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# AchieveNJ and Its Effects on Hiring Principals

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AchieveNJ and Its Effects on Hiring Principals

by

Gina M. Cinotti

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Education  
Department of Education and Human Services  
Seton Hall University  
2015



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**SETON HALL UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE**

Doctoral Candidate, **Gina Cinotti**, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the **Ed.D.** during this **Spring Semester 2015**.

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## DEDICATION

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## Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate New Jersey superintendents' hiring decisions of principals during the implementation of AchieveNJ, the educator evaluation system. This policy created mandates for school districts, which were nonexistent in the past. The 2013-2014 school year was the inaugural year for AchieveNJ, and it is unknown if this new mandate has influenced superintendents' hiring decisions of principals and whether superintendents' own estimations of the new policy will shape their hiring decisions. The study described the influence, if any, AchieveNJ might have on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. A substantial amount of literature exists on the qualities superintendents' value when making hiring decisions for principals; however, within this literature base, superintendents' backgrounds influenced what principal qualities they looked for relating to their years of experience, education levels, district size, and so forth. (Dillon, 1995; Karol, 1988; Clark, 2003; Arrowood, 2005; Rammer, 2007; Weber, 2009). According to superintendents, there is not one accepted standard in principal leadership characteristics, although there are commonalities regarding: (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications. Based on previous research and the lack of literature on AchieveNJ, this study will investigate how a superintendent's background may also influence the leadership characteristics considered to be desirable specifically in the areas of mentioned above.

The significance of this study is to unveil comparisons, distinctions, and conclusions about the impact AchieveNJ has had on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals, which will contribute to the literature gap on AchieveNJ. AchieveNJ impacted superintendents' hiring decisions and instructional leadership is the most important leadership characteristic they look for in a principal. AchieveNJ was a new variable in the research and it forced superintendents to

rank principal leadership characteristics. This groundbreaking policy is at the forefront of accountability and serves an educational milestone.

*Keywords:* AchieveNJ, Superintendents, Principals, Accountability, Hiring Principals

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Superintendents make recommendations to their boards of education to gain approval for the employment of a new principal. After the interview process, the superintendent makes a hiring decision on who is the best candidate. Obviously, there are external factors that influence their decisions. Each superintendent has his/her own set of most valued leadership characteristics used to assess the candidate pool, as well as in their selection of the successful candidate. A plethora of literature exists on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals, where a variety of qualities are valued by superintendents when considering a new principal (Arrowood, 2005; Clark, 2003; Dillon, 1995; Karol, 1988; Rammer, 2007b; Weber, 2009). Each superintendent has a different set of qualities they valued in principals.

Since 2010, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has been working on a new educator evaluation system with the intent to improve all educator evaluations (NJDOE, 2013a). In the 2013-2014 school year, New Jersey public school superintendents were obligated to follow the state-mandated principal evaluation system named AchieveNJ, which assesses how well principals improve student achievement. There is little known about the influence AchieveNJ might have on superintendents' hiring decisions and educational practice itself. This policy was initiated in the 2013-2014 school year in order to meet the accountability mandates for educator effectiveness (NJDOE, 2013a).

The vast difference between the current system and the previous one is that educator effectiveness is determined in part by student achievement. Another focus for the change was to recognize outstanding educators in an evidence-based system (NJDOE, 2013a). The sum of the



scores in the educator's practice and evidence of improved student achievement comprises the summative rating. Teachers and principals have the following breakdowns.

