities where they need to be. We care about kids and we care about human beings. As I said earlier in the interview, education is all about helping all levels of human beings be the best they can be. I think we go into this for the right reasons for the most part. I think that the status of women in New Jersey is good. I see this only getting better, because I see more and more women joining the ranks. And that’s nice to see.

37. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey? You know, I just don’t think it’s there anymore. I think we have broken through. I think that we have done that by proving our worth. I know presently in this district that the two finalists for my job are both women. There were several men in the mix, but they were gone. I think there is a lot of faith in women and leadership and that comes from the people before us and it comes from us establishing and maintaining that faith. Hence, when you have applicants for other jobs, whereas ten or fifteen years ago, districts may have shied away from women, now I think for the most part it is a level playing field. I
think that for the most part in education, with the superintendency, when you are looking for a job, it is much more level of a playing field than in the corporate world. It may not be completely level yet, but pretty level.

Closing Question:

38. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn’t? I think that-- I don’t know if it’s a question but, I think that one of things that we have a problem with and I think it is because we have a lack of roles models I suppose, but we have a problem advocating for ourselves and that is also the support for one another, but it goes hand in hand. I think that we need to if there were, I don’t know, I don’t think there is a course that you can take. I think we need more practice and we need more support in advocating for ourselves and you know, patting ourselves on the back for the job that we do. I don’t think we do that as women. I think men have no problem doing that all. They are always patting one another on the back and are advocating for each other. They know how to advocate and speak affirmatively. I think women have a tendency to question that more so than not. I don’t know if there is any kind of a question about that. That would be my final statement. It all goes hand in hand. I think the questions were good. I wish you best of luck.
Interview Transcript – Bergen- Suburban- Andrea

Date: February 6, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? 11 years

2. Is this your first superintendency? No - a prior to superintendency in New York

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent? Two before this -- this is my third superintendency

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? They've all been renewed.

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? No

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? I had my Doctorate.

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience? Assistant Superintendent (CI/Personnel/Special Education/ Supervision/ Shared between Two Districts)

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 6 years

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? 14 years

10. Please describe the context of your current district: Suburban

11. Please describe the size of your district: c. 2000 and 5000 students

12. Please identify your district as one of the following: Regional

13. What is your district factor grouping? DFG is I

14. In which county is your district located? Bergen

Questions about Structure: Factories

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. Well, certainly the line and staff chart does influence the way we operate. I believe very strongly in strong high school principals, in strong building principals -- of course we have high schools here -- so everything I do involves the principals. They get support from supervisors and directors. But I don’t work with the supervisors and directors without the principals knowing what’s going on and without their input. ... Um... In term of it running like ... um... and obviously the Board is critical. I work very closely with the Board and keep them actively involved in goal setting and monitoring. I spend a lot of time working with the staff about the importance of the role of the Board in setting goals and educating the Board to understand what is happening in the day-to-day running of the schools and how that works toward meeting the organization’s goals. I also spend a lot of time working with the staff so that they understand that if they expect the Board to be involved in goal setting and not in the every day running of the school, then we have to demonstrate to them that we run the schools efficiently and effectively. And that means not getting things on Board agendas at the last minute or asking for extensions from board calendars because something was not done on time. Um, Clearly, I believe that parents are partners in the school and although they are not on the organizational chart, I value their input and seek it and reflect on that a lot. I don’t believe that change is nearly as uh or I guess I should say that change in schools is much, much more complicated in schools than in factories or the private sector for a variety of reasons and so in that way I
don't think we are like factories at all. I think that there are business practices that schools can modify and use to the benefit of the school's organizations. And um obviously some parts of the school systems are like a factory in the sense of the business office function, the benefits function, the payroll function, the purchasing function. Those things I think are pretty similar. Except that obviously we don't get our money from profits. We get our money from raising taxes, and therefore, we need the public support to continue to get that levy.

17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring? Um, we haven't really restructured. We have assigned some additional duties to the supervisors. And we have restructured our Business Office, and I would say that has had a positive impact, and the additional duties of the supervisors, I also think has had a positive impact. We have expanded the Superintendent's Cabinet to include a supervisor representative which I think that has been very helpful to improve communication. And, the last thing although again not restructured is that we have re-emphasized the role of the Cabinet meetings to go back and share this information with the staff so that they can understand and buy into the direction the district is headed and so they can have an understanding why decisions are made the way they are made.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work? Yeah, the work with the president of the teachers' union and his role as a teacher leader and my work with him as co-leaders of an organization in many ways.

Questions about Human Resources: Families

19. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district?
Well, we have a lot of them... Um... In the Board and the community is very supportive of the development of those human resources and compensation of the people which is a real blessing. The culture of how people are treated here in this district is one of extreme respect and is shown in variety of ways including compensation packages, the process and product of negotiations, the instructional materials and supplies and other kinds of support that we give people here and I think that that makes an incredible difference in the culture as compared to other places I have where the labor relations are not as nearly as positive and teachers and leadership is not as respected as here.

20. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board?
Time -- ha ha -- Um Time, conversation, um letting them know what my thoughts are behind recommendations, letting them know of potential for developing conflicts and what I plan to do about them. Letting them know about resistance that I might foresee to meeting some of our goals and what we are going to do about it. And the analogy that I have used with this board which is high – performing and very well-respected district and is the importance of continuous improvement for any organization and that organizations either improve or decline. They don’t stay stagnant. The importance of being a Board and not being 9 different people and nobody will where the Board is going then or 2 different or 3 different factions. I have done a lot of work with that. We have an annual retreat every year I share with them mid-year or around mid-year progress on the goals. We have presentations from different parts of the leadership team throughout the year on progress about their individual goals where the Board gets a written report. Then there is first in their packet and then there is a follow up. I send home to the board every week to the Board every week whether we have a meeting or not. I am very conscious about not
allowing anybody to ask them to make decisions unless they had time at least a meeting
to think about it. For example, if someone has not done their homework and they want
the Board to make a decision on a change, I just don’t allow it. Without giving them time
to ask questions and think about it. I just don’t allow. I work very hard in school keeping
controversy away from them and from parents. When we have had controversy, we work
with committee members of the Board at which I am there with them to work with
representatives committees of either municipalities or parents so that discussions go on
out of the public board meeting. Then there are a number of people who can talk freely
and report back to the entire board. When there are things for School Boards and put on
by the NJ School Boards, I go with my Board, not just to the annual workshops, but also
to the county dinners with them, even if it is only one member or two members who go to
county meetings that I go because that is valuable time. Um and I would say that pretty
does it much depending who is the Board Presidents I might touch base with them every
week. Right now, the last two sets of Board president we have been very corporate and I
know that they have very busy jobs, and I know that they really don’t want to hear from
me unless there is a problem. We don’t talk each week to say how are things going. They
assume that what they hear from the community and what they will hear about in the
grocery store. Because I have been here for six years and the district is being run well.
They will get a phone call or an email so that they will know what is going on. So that
when they leave work and stop in the grocery store, they already know what is going on.
If there is an accident at one of the schools and there is an ambulance at one of the
schools and of course, that helps tremendously. I would say if there is an issue or there is
a concern, I will pick up the phone the Board members or ask them to come in and talk.
20. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? Between different adults in the organization? I believe very strongly that people have to talk to each other. And although I will listen to someone complaining about someone else, or the way they work, I will offer to be part of the discussion, but I always say to people, “If I have a problem with you, I can’t solve it by talking about you. I have to talk to you. And you are going to have to do that to.” So let’s talk about we are going to do that. I will talk with you to support you or facilitate it.

Questions about Power: Jungle Frame

21. What is your definition of power? My definition of power. The ability to get things done through both formal and informal leadership positions.

22. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? Well, obviously a lot of my power is positional. But, for the most part, I don’t consciously use it. I use power that I hope comes from the respect people have from knowing me, and my abilities and my knowledge and from the thoughtfulness and kindness and respect that I hope that I exhibit to other people throughout the organization and therefore I expect that it would be returned to me also.

23. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? I would say the Board. Um certainly, administrators, the parent input, and the president of the teachers’ association.
24. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? There isn’t one coalition at this point. There was one and that isn’t here anymore. Quite frankly, there was a lot of resistance when I came but those people have moved on. I would say... a select few supervisors.

25. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? Through the goals setting process and our priorities. That we set that way through that process.

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

26. What are the most important symbols in your school system? I would say...visibility of leadership and relationships of people in fact at all levels to students and their parents. That’s what people value the most here which results—which plays a part in the very high level of student achievement. The relationships they have with people in the organization.

27. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Well, it is reiterated in a variety of ways. Like we um talk about our achievements and the achievement of our students whether it’s on the athletic field or in the fine arts or clearly academically. We always talk about the hard work of our staff or the relationship of teachers of staff and the support and the key role of the parents and the key role of the community played in their support of the district in the last 53 years which is how old the district is. So, it is a constant message that comes out all the time. Of course, we do have PTOS and they meet regularly and when we did not have PTO in one of the buildings, and the principal was reluctant to have one for whatever -- because he didn’t see it as important, when we hired a new principal we made it clear to that person
knew that they had to have an active PTO and they needed to get it started in some form in the first and needed to get it active and running no later than the second year of their tenure.

28. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Well, the culture here does motivate people. By that I mean the culture among parents is of one of very high expectations of the staff and what the staff will deliver for their students, our students, their children. And there is just no question about that and the teachers feel that all the time. So that is a very strong motivator and the strongest motivator in my mind. I reflect back to other leadership roles in other kinds districts whether it is the high school principal or the superintendent or assistant superintendent. It is much more difficult to motivate if you are the only driving force and for you can align external forces. So that is clearly a benefit I think as a superintendent in being in a high demanding, high performing school district. When I believe a teacher’s performance or a staff member’s performance is lacking, for the most part it is just a conversation about the expectations of the community and what I think the person is not meeting those expectations and what I think, I perceive will happen in terms of the impact on them is usually all that it takes.

29. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why? I would have to say it is a combination. I don’t think that there really isn’t there is one predominant. I really do think there is a balance. And I really think that works the best.

30. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? Describe one briefly and how this individual may have affected your career. No. Ha ha. The only role model that I had and that was
quite a distance was hearing Joan Raymond speak who was the Superintendent of the Yonkers City School District I would say back in-- she was there in the late 70s or early 80s, and I heard her speak about becoming superintendent and this was the advice that she gave then. If you were a woman and you wanted to become a superintendent, these are the things that you needed to do. You needed to get experience in an urban setting, you needed to be a high school principal and you needed to have a doctorate from a top notch school and I did all three. Other than that ... She was quite a lady. She was one of the first women superintendents in a rough and tumble place. Other than that, my mentors have all been men. There just weren't any. I did have the opportunity to work for a woman superintendent for two years. I really thought her style was just, um ... I just thought she was very in sensitive and self-centered although she didn't see herself that way. And um-- I just saw many men who were compassionate, caring and collaborative, so I don't say she was ever a role model. 31. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district? .Well I would say that um. I would say it was when I worked with the Board President. We had an issue with two Board members who violated the Ethics Law and he asked me what I thought we should do. I thought he should meet with them before a Board meeting individually and I told him what I thought what he needed to say to them. And he did. It was very traumatic. There was crying and gnashing and some banging of books and all those kinds of things. One board member stormed out and later resigned and the other one later resigned. Um and um the Board was very supportive of the need to have these Ethics and not to have people gossiping behind my back and not doing end runs with other administrators and that we weren't going to tolerate these kinds of actions.
32. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender? Well, this isn’t going to be published anywhere. When I came to this district, the two principals and the business administrators had all been candidates for this job. And um they had all been with the district for at least 15 years. And I think that when they found out that the Board had hired a woman and then when they saw what I looked like, they clearly expected me to be chewed up and spit out. I mean there was no — just the way they acted. They didn’t expect me to last a year. And I think a large part of that was gender. I don’t have any proof of that.

33. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? Um... focus on the goal of becoming a superintendent and being career oriented and not place bound-- and the courage of my convictions.

34. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey? It appears to be pretty positive. I don’t think that the gender issue is as prominent as it used to be.

35. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? Well, the clearly the bottom line came down to a power issue — who had the power? Or was it going to be me or was it going to be the Board members who were having conversations with the principals about things they should not have been talking about. So bottom line it was a power struggle. There is no question about that. I relied largely on organizational structure and what we know about effective organization to share with the Board why these things couldn’t happen. At the same time I was most fortunate in that I had a very
skilled, very ethical Board President. I mean he was... He is still on the Board and he’s a
gem. And so his ethics and my relationship with him played a key ... it was a very
professional relationship. And he has a very busy law practice, and I had never and
haven’t since although he is no longer the Board President. I had never called him and
said I need you to be here for and I believe the fact I said look we needed to do thing him
to do this and this is what is happening in the organization and this is how I know. It is
not a card you can pull very often because I believe he would have lost respect for me as
a leader. I don’t think that family even played a role in that. The relationship did, but at a
professional level.

36. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the
twenty-first century? Well we just have to look at the number of women moving into the
superintendency and aspiring to a superintendency and I think that answers the questions.
At a state wide level, there is just large, large numbers of women. I mean I look at Bergen
County, I think I haven’t actually done numbers, but I think there are about 25%-30% of
the superintendent most of them I have to say though are in the elementary districts. Of
course we have more elementary districts than we do anything else here. There is only
one woman who is in a K-12 and only one woman in a regional high school district
which follows the national literature. Most woman superintendents are in the small and I
believe they are mostly in the small rural districts. But I think that is going to change, too.

37. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey
are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do
you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New
Jersey? I think the glass ceiling is pretty well broken. I really do. I think that there are
still perceptions that we have to deal with. Clearly and I do believe in five years I actually yelled at one person someone in my office once. I think a man could yell a lot more, and people would see that as a strong leader. I think that women have to be very careful about how they exercise strength and power. And I say that not just from my experience but also from my conversations with my husband who was a very highly regarded superintendent and a very successful one and over the years how he acted as a change agent. I don’t believe that many women could use that same style. Just from my experience, I could never … I still believe that an emotional man, by yelling and screaming that display of emotion from a man in education and in the private sector, too, I don’t know, for man, it is more accepted, it is showing strength. For a woman they would say that she lost her emotions. I think we have to be careful about that. Even the one time I yelled at somebody in my office and they heard it in the other office. It was very calculated I knew that I was going to yell at him and I knew that it was going to go through the walls and I was going to tell him to leave my office. I wasn’t going to listen to him. It was all very calculated. It wasn’t as if I started out calm, then got all worked up, and then lost my emotions. I think women do have to be very calculated about that.

Closing Question:

38. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn’t?

Um...I think you um no I don’t really think so. That’s good to hear. No, it was enjoyable and I look forward to reading your research.
Interview Transcript – Mercer – Suburban Michelle

Date: February 19, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? 13

2. Is this your first superintendency? No

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent? 2 districts I was a superintendent on a regular basis and then I had an additional year as an interim in South Brunswick.

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? No

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? Doctorate of Education -- Ed Admin.

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience? Business Administrator

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 7 years

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? 10

10. Please describe the context of your current district: Suburban

11. Please describe the size of your district: c. 2000 and 5000 students

12. Please identify your district as one of the following: K-12 Regional

13. What is your district factor grouping? DFG is 1

14. In which county is your district located? Mercer
15. What best describes your age range? D. 60 +

Questions about Structure: Factories

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. Well, certainly the line and staff chart is important. There is a governance structure as well that’s highly influential where you report to a Board of Governors-- Board members. You’re looking for additional structures or…? My work is probably influenced most by the governance structure. I report directly to the Board of Education where I report to a lay public of elected officials.

17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring? Yes, I have. I restructured our supervisors of instruction who were predominantly 6-12 assigned to a K-12 responsibility which I believe will improve the articulation of the curriculum and for financial reasons I eliminated vice principals at the elementary schools and placed the supervisors at various schools throughout the district to back up the principals needed which I think gives them a more and a heavier presence and more credibility with teachers. And I replaced a lead teacher who was in charge of staff development with a high powered principal who is bringing a great deal of professionalism and high expectations to that role.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work? Well, I mean, we are departmentalized. Well, there is an administrator; there is a principal in each building and an administrator in charge of each department. I rely
heavily on department heads and principals to conduct the routine day-to-day work in their areas of responsibility.

Questions about Human Resources: Families

19. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district? I have a head of Human Resources who’s a former teacher and building administrator. He is pretty much fully in charge of staffing, negotiating, bringing all personnel matters before the Board for approval. He reports directly to me. Uh. He handles grievances. He has a formal and an informal role. His informal role, he’s very close to the union president in terms of understanding how she thinks and acts. So, he is a good advisor to me when there are any union issues brewing. He also handles lot of small fires and puts them out, so that I don’t have to do that. He does not handle professional development although in some districts I think that’s another responsibility of the HR person. I have a separate department for that. He contributes in a major way to the development of the staff budget. And he also has -- one other very important thing he does is that he oversees the supervision and evaluation system to make sure that, to see that we are conducting not only the required numbers observations but they’re also done of with high quality. We recently revised our system linking it to Marzano’s work.

20. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board? I have a very close working relationship with the President and Vice President. They both are stay-at-home moms and have a lot of time during the day to touch base with me by phone or in person. I sit on every committee of the board and there are a number of them. So, I am actively involved in the committee work. I communicate weekly in writing with
a weekly update about any hot topics or anything I feel the Board needs to know. I e-mail them anything that comes up in between that I feel they need to know that’s urgent matter. Some of them drop in regularly to chat. Well, a lot of them don’t work. They are around a lot. I have a couple of retirees and I have some stay- at- home moms.

21. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? Mostly mediation I would say. They are classified the work that I do. I get called in to situations when they are usually far along toward disaster. So, I either host a meeting between the two parties. In some cases I have responsibility to investigate if there is a complaint against a staff member. Administrator to administrator -- I usually encourage them to work out their own differences. I don’t think I need to be their, their mother in that situation. But I have on occasion had meetings and tried to get issues resolved that they were unable to resolve between them.

Questions about Power: Jungles

22. What is your definition of power? Well, there is the authority that one has by nature of the job. Where there’s, you know, usually if the superintendent speaks, people listen. I guess every superintendent has power to make decisions that influence people positively or negatively. I try to be objective and fair and not misuse that power. But, certainly I reward people for good work. I let them know when I am not satisfied with their level of work. Power -- there is a lot of power in the superintendency. You can direct the work of your key administrators to shape the direction of a district. You can
control the budget if you want to which is an enormous influence on the work of the schools and the departments. You can decide to recommend or not recommend new programs, new clubs, new sports and ...that's big. It's huge, and there enormous amount of power that's available.

23. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? Um... well I try to make decisions based on what I think is best for the organization and for the students. And I don't like to use the power of the office. I like to use the professionalism and motivation of staff do to the right thing rather than to be ordered to do things. If you have the right people on board, you can do that. I involve other people in making key decisions. But, I wouldn't say that I involve-- I am not, I am not an extensive collaborator. I like to get things done. So, I will bring to the table just key staff that will help me make a good decision without wasting a lot of time and energy in meetings. I guess the example is making budget decisions. I have four key advisors that I use. Last year on that one matter, last year when we were trying to better inform the rank and file, I did have a representative committee working on budget for 6 to 8 months which included the union president. So, but once they were done what they could really do, I took it on that responsibility to update annually myself. I had the involvement in the first level, then once I felt they had done all I thought they could be useful doing, I dismissed that committee.

24. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? We have two foundations -- very hardworking and influential people. One is for recreation and fields and the other is for education. Clearly, when you say coalition, you mean an organized group. The principals and supervisors are organized as a union, and they are obviously
very supportive. And the head of that union is very influential in shaping the thinking of individuals and she has helped me out several times when we are trying to restructure, people get nervous. My key staff is probably my closest coalition, and I work with them on a regular basis. The principals, the building principals. (6) And PTO council. I can’t forget them. I meet with them monthly. They are very, very influential in shaping public opinion. And then there, I mean there is also the political. We have very active, three municipalities in the regional. I work more closely than I want to with the mayors. They don’t always agree. It’s definitely a coalition.

25. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change?

Teachers, I would say the teachers’ union is the most reluctant, I would say. They are still in denial about 1701. They don’t believe that we can’t continue doing business as usual. Parents can be resistant to change if they are losing something. They don’t like to lose any service or a program or they are losing something they had. They want things the same. Some board members are I would say less welcoming of change than others. That’s not a unified board in that area.

26. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? How do I control or balance? Um... Well, we have I have implemented just this year a per-pupil allotment for schools that is ratioed for higher amounts for the middle and high school. That’s the first time that has been done in many years. It was way out of balance. When I make cuts, I make cuts across all categories. We make sure to cut administration, secretaries when we cut teachers. We try to do it fairly and equitably. Schools, I try not to reduce the school budgets. When I was able to last year, I was able to because of a waiver that we had to add back some staff to the high school that was passed. What I am not able to manage is
special education because we have to pay whatever price it is. That’s difficult. It is beginning to really take away resources from regular ed. I guess the efforts …we have made efforts to lobby against some changes in laws that were unnecessary. Oh, there is one other thing -- class size. You know, I try to keep class size as similar as possible across the elementaries. One school because of its small size enjoys very favorable class sizes. So we are looking at alternative structures there, too so as to bring it into more alignment with the other three there is multiage grouping. There are two schools already have in place, so I wasn’t asking them to do something the others weren’t. And we are equitable. If one school eliminated field trips, they all did. So, we agreed about what cuts we were going to make. There are four elementary schools and one middle school.

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

27. What are the most important symbols in your school system? We have a mascot, the bulldog, and each of the schools has a mascot. It’s very well-known and frequently used. Our strategic plan -- that is not really a symbol – everybody knows our mission statement, it is frequently quoted. I updated it – not the mission. We updated strategies. It’s kind of funny, but we were trying to get rid of --which is the term “HoVal” and the colors – uh, the former high school principal did not like the color of the gold, a kind of a wake forest gold – gold and black, and he lightened the colors of the athletic uniforms to a softer gold and you would think they he was trying to kill school spirit. They are still talking about that. It was a powerful symbol. He did not like the term “HoVal” and it was on everybody’s sweat shirts, but he forced elimination of that term when he was there and when he left, it came back.
28. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Obviously, the mission drives our work and our strategic plan and when we make cuts, we try to make cuts don’t impact on the core values/mission of the district. The district very much has a good sense of school spirit. The principals dress up I think I mentioned that, as the mascot sometimes when they have parties at school. They have their costumes, yeah, that they can wear. The dog’s, the bulldog is a um a source of naming for various things such as the student newspaper, the parent electronic newsletter is called the “Dog Bite”. The middle school’s symbol is the wolf and the parents call their electronic bulletin the “Wolf Pack.” It is used. It is in the cheers. It is in the …prevalent in each of the schools. It’s on -- the symbols -- where we have renovated gyms, we put the symbol right in the floor.

29. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Ha ha! – that’s the eternal question – right? The district has a very high work ethic. I can’t take credit for it because it was there when I joined it. And I think, I mean, I believe that just modeling hard work and effort is probably all you need in setting a standard that others follow. There’s a little bit of ….What happens among administrators you end up with a competition of who can work the hardest. That’s the way it is. There’s uh--The teachers are the same. They are proud of their professional development and training. And, they do turnkey training for one another and one of our professional development plans after school courses they take. There is kind of a standard of teaching excellence in the school district that’s like South Brunswick in that way which is not the case everywhere. When you are hired here you are expected to be darn good. And if you don’t perform, you don’t stay.
30. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why? I guess it is probably the family because it is about relationships and support for a lot um ... parents are very connected to the schools. They are very supportive of the schools. There raise money for various programs. Teachers are well-connected to each other as a unit. The administrators are as well. They have professional learning communities. Even the union president is very professional, and she is an excellent teacher which is not usually who gets hired or appointed to the presidency. It is a caring environment. People take care of one another. They work together help other individuals with problems such as drug or alcohol abuse. And the expectation is that the building principal is going to be very connected to kids. When that doesn’t happen, we have to make a change.

31. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout your career as an administrator? I worked for Carol Choye in Princeton for six years. I am not sure that she was a mentor as much as a colleague. I think I probably... If I had to pick one, it would be Mary Lee Fitzgerald. I didn’t work closely with her, but I think she was a big influence. Well, she was... I met Mary Lee when she was a principal in East Windsor, and I was monitoring her district for the Mercer County Office of Education. She started NCEL and I was a part of that-- Northeast Coalition of Educational Leaders which is a women’s group. She was very active in early on in networking female administrators in New Jersey, and it expanded to the Northeast – it started in New Jersey. And I saw her as a highly successful, confident leader, and of course, she became Commissioner of Education. And she opened a non-profit organization that I worked for a couple of years. I didn’t see her so much as a personal mentor, more on the side of a role model – somebody that I looked up to and admired. There was also a woman in the
County Office that I was hired by Willa Cwik. And, Willa was a long time Dept of Education leader. She had been named Acting County Superintendent. She came out of what they called a lead ‘helping teaching’ in the county offices used to have and they were intended to support the public schools. They were experts in curriculum, experts in professional development. So, I didn’t work with her long, but in the year I worked with her, she was very supportive another good role model, highly professional. And, she also taught me about the department of ed workings and politics.

32. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district? Current district? I guess the defining moment. One I think would be doing our negotiations with the municipalities over the defeated budget. And, the Board really relied exclusively on me to tell them what we could and could not do with the various proposals that came our way.

33. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender? There was an outright gender bias in an interview I had for a superintendency when I was in another state. An older female board member made some kind of comment to the effect of “Honey, you’re so petite how can you possibly lead a school district?” or something like that. I don’t know where that was – gender bias, I don’t know that I have had a lot of gender bias over the years. There may have been some in the application for a job, but not after I had it. I never felt that, Maribeth. I never really felt that although I know a lot of people do, I never really felt that I was discriminated against because I was female. There are some board members who are initially, I think, are not as comfortable with a female superintendent and usually that’s women, unfortunately. That’s been a long time since I had that situation. I really think that is a thing of the past.
34. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? Combination of factors. You asked about mentors, mine was actually a male. My real mentor was a male, an assistant superintendent, when I was a teacher and department head. There was an Assistant Superintendent who encouraged me to go back to college and get my certificate. I also when I under his leadership, led the direction of the whole redesign of the English curriculum and that got me thirsty for curriculum work. Now the another factor there was an opportunity that opened up in three counties in New Jersey with the Thorough and Efficient the law was implemented and they had monitoring for compliance. There was a whole host of people who were to outfit the offices to do that work. I had 3 interviews in 3 different counties and I got 2 job offers out of that. So, that was my first quasi-administrative job. That gave me audience in a lot of different in districts. And that’s how I got my Princeton job which was a real administrative job. Because the Business Administrator was leaving and they knew my work and invited me to apply.

35. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey? Well, now there is … I will say there is some gender bias in this area. Women and for whatever reason are more prominent in small districts and elementary districts as superintendents and principals it’s the same, there are still I would say there is still unequal representation in the high school principalship. There are viewed more as elementary, small rural. You also see more women in curriculum department and professional development people then they are and maybe because they don’t pursue it, I don’t know. And I am not sure this answers the question. In working with female candidates, I find that they don’t have the same level of confidence in their ability to do
the job that male candidates do. And almost always you see a male candidate moving faster through the organization and quicker to the top, and women feel they have to have done everything successfully before they will tackle the superintendency. They will often say “I am not ready, I’m not prepared.” It is their own attitude about their experience rather than the reality. I also think they are trying to balance family life. They’re less inclined take on the jobs that have all the evening and week-end work.

36. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? Let’s see. I guess the restructuring. Oh no… I know which one. Let’s see, which frame it’s in. My battle with the Religious Right in West Morris as we implemented the strategic plan was probably last minute when we were recommending the strategic plan was probably the greatest test. Everyone thought it was wonderful and would fly right through. We had a group came forward was saying that our program was outcome based and values based and evil and not their values. They came out in full force. It got people terrified what we were doing through propaganda. We had a meeting of a hundred angry citizens the night we were supposed to adopt the plan. So we had to –we had to um – I really worked very closely with the Board President on this as a strategy. We reopened the planning process to include representatives of the opponents. So we brought in a fair number of conservative representatives who hadn’t been involved the first time around by choice. We hadn’t excluded them. They hadn’t come forward and volunteered. They did significantly change some of strategies, I would say, it took a lot of the more progressive ideas out of the plan but at least we got buy in to the first round we were able to pass of
the plan. There wasn’t anything significant that we lost, but it was more I think framing things in words that they were more comfortable with. Now, which frame is it in? That’s a good question. It is not organizational. It is probably -- probably the jungle! We are looking at political power and that was when the Christian Coalition, there was a national movement to take over local boards and politics and government for the religious right leaders to take public office and influence and that ended up with a full review our family life education. I had three religious right members on a nine member board. There was a period of years when they gained seats on boards and municipalities. And could influence local decisions and they did! And I battled with this one really extreme right on many issues. He was into preaching abstinence and that’s what he wanted -- abstinence education and nothing else! He peppered me with literature. I changed my e-mail address so he couldn’t get to me. Ha ha…

37. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the twenty-first century? I think they are doing great. We do have … well there are not as many as I would like to see. We have women are in very prominent places. We have a Commissioner of Education who is female. Some of our most prestigious school districts are now led by women. When I look at the leadership of my staff, it is probably half female. The union leader is a female. I think we are well-represented and doing a great job.

38. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey? We have been ahead in NJ for a long time. I am convinced that it is a ceiling that
is there because of our... it is a result of our own lack of effort to take more positions. And for the reasons I said before. I think that some don’t have the same level of confidence that men do -- probably because we are reared that way. Probably because of responsibilities -- they have other lives to lead. But, I don’t think there is a bias against women in New Jersey any longer. -- not in any huge amount at least. I want to go back to the one before. One other thing I want to add -- I think women have added a high level of professionalism to New Jersey’s educational leaders. There is less of a ‘good old boy’ and a good deal less deal- making and it is what it is -- women don’t play the games in general that men used to play and I don’t think the current males aren’t doing that either after the SEI report that was so embarrassing to many of us. It was a State Investigation -- they did a report in fact that South Brunswick was listed in the report. It was on buyouts and deals that Boards had made with superintendents. Ron Larkin had one of the biggest buy out packages. Back room deals that people were making – I think there are far fewer buyouts for females. And their contracts are much simpler. They don’t skip to go play golf with vendors. That’s what I am talking about.

Closing Question:

39. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn’t? I don’t think so. That was pretty comprehensive. I wish I had read the book before the interview. It sounds fascinating.
Interview Transcript – Camden—Urban--Marie

Date: February 16, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another?  8 years

2. Is this your first superintendency?  Yes

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent?  N/A

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed?  Yes.

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed?  No

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency?  Doctorate of Educational Leadership.

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience?  I was the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for a large regional high school district. It was in lower Camden County Regional.

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 15 years

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent?  9 years

10. Please describe the context of your current district:  Urban  Abbott very low socio-economic  DFG B – we’ve been identified as one of the poorest districts in New Jersey.