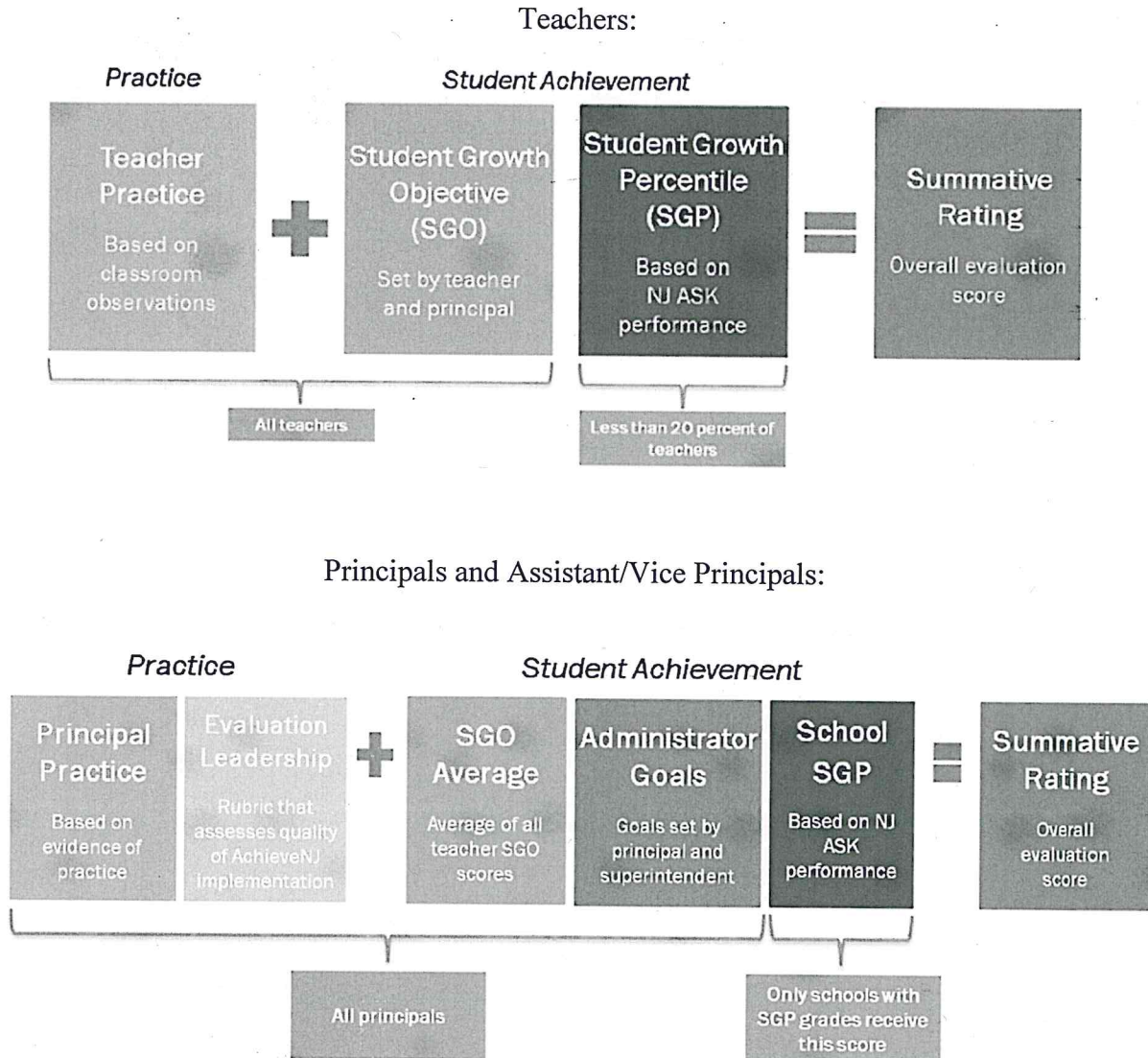


Figure 1. Evaluation Categories and Breakdown. Source: (NJDOE, 2013a)

The culminating effect of AchieveNJ is that it will directly affect tenure for teachers and principals. If an educator is rated partially ineffective or ineffective after one year, then in the following year rated ineffective, the superintendent must file charges of inefficiency on the employee (Nash, 2013).

Due to the implementation date of AchieveNJ, I am unable to gather a minimum of three years of trend data, so using previous research as a foundation provides some initial suggestions and implications. If multiple New Jersey researchers replicated this study, the results would provide a wealth of preliminary data regarding the newly instituted AchieveNJ.

## **Background**

The NJDOE has, for the first time, unveiled a new standardized educator evaluation system, AchieveNJ, where summative ratings will depend, in part, upon the proficiency percentages in student performance on state assessments. This new evaluation tool will encompass teachers and principals. In preparation for the unveiling, a comprehensive planning and two-year pilot programs existed in 2010 (NJDOE, 2013a; “What you need to know,” 2013; however, this policy has not been free of controversy nor has it been accepted by all stakeholders. The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), and the Garden State Coalition are a few organizations who have voiced their concerns in the media and in writing against AchieveNJ (“Demanding a course of action,” 2014; Keyes-Maloney, 2013; Garden State Coalition, 2013). There has been so much pressure and attack on the then New Jersey Commissioner of Education, Christopher Cerf, at the time of the unveil and enactment, that he released a broadcast memo identifying seven accusations from the NJEA and then responding with what he positions as facts (Cerf, 2014). Regardless if educators agree with AchieveNJ, it is a mandate that is approved, in progress, and must be instituted by school districts.

The new accountability regulations require a paradigm shift from the principal as a manager to one of an instructional leader. This shift began in 1997, when the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards were created (Van Meter & Murphy, 1997).