11. Please describe the size of your district:  c. 2000 and 5000 students
12. Please identify your district as one of the following: Pre-K – 12

13. What is your district factor grouping? DFG is A

14. In which county is your district located? Camden


Questions about Structure: Factories

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work?
For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. I believe that you should have a very clear organizational chart for efficiency, which we do here, but I also believe strongly that you have to create an administrative team that works together so that in their individual schools they follow that model and create a staff team that works together. But I have found in this position that the most effective way to be is to be extremely clear and I often have to back up and lose time and lose efficiency when I am not clear in my purpose, and clear in the result that I am looking for and clear with how we’re going to get there, with discussion but that when we leave a meeting or when we leave some sort of gathering we all need to be clear on the mission. I find that to be the most important thing to do.

17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring?
Well, I restructured when I first arrived 8 years ago. I felt that it was very loose here as to who was doing what, no school spoke to each other, they hardly knew each other. There was no common goal was a lot of restructuring done at that time. In the sense of—they had 7 supervisors at the high school and the high school is only a little over 900. There
was no purpose to that. That was a waste of time. People were wasting a great deal of
time. I restructured to bring in a curriculum director which they didn’t have which you
needed to have. But, I restructured in stages. A lot of help and assistance in the very
beginning such as a director of elementary and a director of secondary. An instructional
supervisor for special ed -- department chairs taking on a little bit more responsibility. I
did a lot of the things because we are a smaller district and there is no Assistant
Superintendent here. So, I originally wrote the grants and then I brought in somebody to
be a PR and a grant person after about four years. So I restructured, but I restructured in
stages. As people opted to leave when they saw there was going to be more
accountability. They said I made a lot of changes quickly but I really didn’t but I had a
plan about where I wanted to get to as I saw as the people and positions were being
moved around how best to get there. Now we are more sleek because I have the best
people in the positions. And sometimes the budget dictates what you can do and what you
can’t do. Some people were wearing two or three hats and you find out that doesn’t work
because they are overloaded, you restructure again. Basically, we are structured to get the
most effectiveness with the least amount of people. And it took me a while to get there.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your
work? I think that the school administrative structure is important. I think the principal
has to --well the principal has to be able to manage his or her building and has to feel
somewhat in control. And I have always been a superintendent who sets a clear standard,
but will let the principal call a lot of the shots. If you want strong people to run your
buildings, and if you want to give them the responsibility, you also have to give them the
power. So we have what is called a general administrators’ group which is the principals
and the central office people, we meet at least once a month to discuss common issues
and I found that to be very, very helpful in creating that whole team spirit and It is a very
structured, a very clear pecking order so to speak that keeps good people in positions
because I do give them power. However, they all know that they better have their ducks
in a row. They better have followed policy or I will overrule them. It depends on the
issues that you have. For instance, if you have a lot of serious discipline issues, then you
really have to concentrate-- when I got here that was a huge issue—discipline. People
were not coming to the high school. They were going to private schools etc. because they
said that the high school was not under control. So that was an issue that I had to tackle
right away. So I brought in strong administrators. But I If you don’t support them, like if
you know people would call and they would say so and so gave my kid 5 days
suspension, and I said really, well that’s unfortunate that you called me --now it’s 10. So
they stopped those calls right away. Unless the administrator made a mistake, I would
always hear it out. Once you support your administrators, they know that they have
control of the building, they create more presence and they step up to the plate. Those
structures are important. But I always support my administrators. And the principals
have to be in charge of their assistant principals. I am not into this going around.

Anybody can come to me. I have an open – door policy. But, I never make a decision or
have a favorite in that sense of the word. If an assistant principal comes to me with an
issue, I will talk to the principal about it if I think it is a serious issue. More than likely,
unless I see egregious behavior-- more than likely will back the principal. Because if you
are not going to do that, then you are not going to have well run buildings. Now, I have
had principals who are very poor. But then I tackle that myself. And say you are not
doing this, you are not doing that. I am very clear on my action plan. I am very clear as to the expectation. I have never gone around to the assistant. I have respected that and I think that you undermine your strong people when you do that. So, there is a very clear delineation of how things should be. But I encourage the principals to have a very strong team support in their buildings. Personalities are hard to work with. You have to kind of see what people need and see where you are going without stepping on their toes and their egos but at the same time making sure that they are clear on what that the expectation is. It is hard doing that when you are a woman. For the most part in a secondary district, men are the high school principals, and men are the middle school principals, in a tough urban it is almost always men are so there is that whole ego thing going on. . You have to get your way and get your point across with out stepping on their egos. I think I get to that by being strong myself by supporting them but also by being reasonable. And I do know that they may not like me, but they do respect me. I also know that I don’t ask anybody to do anything that I wouldn’t do. I don’t make other people do more work than I do. So, I get very few complaints about the work load. When I first got here I went in and observed classes. I went in and did all the types of things that I asked them to do... And that went a long way for me. Was I busy, yeah? Was I working long hours, yeah? Because I was willing to do that -- no matter what had to be done, so they know that I am doing just as much. So the complaining stops -- we are all a team. And if a principal is not sure about a teacher’s performance, I will go in and observe. I will be one of the ones that observes. So it’s -- as I have gone along and gotten key people in place and supported them, it’s less of an intensity for me on the ground floor, then I tackle the State and do more things that I am supposed to do. There is a process. And you
have to start where the district is, know where they need to get to and then start to plan your strategy and be flexible — because a lot of times your strategy doesn’t work — or somebody who you thought was going to be with you, decides to move on, you have to have a game plan and plan A and plan B and then Plan C and not be discouraged by that. Just keep your focus. Most people will say I am fairly persistent. They are very clear on that children are first and instruction is first. It has taken me a while. But then they ask the same questions. If it is between what is good for the teacher or what is good for the kids, the answer will be the kids. And now the principals echo that. It takes a while. It takes a while to change the culture.

Questions about Human Resources: Families

19. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district? You know every district is unique and every community is unique. This district is one of the most unique communities I have ever been in. -- very, very closed community. They don’t want their children to leave the community to go to college. They don’t want their children to go away to college. I would say -- probably one of every four that goes away to college stays away. The other three come home by December. We worked very hard not to do that so we offer college courses here. We do summer things where they can go to community college where it is not really far away from home... We do lots of things like that a lot of uniqueness about that. They like to feel that camaraderie and community in their schools. That was a very difficult thing when I came here. I am the first superintendent that they ever hired outside of the system and I am the first woman that has ever been the superintendent in this city. So I had two strikes against me right away. I
remember when I first got here I heard from the Board members, the teachers were complaining because I didn’t know their names. Even though there were 450 of them and only one of me. I even used the yearbook and figure out who everybody was. They wanted me to know who they were related to. They were used to people coming who actually lived here, grew up here, who came up through the ranks and became their superintendent. Their father figure whatever that is. The Board knew that change needed to be made. Their scores were super low. We were really in the basement there. Whole school reform was coming. The current people didn’t know what to do with that. They didn’t want to address it. They were not strong in instruction and curriculum. A lot of changes needed to be made. There was a huge good old boys’ network here. The way they did interviews just -- I was aghast. They would ask any question they felt like and then they asked different questions of different people and then they would hire the person from the community who they wanted to. The board members would tell them who to hire. It was just unbelievable. But when you come in and you know that that is wrong you have to make changes. You are not real popular. My first year here when got a vote of no confident. Then the Board got up and made a vote of confidence for me. It was quite a night. It means that the union and the administrators got together at a public Board meeting and said they were giving you a vote of no confidence... And when the Board said well why, they didn’t any reasons. She doesn’t always agree with us... anyway --You need to have a tough skin it would have been disastrous. Eventually the people who weren’t going to do the work moved. I’ve been called aloof. I’ve been called -- I am not warm and fuzzy right away. – because you can’t be warm and fuzzy right away. I am not here to be your friend. I am here to improve education for their children. I do
think that the human factor is there -- Even though I do it behind the scenes. People have come to realize that after the fact. I am here to improve education for children. I am here to help fill people's needs. They have come to trust me. I am fair and consistent. As soon as you show favoritism, it is all over. Then nobody trusts you after that. People will come up to your standards as long as they view you as fair and consistent. I have an open-door policy. Anybody can come in and see me. They have to have somewhere to go if they feel they are being unjustly treated. And you just can't say that you just can't get to me you have to go to other people. No one could get in to see the superintendent but that all changed when I got here, and that all changed and people have learned to trust that approach. But because I have that approach and I get all the facts, they feel that they have been justly heard. So the human factor is very strong in this district. It is not like the suburbs where it is a little more professional end where things are all about results. Here it is all about whether you care about my child. Yes, I care, but do you understand that caring means that your child must come to school every day and prepare for their future. There are other things that we need to do to show we are caring. It has been a long haul that way. And I will admit, if you are in a secondary situation, you can't be as -- you can be nurturing, I don't mean that, but you have to have a little bit more of a tough skin if you are going to succeed and the men and the high school teachers -- they are a tougher lot -- you have to be a little bit less, I don't want to say, nurturing and but yeah a little bit more cut and dried. You have to appear strong -- if you don't appear strong, you're done. Especially as a woman, now they would call me -- let's see -- what were my names, I was too aggressive, I was the 'B' word. I don't know if I am allowed say that on your tape. But if I were a man, I was just being assertive and strong. If I am a woman, I am being
aggressive and a bitch. Yeah, but that’s okay I didn’t mind as long as they were doing what they needed to do. I was okay with that. Because of that I think that people realized that we weren’t getting anywhere may be we should really concentrate on instruction. I was never unfair about it. But my way in the human factor is to include everybody. I want to all of the school management teams they were called if you are familiar with the term from the Abbott, and we talked about instruction, we talked about what was best, we talked about the research -- things that they had never talked about before. It is your decision to do it. It took them a while to come around. These mandates are really coming from the state. And now when the kids started to do better, then they were very pleased. But I will never forget the fight I had with the teachers and administrators in the very beginning. When I would say, “This is what you need to do. The kids need to accomplish to this extent.” And they would say to me “This is only City … They are only City kids.” I remember saying I seem to care about your kids more than you care about your kids.

What is this all about? You know, I remember the union president after I heard this after the fact, standing up at a meeting and saying, “If she talks about those kids coming first one more time, I can’t stand that.” That just lets you know where they were coming from in the past. It was anything goes, what ever is convenient for us. Hand out the work sheets. They don’t do any lesson plans. It was amazing where they were. And, they were resentful that someone was coming in and saying “No, this is not okay and this is what we will do for the kids’. But we got over all that. Yes it is working. You don’t have to throw kids out if they don’t have a pencil, and you don’t have to classify half the class. You have to give them resources. We had a lot of professional development -- a lot of supports. If you take away the excuses, then they only have themselves to feel why things
aren’t going right. So, it’s been a lot of difficulty, but I think successful. And that’s the human factor. It is a lot like a factory. I am not super into the very nurturing. Secondary is a little different. And it is a business. It is a business. You have to make sure that you’re effective. That’s what you have to do nowadays -- especially with the whole Abbott thing and the funding and the taxpayers’ money. It needs to go to the kids.

20. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board?

Well, that is not an easy one. I have a wonderful board now -- it hasn’t always been so. I’ve always had a fractured board because there is a group of good old boys and there were the newer ones who really wanted change. We had a gentleman on the board who privatized the cafeteria when I came on board and because we were losing money hand over fist. It was a disaster.--not sanitary not clean a whole bunch. One of the board member’s mothers was the head of the food services. So, when we privatized, he hated me for that. She didn’t have to lose her job. She chose to leave. But she was under accountability then... she didn’t want it He was there to protect her job, but it didn’t work. There had been people on it – I guess I am outspoken -- I was assertive. And they are not used to assertive women. Oh, like it is whatever she says goes. People on the inside knew that was untrue. We discussed everything. I have been fortunate that over the years, more and more educated people have gotten on the board. And understand the wisdom of where everything is going. The Board pretty much ran everything before. Here – this is my brother hire him – here, this is my cousin—hire him. And I didn’t allow that. So there was some balking. Openly, they would say “Oh that’s a good thing, “but behind the scenes they would say. Listen, I want you to hire someone.” I would say, “I’m sorry -- not happening.” There was some contention there but always the majority was in favor of
change. Now, that doesn't always happen. But luckily I have had that. I am not a glad hander. I am a let's get to work and roll up your sleeves and get it done. I don't pry into people's private business. And I mean, some people are very good at that - They glad hand and everybody loves them. They are not a lot of substance and not much gets done. But they get hired. But that is not me. I am a worker. I tell it like it is. I am very organized. I don't put up with a lot even from Boards. So, sometimes it is a good thing and sometimes it is not such a good thing. It depends on where you are.

21. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? Well, the administrators - we were strained -- I tried to bring in some professional development to talk about the team approach and stuff like that. I thought it would work faster. It did not work faster. It kind of worked, but it worked more slowly. I gradually saw the team come start together as they began to develop trust in one another. So maybe it did work in hindsight. But, we were fractured. Part of the reason is because there is quite a mix of male and female. It used to be predominantly male. I hired a female BA and I hired a female principal which they weren't used to. I hired -- it is still predominantly men. But, my Director of Student Services-- she was being paid lower than a vice principal when I first got here. I restructured that -- Now she is right up there with the principals where she should be. There was resentment there. I made her a confidential employee because her union would not do that because she was a woman So. I took her out. There was a lot of things that the administrators did that wasn't right. I got rid of the instructional supervisors which didn't go over well. To mend it, all I did was I constantly support the educational program. Remain fair and consistent. Listen to what they have to say. And then give them all the
reasons why they needed to follow the vision and the goals and where we are going. I hire strong personalities because I wanted them to do a good job. So, it is not always easy. But I try to do is be reasonable with people. I try not to embarrass them in front of any kind of a group. But I will talk to them privately if things aren’t going well. As far as faculty goes—I tend to give this speech at the beginning of the year and talk to them. They all know that there’s always an open-door policy when somebody is really having a problem, they do come to me -- they don’t always want their union to know, but they will come to me and I will help them with the issues. If someone is having a problem, they will come to me. I will relax more and . I try to commend them as much as possible and I have the principals commend them as much. And it is just now the last two years that I can relax more and then really compliment the. When I would come to the building they would say, “Who’s getting fired?” And you don’t want that. The last two years, I that’s kind of hard too, I am not their friend. I am the superintendent and some of them I really like. You know, one of the things that I did to get close to them was to get the American History grant. We did get that. I attended it and I went on the trips with the faculty and that would be a way to get to know them and it worked very well. There was also a curriculum piece, where some one else would come and shows them that and rather than outsource that, I did it. I got up in front of the teachers and I showed that because that’s what I used to do because I was a curriculum person. And you know discussed with them and talked with then. And that went a long way and sitting on those school management teams did a lot. They could see the other side of me. I think that was a good move to try to say that I don’t mind doing that. Everybody has a different personality and I am extremely busy and I don’t have a lot of time for a lot of nonsense. But, I don’t know if it
is nonsense. Some people need it. I leave that up to the principals. But I think the faculty really needed to come together. And I will tell you what worked like a charm was when they saw that everybody was accountability. A lot of the people were like -- thank goodness. Because they were working hard and their next door neighbor wasn’t doing anything. There was no accountability. So, they might begrudge the fact and a lot of time some of the quieter ones but underneath that they saw that everybody has to work hard. And I think they really liked that. I am not sure that is politically correct to say that in their group, I am sure. But, now I think that after a few years they knew where I was coming from. And that was okay. They saw the money I got from the state. I went to court, I did all of the things that I needed to do to make sure they had what they needed. And they almost always comment on the fact that money seems to pour into their classrooms and all the money, all the money that I possibly can gets put into classrooms and professional development. None of them can deny that. We brought all the technology. They didn’t have technology. They didn’t have e-mail. They didn’t have anything here. Now they have SMART boards in almost every classroom--and training. I did that through the Abbott money. Everything went to the kids -- to the staff. I think that the professional development helped greatly. You know, we partnered with University of Penn and they would come in and mentor them on Penn literacy. They would come back and talk to them-- everything is about instruction-- instruction. We talked about instruction. I am willing to bring in subs and have them sit as a group and talk about instruction and all of that kind of stuff to move us forward --a lot of the kids, especially the younger ones who come here really feel that this is a good place to learn and grow.

We take all student teachers -- are a magnet school for Rutgers University. We are their
urban experience. We take student teachers from the university. We take tons of students teachers --which elevated the teachers. Being called a magnet school with the University come in and place their kids with them. Wow, I’ve got something to share. That is all my way of building self-efficacy and self-esteem.—you are a professional. I also brought in a dress code here which nearly killed them. They were dressing in spandex and t shirts. So I put in a dress code and then enforced that. but it made them reflect on what they looked like and they hated me, but that’s okay. They began to look more professional. I wanted to change the perception of this City. We were called River rats and they were just poor and the kids didn’t know much. When I came here, my co-workers at my last job said, ‘Oh, my God, you would have to wear leather and drive a Harley.” —Cause that was the image. We were 99% Caucasian. But we are fastly becoming Afro-American and Hispanic is fastly growing here because Camden is shutting down a lot of their housing and they are coming here. We are also cheap. Mostly low socio-economic there is a lot of easy renting and stuff like that. So, I am having to deal with that. This is an extremely prejudiced community. I brought in a bunch of programs on tolerance and that kind of stuff. We were twice the state average in dropout rate, too, when I came here. Now were are less than 1%. I started an alternative program there was a lot of things that I put in place for that, too. The whole idea was to get people to value their children. The whole idea is to get them to value their children and the children value themselves. But it takes time. You got to be persistent. You’ve got to be unrelenting in your goal.

Questions about Power: Jungles

22. What is your definition of power? Love it! I think power -- to me it makes me feel I can get things done. But you have to be very careful with power. Because, you know,
they say ‘Ultimate power really corrupts.’ And you know, you can get a sense of it is going to be that way because I said so. You really have to steer away from that. You have to constantly reflect—did I make that decision because it is in the best interest or did I make it because that’s the way I want it. I have to constantly remind myself. I want to get this done and get them done quickly. And I don’t like to waste time but I have seen the sense and the reasonableness and the need to sometimes back off. But sometimes it the principals say to me no we really don’t need to. I may think they are wrong. But I may say—okay, let’s try it your way. That has done a great deal to develop trust. And 9 times out of 10, they come back and say, I should have done it your way. But that doesn’t matter because we discussed it. It builds respect about what they thought. I will be doing that this year. I allowed some of the schools to cut some of their language arts time. I wanted 90 minutes, now it’s down to like 84-80. They have special assemblies and they cut time from reading. But that is going to drop because the scores are dropping. But I am having to go back. But I gave it a year to do it and now I have data and I can now say “It ain’t working.” Now we are going back to the 90 minutes and now you are going back you can’t use that for assemblies because the scores are going to drop.

23. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? Women are supposed to lead by consensus. That is acceptable to everybody—to men—to society, etc. Men are supposed to lead by dictatorship and that’s acceptable. I mix it because of where I am. And I also think that the bottom line is somebody’s got to make the decision. And you got to move on to the next thing. I try to get consensus, but I know I am never going to. On some things, I will spend a long time on because I want to get buy in. And some things you have to
determine don’t need a lot of time. You don’t have a lot of time to make a lot of
decisions. So, I say no this is the way it is going to be – but I never say because I said so-
I can list the reasons why. With some people, you need to be very, not dictatorial, but
very -- it needs to be this way and very clear that it is going to be that way. For other
people, you need to talk about it differently. They like to talk about it a little bit. And you
need to convince them. They need to feel that you value their opinion. Some people are
just whining because they want to whine... And that changes with the situation.. That
changes with the need. If there is a need to get something done quickly, or a safety issue
or something has to go to the State or court, whatever it happens to be. That will change
my style it will be more of a directive. But, women will not succeed if they are too
bossy—I don’t know the word I want, too dictatorial. Men can get away with that a little
bit more—they are almost respected for it. Women are resented for it. You have to be
strong but at the same time appear like you are getting consensus, and you are trying to
hear everybody out. That is just the way society is. If you are not aware of it, you are not
going to be successful. You can’t be too emotional. I never saw you cry. And if you cry,
you may know this as a principal. Then they think you are weak. You can’t be too
emotional. . It is a career, not brain surgery. Nobody is going to die. Sometimes people
get upset when they are getting attacked. You have to have a thicker skin. No, I think that
this is the best. Okay if you don’t like it – but, I am okay with that. Everybody gets
defensive sometimes especially when a lot of people are attacking you. You can’t help it.
So, you just have to realize that and move on.

27. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? It changes. Um, in the
beginning I don’t think I had any. I truly had no one who was – everybody -- .I was
making massive amounts of changes and had to under a state mandates, I mean, there was no choice -- but I was making them quickly. I was ruffling everyone’s feathers. I think that now that my coalition that is the strongest is obviously the administrators. And, that was not always case. It took me awhile and changes in the administration to get that...

The good old boys did not want any changes. They weren’t even doing the observations. They were having the teachers do them and then they were just signing them. So, we had to come along way from there. You know, you had to rattle their cages and that was a problem. There was a principal who refused to come to work when he found out that they hired a female. He said he would not return to work again. He was using doctors’ notes. I had to call him in and tell him, you know what, you’re done. You need to leave, you need to get a doctor’s note if you want to work till January and I will have you separately evaluated. I know you were dancing at your child’s wedding over the weekend. I know your back is fine. So, let’s come to a decision here. He had that kind of -- really, people who just didn’t want to work with you.. Since the union president retired, there has been a whole new feeling with the union... I don’t think that I’ve had one grievance all year. I used to get 3 a year. I used to get 3 a day. They were bogus. They just wanted to harass. And I went from that to none all year. So it’s time. If you are fair, and they trust that you will be fair. There is a perception that you are fair. There is really no problem. Sometimes people come to you and say there is going to be a problem-- Oh, well that’s fine, let’s work it out.

28. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? I would say
it remains the teachers. The teachers, but I think that is true everywhere. And it is always the high school more than anything else. That’s typical everywhere. They aren’t nurturing.

26. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? I tried to be fair to all the schools. We all try to sit down as a group and decide. You know, the principals themselves will come to you about an agreement. They see the value of each program we have. Well, I have sat down and some will say I want more computers; I haven’t had any new computers for 6 years and they will say, you know you’re right. We kind of come to consensus that way. I try to see that everyone gets what they need.

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

27. What are the most important symbols in your school system? I am not sure what you mean by symbols. People identify with — I mean, we have the mascot — the roaring lion — it is a symbol people rally around and I made them do calendars with cubs and then with a youthful lion and that kind of thing — anything I can play off there. By symbols, I don’t know if you mean. I can tell you some of the things that I did to make them made them feel better about themselves. For instance, when I got here the cheerleaders were a group of kids that were like -- this one woman was in charge and she just picked the girls she liked who tended not to be very athletic. And there wore these silly skirts with t shirts over them. They really didn’t look like real uniforms. This will never do so I made her follow the NJISSA rules and have try outs and then I bought them really nice uniforms -- that when Gloucester Catholic came to play us who had great uniforms -- ours were even better. And you know what -- They began to stand up straighter and they began to think
that they were better than everyone else. So I bought all new uniforms for the marching band and they looked wonderful. I got them a better teacher. I started a jazz band. Music is not really touted here -- athletics were and and I got a really good vocal teacher and the kids really swarm to him. Then there were musicals and then there were musicals of quality and now we do musicals. Those are really symbols of success. The new facilities were a symbol of success. We wanted to build a middle school and the NJSSCC ran out of money but we are still waiting. The state ran out of money but we are waiting to build the center until money ran out at the state. And a new early childhood center. We renovated the high school. So, we did a lot here until the money ran out at the State.

28. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Well, another thing we do here which we never did before I got here -- when I start a board meeting and they want to start with the superintendent’s report I start out with the mission statement and we also have it filmed and it plays over channel 19 -- The mission statement is always stated. People can almost recite it 'cause it is always stated. I think that gives people a sense of unity and a sense of where we are going. One of the things that I am very proud of is last year all the streets were jammed trying to get into the city on graduation night. And I didn’t know what was going on and the police told me later that this has become the single most important event in the city is graduation. And we do it in the football stands, and we only were having 250 students graduating. There were thousands of people were in the stands. Everybody feels that that is the event. People are graduating from families that never had a high school diploma. I didn’t even realize that. Now they can’t drop out unless they meet with me. We have a conversation the parents and the counselors. And the parents used to say 'My husband is a junk man.
It's okay for Bob to be a junk man. Who are you to tell us that we need an education? I kept persistently chipping away at that... Now it is March. Now they come. I have had no meetings this year about who wants to drop out the first thing out of the parents' mouth now, "I know we need a high school diploma." First thing they say. That is change from what we had before I am dropping out – I am not coming. I have gone to kids' houses and knocked on the door and said, come on you have to come to school. We had an ordinance passed when I got here that if you are out on the streets you will be picked up and brought to school or you would be fined. So I have done everything I can think of and a little bit more intense so that the symbol I guess is now education. We offer college course here. I had an aide say to me one time -- She came up to me at a meeting and gave me her card -- an instructional aide -- her name is Joanne and she's a little tough -- she' city tough -- She was actually crying and she said, I am taking the college course that you offer here – she doesn't have a car -- A lot of them don't have cars. Even if I fail this course, Dr. S ______, I will always remember that I went to college." Now that says something, doesn't it? By the way she has almost finished her associates. She is so proud of that. Sometimes I lose sight of that. I have been struggling so much to get people to buy in and to do what they need to do. -- But there are people who are touched by that and who are feeling more successful. So, you get to people a little bit at a time.

29. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? Well I have found that when you have somebody who is dedicated anyway and you give them some recognition, you can get a ton of work back from that. And some of them just want a word. And I am not good at this. I was a music teacher by the way. I demanded,
demanded, and put on great shows. But then I remember after one show, it was a fantastic show, I was so relieved that it was over. And someone came up to me and said, “You never tell us if we were good. Were we good” And I thought, I thought I told them that. It was like an epiphany. After that, I will even compliment burly principals that they did a good job. I will send them an e-mail-- thank you for your commitment. And they are almost embarrassed to get it but they were pleased. And I don’t always give out compliments. So I would sometimes in front of a group. By the way, I want to let you know that Kate and wow was I proud to be the Superintendent of these schools. Well, I that just goes like wild fire. I will do that in front of a classroom. Sometimes I will let them know -- The state contacted me to get them to present-- I try to get them to present at things--. I got to tell you, I am so proud that you are a faculty member at this school district. I just can’t tell you. I may never say anything to that person again for a year because I may not see her but that makes a difference. -- I showed the chart of success -- I say that I stand up here and take all the credit but I would be no where if you people weren’t doing this every single day... and you can see them feel and they are re--motivated and I really mean that -- I say -- do do do do do do—-but They’re doing it. I really mean it. I just sent a thing out to them, a press release went out about this city and Phillipsburg and we’re above all the schools on the state test on the HESPA. We dedicated a lot to mathematics. So I made a big deal about that. The high school principal made signs and you know, we are always the underdogs and we start out behind the eight bail and we are actually scoring higher than I and J districts that’s a big deal because we have a longer way to go than they were and they can hire private tutor. We are proud of that -- Everyday math, Math in Context at the middle school and Core Plus at the high
school and the state is asking us, “Hey what are you doing in the math?” And they continue to climb. We have SMART board and we just constantly do professional development. And success breeds success. And the kids strut around thinking that we are pretty cool, too. The HESPA scores --not just the Abbott average or DFG average. I’m glad when we are above the DFG average or above the Abbott average. When they came back and said we were above the state average -- I said, “Woo Hoo HOO!”

30. Which of these four frames do you think best reflects your district? Why? I use a mix of the first two. -- Factory and human resources. The jungle -- I don’t get into all. There is very little -- now there may be some of that behind the scenes. I try extremely hard not to enter into that political nonsense. I don’t see a lot of that happening anywhere. What you model is what most people follow. “That may have been in the beginning when I was making radical changes. One of the administrators broke into my office and go through my desk and took an organizational chart I was working on for the Board and then it and spread it around. They broke into my office. That’s where we are coming from when I first entered. I don’t get into that jungle stuff at all and I raised it by my example and my professionalism quite a bit. I don’t get into that jungle stuff. I don’t have a lot of tolerance for it. I refuse to accept it anywhere. When I see it, I shut it down. I worked in districts where we had that. It is so self-destructive. And the last one was symbolism -- I think that symbolism is pretty much -- you go with what -- the high school diploma is the symbolism here. We have an adult school one of the few left that actually gives a diploma. We make a big deal about that. It is a huge symbol here. People want it now. They feel very good about it. People made it a symbol now. We made that a symbol. But that is a byproduct of the first two things of how you manage.
31. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? Describe one briefly and how this individual may have affected your career. No. Females do not mentor females as a rule.

32. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district? I think the night I had the vote of no confidence. Because that fact that all they could come up with – the fact that I was making such a difference in their lives that they felt threatened by it and they knew that I was in charge, and the fact that the Board had a vote of confidence. I knew that “okay” – I can see where this is going. Even a reporter said, “It sounds like they don’t like the changes.” They were even talking about it in the newspapers, I knew that I was in charge then, because if I was rattling their cages and that I wasn’t doing anything unjust – I knew that I had made it then. I knew that I was clearly in charge.

33. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender? Oh, I know just getting a job in a secondary district. I went on tons of jobs for secondary principals-- I got offered a ton for elementary and I did not want to be an elementary. So what I finally did was go to a private school Yale in Cherry Hill and – a school for the mentally disturbed. Then within four months I went in as elementary -- they moved me to the high school. I thought that if I had that on my resume – and plus I was music -- Music, what does she know? Then, I was at the high school and I was there for 2 or 2.5 years. Then everybody wanted to interview me. That I was the high school principal at Yale-- I got interviews hand over fist. Then I went back to public as an assistant principal at Haddon Heights which is a high school district here. I finished my doctorate here. I was discipline for the older kids. And Yale established me.
I knew I had to do that to establish me—at Lower Camden Regional. I would have loved to stay there forever at Lower Camden Regional as Director of Curriculum and Instruction, but they dissolved. Well, now I will try the superintendency. And then I got this.

34. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? That is what I did purposely to get in. That was what I had done purposely to get in. If you can handle disturbed adolescents in the high school, and you can run a good program, then you can handle just about anything.

35. How would you describe the work experience of women superintendents in New Jersey? I think that people are beginning to realize women bring a lot to the table. You know, men have traditionally been in the role and there are some certainly some excellent male superintendents, and but women tend to be more nurturing in the there are in the sense that the kids are really first all the time. Some of my colleagues will say, I played golf this morning and played racquetball before I got to work. I don’t have time to play racquetball! I am here at 7:30 worrying about the kids and worrying about the programs and worrying about who is got this or that – you know what I mean. I think that people are beginning to realize that women are workaholics. Women worry intensely about safety of children and the nurturing of children. When I got here, they said that we were going to run our half days before lunch. I said no – they said well why not – the kids will not eat lunch when they get home. There will never be a day that doesn’t include lunch. We never did that before. This is the kind of thing women think of. It makes a difference. It is not because men are mean. Men don’t think of those things. I also think that they are realizing that women are persistent and will plug away to get something. My
brother is a principal. But I think that they thought that women couldn't handle it, especially secondary. They are beginning to realize that I am tougher than anybody they ever had. I just am. I am a disciplinarian at heart. And, you can't run a good program if it is not organized and safe. I am tougher than the principals are sometimes. I press charges at the drop of a hat. If you bring a pellet gun, you're done. But see, I had to stand up to kids that were very dangerous and very violent. I am not afraid to do that. You know, I raised two boys who were bigger than me. But I think they are beginning to realize that we have an awful lot to offer that we are not incapable. In many cases, we are more than capable and better and more dedicated.

36. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? I think that I was tested when I first came here in the sense there was so much that wasn't where it needed to be. There was so much to be done. I thought they were average, but they were here -- I remember thinking to myself -- Holy Mackerel. There was a ton of stuff here. I had actually had administrators who were screaming at me. Who was I? I wasn't going to wipe my feet-- Well, I was rattling their cage. What do you mean you want me to work in the summer? Well you are paid in the summer. Well I catch up on my reading in the summer. You want to be paid? You will work. You have to be careful. You have to lead them and model. The very first year or two I was here was tough-- really -- really tough. If I didn't have leadership skills and tried what I learned -- I tried a ton of different management styles until I found one that was working. After that I began to hit on one that seemed to be working. Yeah, I do change. It depends on my group and sometimes it
depends on the situation – I change, too. That was a tough time those two or three years. The state was on us and the Board was on me. It was a mess. Oh, I think was -- the factory is the structure -- I ran it like a business. I was very structured -- I was very clear – I had to fall back into structure. There was no structure. It was all over the place. There was Board meeting. They would get it that night. They were looking for the motions. They were all over the floor. I had to restructure all of that. I had to be strong because people don’t like me. People don’t like change – this is a blue collar environment. The board members got threatening calls. How dare you hire a woman? How dare you hire someone from the outside? How much do you pay her for her clothing allowance?

37. How do you think women in New Jersey are meeting the leadership challenge in the 21st century? I think that that they better start relying heavily on the women in New Jersey because the good old boys network is very corrupt and nobody has the backbone to take it on. I think the women have to take it on. In many instances, women are more resistant to corruption. I just feel that way in my heart. Not that I mean that all men are corrupt—I don’t mean that. Men are more accepting of the good old boys. The good old boys are more used to ‘wink wink wink and I get that.’ Women are used to struggling for everything they get. Women don’t go into it without commitment. Women feel a strong commitment. That’s why I was so disappointed in Christie Whitman. I thought she was going to be a real true leader. She started that -- She was so resentful of the Abbott stuff. I was very disappointed in her. But then I think there are tons of men I am disappointed in. I remember the days when I was trying to do that. Every now and then one female governor. Maybe we need more than one. I do think that women in my own experience will really take the mantle and really work for what is right and be the
salvation of the public school system. I mean -- I’m here at 5:30 p.m. because I believe in your need to help you with your doctorate and some would say I don’t really have time for you. This gal wants to come who is working on her doctorate. I am committed to education. I commend you that you want to get a doctorate. If everybody was going to react like that -- we don’t help each other and we don’t have a good old girls’ network. And we don’t. I say this all the time. Now, I hire women and I promote women and I say this all the time. I mentor women. I will do all I can. I feel very strongly about that. No one helped me. I had to struggle, struggle, struggle and I don’t want any one else to make it. Because I won’t be so special. If you get there too, I won’t be so special. To men that doesn’t matter. Men don’t feel that way.

38. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey? I think that the reason that we have been able to be successful because in New Jersey we are a bit more liberal in New Jersey but also because I think that no one wants to be superintendents in the job. I think it is our chance. No one is banging down the doors to be superintendent. It is a thankless job. It is a lot of work for a little bit of money. And I think that in New Jersey there are many women who are educated and who are willing to tackle the job, and this is our opportunity to get in to that field. I am sure that I got into this city because I had the curriculum background. Most men don’t have curriculum background. They needed to someone with curriculum. I am the only woman they interviewed. I had what they needed or I would not be here. They knew they were in deep trouble. They didn’t know how to write curriculum. They didn’t have curriculum
that matched the core content standards. And I knew I was the only one who could
answer those questions. Again I was at Yale. They figured I can handle secondary. I
played that hand. I won’t be weak on discipline.

Closing Question:

39. Is there any question that I should have asked that I didn’t? No, I think you pretty
much covered it – I am usually asked about my management style. But you go t through
the other way which is fine. But, you didn’t ask me if I was glad I made the choice I
made. Some days yes and some days no. As I am in the job longer, I don’t have the
contact with the children. I so loved being with the children. But I can tell you that I feel
that I made a difference here even though I don’t know each particular child and that the
children here are better off. And not just me personally but also the leadership I provided.
The educational system here is much better. For the most part, I have enjoyed the
experience. But it has caused me a lot of stress. I am retiring next December. My blood
pressure has quadrupled. I got Epstein Barr from the stress -- there is an awful lot of
stress and there is an awful lot of responsibility. Women feel an awful lot of stress - it
comes from being the nurturer of the children. I worry about the three years olds are they
going to be too cold. I worry about the wind chill on the three year old. So I think that
that has taken a toll – I am leaving before I have to -- I just think that it is time for me to
enjoy my life a little bit. I am going to teach at the college level because I do miss
teaching. I am going back to the college. That would be the only question that I can think
of.
Interview Transcript – Essex – Urban -- Tanya

Date: May 17, 2007

Demographic Questions:

1. How many total years have you been a superintendent of schools in New Jersey, either in this district or another? 8 years

2. Is this your first superintendency? Yes

3. If this is not your first superintendency, in how many other school districts were you a superintendent?

4. Have you had a contract as a superintendent renewed? Yes.

5. Did you become a superintendent in the same district as you were employed? Yes, I did.

6. What level of education had you completed prior to achieving your first superintendency? Master's Degree + 30 credits

7. What was your official title of the position prior to this experience? Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

8. If you were a classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have? 14 years

9. How many years of administrative experience did you have prior to becoming a superintendent? 17 years

10. Please describe the context of your current district: Urban

11. Please describe the size of your district: over 10,000 students

12. Please identify your district as one of the following: K-12

13. What is your district factor grouping? A – Abbott
14. In which county is your district located? Essex

15. What best describes your age range? E. 60+ (61 years).

Questions about Structure: Factories

16. What kind of administrative structures do you believe most influence your work? For example, an administrative structure in schools might be the line and staff chart. In terms of structures and line and chart or what have you, I think there has to be a well-defined hierarchy. Certainly and in our schools there is some autonomy in terms of some of our principals stepping outside a little bit as defined as their element. One of the things that I felt is very important but it doesn’t mean micromanaging because infrastructure is very, very important. There are certain things and expectations that students have a right to expect and so do administrators. I can’t have a hundred different ways of operating. So, we do have policy and procedure but it is not top down it is generally committee drive. And once we have a policy in place, that’s what we all live with it. Understand that this is a very large school district. So when you talk about structure, I have got 5 school leadership which means I have assistant superintendents as possible for as many as 12-15 schools and so the delegation of responsibility is through school leadership teams. And I also have a Deputy under me. We are also an Abbott district, and we are also a state operated district sometimes so we don’t always define things ourselves. We have another group that we have to write reports for, tell them about our organization and how it functions, and how we run our organization. I have education services side of the house. There is a support services side of the operation.
17. Have you recently reorganized your administrative structure at your district? If so, describe the results either positive or negative that you see from the restructuring?

Actually, no. We continue to look at the organization and tweak it if we feel it is necessary. We have been working under the same framework for the last five years.

18. Please identify other administrative structures that you feel are essential to your work? Other administrative structures? Well, yes. I think that in my structure, because a lot of this is going may fall into the frameworks as well that I do structure routine conversations with different factions. I mean I have a parent advisory council. I have a student advisory council. I have a principal advisory council and I also have in terms of my structure, I have structured ways to communicate with my immediate neighborhoods. So I have town hall meetings. So I have to have an infrastructure so that my employees know what they supposed to do. I have to have an infrastructure because I need to inform others and very often ask them for help. So there is a lot that goes on in terms of “here is your entire operating structure.” It is defined in terms of staff and their performance and it terms of the expectations of that the community has of me.

Questions about Human Resources: Families

19. Describe your views on human resources in your particular district? All right, when you say families, they are interconnected with the human resources director. They are interconnected in some ways. You are talking about the people capital and I think that’s critical. I think that when you have the charge of running a school district, you know full well that you cannot do it without the people that work for you, and they need to feel they are a part of the community they are serving. I have spent a lot of time to get everybody
to understand that “The village is us.” I think we have done a very good job with that. It
doesn’t mean that you have a feel good disposition. People need to be regarded for the
value they bring. I unfortunately have an email address and everybody has it. Yes,
indeed. It really consumes me. I can’t leave here until 7:00 at night because I am
answering email. Now, I don’t always suggest that the people to come directly to me. We
have channels of communication. But, there are times when understand why they have it.
I have made myself available to almost everybody. But there are times when they haven’t
I have made myself available to everyone. I try to encourage a different kind of
leadership style in terms of how you deal with people. In today’s world, you can’t hit
people over the head and they are going to be responsive. They are going to find ways to
circumvent it and rebel. There is an issue of accountability and then there is an issue of
treating people with civility. I don’t thing the state of New Jersey understands it all. But
at any rate, in our community -- and in fact, if you ever visit our schools, you will see that
they are very nurturing. It is not just the superintendents’ leadership style or the
assistant’s style. It is the principal’s style. And certainly in the high school and I try to
encourage our principals, more than any place else, you need to make the kids part of the
community and respect that. You get so much more. I think that is a critical piece.

19. How do you develop and sustain relationships with the members of your Board?
Ha, ha, ha, No, It is a tough relationship always have and in my conversations with my
superintendent associates across the country tell me that all the time. You have to have
conversations with them. You need to respect that they are elected officials. They need to
respect the fact that you are the educator in charge and the micromanaging and having
them not involved in things like that is a delicate issue. Every month I have dinner with 3
of them at a time. And we talk about your relationship. We have staff development. We talk about how we work through consensus. Where their role ends and mine begins. So it has been -- it is very difficult and fragile simply because every year I get three new members. I have potentially 3 new members, and generally at least two of them leave and maybe only one stays. Because unfortunately Boards kind of use it to jump start their political careers. That is a function of Newark. I guess the West Caldwell superintendent told me he has been there 5 or 6 years, and he has had the same board members every year. I said, “What a wonderful place to be!” Bigger districts have less stability on Boards than some of the smaller districts.

20. How do you repair relationships that have been stressed in your organization among the following: administrators, faculty members, parents? Probably bring people in and have an open conversation. Sometimes we have to change our practice in the way that we deal with people. Some people are sensitive to things and some are not. So you have to regard what issues create tension, and sometimes it is not so much that you can repair the relationship, but you’ve got to be able to continue the work.

Questions about Power: Jungles

21. What is your definition of power? My definition of power is getting everyone of my, let’s say staff or executive staff, to understand what the problem is, to chart a course and we work together. Most of what I do is done by consensus -- but not always. I do not make decisions unilaterally almost ever. There is a senior staff, there is 5 of us. We meet every Tuesday morning at 8:00. We talk about the issues that we’re confronted with. We can make some preliminary decisions at that point, and we will take those and then
present them to a larger audience, maybe my executive staff, and then present them to the principals, and I then get feedback. What’s going to work – that’s what’s important. Are there times when we need to have a mandate, of course there are! When it comes to budget those are mandates. There is no discussion around that. You have to do them. In terms of how you operate and your guiding principles, we need to all be on the same page. And that is something that cannot be mandated from the highest position.

22. Based on your definition of power, how do you view your methods of exercising power in your school district? I think I kind of covered it. Well, again, it is through consensus, for the most part. And, once we have defined what the policy, practice and procedures are, they then become the mandates, but those mandates did not happen by my sitting down and deciding this is what we are going to do. So as a community, we decide what is the path we are going to travel down. We can’t have people going off in all different directions. My evaluations are going to reflect that. The conversations that I have. I hope that the leadership in the schools, reflect that. So we try to come to consensus through what is in law, what is required of us by the state, the city and, you know, everything else. And then primarily getting the kids to perform well on student achievement. And I think we are all in sync when it comes to that.

23. Which coalitions in your district are most helpful to you? Well, my executive staff, I would say is the most helpful. Certainly my senior staff is very helpful and then my principals. Now after that I would have to say, my teachers and my teachers’ union. Most people have an adversarial relationship with their union. I do not. We have consulting council. I meet with my teachers’ union monthly. I meet with my administrators’ union
monthly. And I meet with the support services union monthly. So, what may have been contentious 7-8 years ago, I think that we all want to work together. An example, I just laid off 268 people. Now, in East Orange, you see them in the paper everyday. Here, there isn’t a single word in the Star Ledger. I certainly didn’t give as many pink slips, but I meet with the unions and we talked with the union to talk about what we can do to avoid panic so we don’t have massive people running. So we managed it and we managed it by doing positive things. And even when we had to give out notices, they know that we have done everything possible to avoid it. My coalitions are most helpful. My executive staff, my senior staff, my principals, my senior staff and that equals a deputy, BA, general council, executive Director of Human Resources and generally have my Chief of Staff (there is a vacancy now,) and one of my executive assistants. My executive staff is made up of all of those individuals plus my 5 area assistant superintendents, my community relations director, my labor relations director, public information officer is a part of that. There are usually between 16 -20 people on the executive staff at any given time. My executive staff helps me move my agenda. Even though they are higher ranking, my senior staff is a part of the executive staff, too. Then there is the principal layer. A lot more layers here.

24. Which coalitions in your district provide the most resistance to change? High school teachers and high school principals.

25. How do you control the balance of resources in your system? I think very fair and equitably. We have budget hearings. We look at student population. So, it is not who cries the loudest. You look at what the needs are. And, you are trying to provide
resources based on need. The last group that gets heard unfortunately is Central Office, because the schools have to have what they need to be successful. We also are an Abbot district, while at least we had in the past what I would have to say were adequate resources. We do not have that luxury anymore. There is less of an issue of equity in the district now than there was let's say fifteen years ago. They have been chipping away. In the past, it really was some schools got more than other schools. At some point in time it dawned on us that we can't keep operating that way. Little schools just by scale would not have the resources they needed like East Side High School. So we look at a combination of things. But I think that at the end of the day, everybody feels that they have been treated fairly.

Questions about Symbolism: Theaters or Temples

29. What are the most important symbols in your school system? Symbols, in terms of what? Well, yes, we have a mission statement and we have goals and guiding principles. And certainly, if you go any school in Newark, you are going to see that. I mean we have it on bookmarks. You will see that in the preamble in half of the documents that we publish. And so most people know that the guiding principles have not changed for the last 7-8 years. And then we have instead of "all children will learn" we switched it to "all children can learn." We have another one that is "reaching for the brass ring." You will see that. There is a visual reaching for the brass ring. It is the expectation that we can. Everyone has their own little spin on it. You see a hand up and see it reaching for the ring. And the expectations need to be higher and sustained and also ratcheted up.
27. How do you use these symbols, traditions, metaphors, to achieve the goals of your system? Well, I think that in terms of just some of the language that is embedded in the mission statement talks about academically gifted and graduating a kid, it is also about a kid’s character, it is important character gifted and civic minded, when you pull out and extract these are things that we expect kids to leave with. Then we embed that in our curriculum and we embed it into the activities that we do. We have the character education, like others have had. We have community service, because we want kids to know how to give as well as receive. When we have had celebration parades down Broad Street, it is to promote the kinds of things that are in our mission statement. We talk about the fact that this community is rich in terms of the kinds of community agencies that reside with us. We have 4 colleges here. As a result of that the linkages, now I tell you -- Rutgers and Essex County. Just look at how they are built. They are built like fortress. I told the Dean, “They are built like fortresses. My kids won’t even think about stepping on your campuses.” They are not open and inviting. I met with the college presidents and now there is a different environment. I have more of my kids are going to NJIT than Rutgers. People don’t believe that. Because the students from NJIT mentor my students on the robotics team at our high school. I have well over 125 kids that engaged in robotics and have gone to Atlanta, have gone to the national competition in Atlanta. They have done well to the fact that I got a bond that I am building a robotics building through NJIT. So that is through NJIT. And that is part of our mission statement. Kids have never thought about being a pilot, or mechanic or engineer or pilot. You look at what surrounds us and then give kids the inspiration. You look about what surrounds us in terms of what you are asking. You give kids inspiration in terms of what you are
asking. My kids run a jazz club. Now they think they can become producers. My mission statement when it talks about empowering them to understand that academics are important because it gets you to the end game. And that is whatever it is you want to do. Our graduation rate is up. It has gone from 48% to 73%. They are still struggling academically, but they are staying with us. They are staying with us because they know we believe in them. I would rather have a graduation rate 73 than 48.

28. How do you motivate individuals to put their hearts and their minds into their work? You motivate them by putting models of motivated people around them. That’s one. You try to get them to buy into the vision of the district. And you can’t always motivate folks. I think that when they see success, they’re motivated. When you compliment them for what they do and then recognize them for their contribution, I think they are motivated. When you give them a voice at the table, I think that they are motivated. I would say that most of them are motivated. They are almost burned out. There is just always so much to do. They are motivated to do it. At the end of the day, you can’t last as long at what we do. I think that even the teachers at the end of the day, are so tired. I say that’s good if you go home tired. If you go home tired, then it means that you worked hard. And the 55—and most people leave now at 55. They don’t stay another ten years. Some still do and our work is so demanding. I am saying that I think that my people are highly motivated and they give so much. At least they recognize. Because I don’t like when people hang around just to hang around because if they can’t give 100%, given the nature of what we do, they are in the wrong place.

29. Were there any female role models that helped you or mentored you throughout (during) your career as an administrator? No.
30. Describe a defining moment when you knew you had established yourself as the chief executive officer of your district? Maybe at my second or third principals’ meeting. I think I was very passionate, but I was very demanding. And I thought that when my principals left, they would be annoyed with me, but instead I got a standing ovation. So, it said to me that I had a right to have high expectations and be demanding. I think what they recognized that I am a very fair person. And so it was like -- we are going to do all that we can do. They just wanted to know if they are going to be treated fairly, too. I think that’s what they were telling me. Let’s get it done. That was a moment. I have had some others since. It has been a rocky road.

31. Describe any resistance or challenges that you may have faced in your work that you believe can be attributed to gender? Sure. I work in Newark. I have CEOs in Newark. I’ve got the President of Prudential. I have got other CEOs. And, rather than have a face-to-faces with me, they send a female in their organizations to have conversations with me. I noticed that from the very beginning. I think that is very much a gender issue. I think that if I were a man here, would that be the same way they would deal with me? I know that it is not. Even in dealings with the past mayor, at some point, he accepted me. I told my secretary, you don’t put me on hold just because a man called. It is his secretary that is asking. There are some little things that are subtle and there are some that are very blatant. I think that we have to work harder. I think that we have to prove ourselves. Even with our parents and our community, they think that it is a man’s job. You have to show you have the strength of character, and that you are not intimidated by situations. I also think that when $1.6 billion facilities bond came available, everyone around wanted control of it. That woman over there she probably can’t handle that. I think I worked
through it. It is not just me. In fact, my facility team got two national awards. So, we do know what we are doing. But yes, there is always a gender issue. In fact, someone asked me because I am an African-American woman, which am I affected more because of my gender or my race. More often I am discriminated against because of my gender and not because of my race.

32. Which combination of factors do you believe led directly to your rise as superintendent? NEED -- the need to fill a vacancy because I did not apply for the job. The commissioner came and suggested that I apply because I am the community person. I think that they had someone from outside of the district and people were not so happy. There had to be somebody thrown in so for four months I said, “No.” It was a realization that if you want to have things happen in a certain way and you are not willing to take it on and do it. They didn’t have the same passion. So it happened. And then community said if there was ever a need, that we would have their support. No, it was David Hespe, It was nine years ago. David Hespe and asked me to consider. And here is another example to me the blatancy of gender --They advertised for x number of dollars, and when it came time to negotiate my contract, they offered x - $10,000 and I almost walked away because it was so blatantly and the guy from East Orange, they offered him $30,000 more to take the job.

33. Describe a scenario in which you were called upon to test the limits of your leadership skills and you were successful. How did you choose what to do in that particular situation? What frame do you think this situation was in? One of the toughest situations that I encountered was with the principals. I wanted them to work 12 months instead of 10 months. Newark was one of the few districts in the state that didn’t work 12
months a year. I was convinced that they needed to. Otherwise, they were in the wrong place. In addition, most of the principals came through the ranks, and they found it difficult to accept direction from someone else from in the ranks. So they were accustomed to having off the entire summer. Some of the dedicated principals were there during August on their own time. So now I am paying you to be here -- so which one of the frames, factories, symbolism, family. Actually it was power. They went to arbitration, and I asked for 25 days and guess how many days we got? You're right -- 25 days. And we were right.

34. The most recent statistics reveal that nearly 25% of all superintendents in New Jersey are women. This average exceeds the national average. Given these statistics, what do you believe about the ‘glass ceiling’ as it pertains to women educational leaders in New Jersey? The more opportunities that you give women, the more they are going to do a good job. Women are also getting the tougher jobs in schools in some of the tougher cities like Cleveland. We can't go by yesterday's barometer anymore. And it is also harder and harder to find superintendents. More women are represented in the schools. Women outnumber men in the schools 3 to 1. So it is good that there is more of a proportionate representation of women in the superintendency.