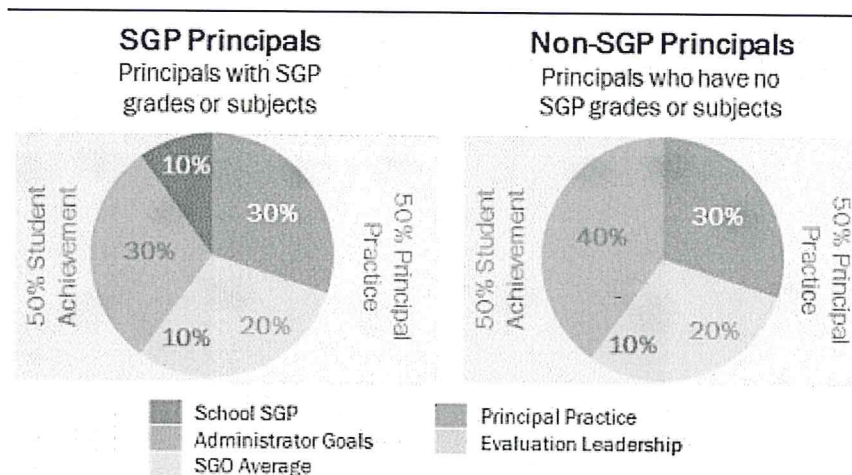
They were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers in conjunction with the National Policy Board on Educational Administration (NPBEA) to reinforce school leadership preparation programs (Van Meter & Murphy, 1997). The accountability underpinnings contained in AchieveNJ are a result of the paradigm shift of the principal as an instructional leader. As the research indicates, the principal's role began to change, and over the last 15 years, their responsibilities included improving student achievement, effective instructional leadership of teachers, and data-driven decision-making (DuFour & Eaker, 1999; Lashway, 2001). With the academic standards movement in the late 1990s, the accountability demands for schools to produce high scores on state assessments was paramount (Cross & Jofus, 1997).

For the first time in New Jersey, AchieveNJ requires principals to be evaluated in part on their ability to improve student achievement. If a principal is rated partially ineffective or ineffective for 2 years in a row, the superintendent must file tenure charges on the principal. These high stakes accountability regulations can be considered in superintendents' decisions about the potential principal candidates during the hiring process. With the newness of AchieveNJ, it is unknown whether superintendents' hiring decisions about principals has been affected by this policy shift; moreover, has the importance superintendents place on the leadership characteristics favored when selecting a principal changed due to AchieveNJ? Also, superintendents' backgrounds might also play a part in the decision-making process for favored leadership characteristics of candidates. Since there is no foundational data on AchieveNJ and its impact on superintendents, it is critical for this study to be conducted. This policy milestone is one that must be reviewed in the context of educational practice.

In addition, principals will be required to have all staff annually create student growth objectives (SGO), which must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (NJDOE,



2013a). Additionally, student growth percentiles (SGP), derived from state assessments, will also be part of the teacher and principal ratings for those teachers in tested areas, such as language arts and mathematics in Grades 4 through 8. Principal evaluations will be based on how well students meet teachers' growth objectives and earn percentile rankings on the state assessments. The principal evaluation will be separated into 50% student achievement and 50% principal practice (NJDOE, 2013a). It should be noted that on July 21, 2014, the NJDOE announced a proposal in decreasing the percentage breakdown for the amount of student achievement counting toward the teacher evaluation; however, no such announcement has since occurred regarding the principal evaluation ("Fine print"; 2014; Mooney). Yet, on August 7, 2014, the NJDOE reviewed proposed changes to the percentage weighting of the student achievement components of the principal evaluations which were later adopted in December 2014 (Keyes-Maloney, 2014).



*Figure 2. Readjusted Percentage for Evaluation Breakdowns.* Source: (NJDOE, 2014)

Prior to this initiative, tenured educators were observed once annually, which served as the snapshot of their performance in a given year. Now, the framework has shifted to include a student performance component based on the effectiveness of the teacher's impact on improving



student achievement and the principal's contribution to student achievement (NJDOE, 2013a, Stronge, Tucker, & Hindman, 2004). The push for this new evaluation system is the product of unrealistic federal and state mandates of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top (RTTT), which will be discussed in more depth in the literature review. Measureable accountability for student achievement appears to be a major emphasis in education with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS;"Standards in Your State," n.d.). Currently, 43 states elected to adopt the CCSS to signify a universal curriculum with standardized state assessments across the United States. The school principal must ensure these standards are being taught, and superintendents need to ensure they are hiring principals who can fulfill this responsibility and who can be effective leaders in all areas relevant to student learning. However, extraneous factors might interfere with superintendents' hiring decisions (Karol, 1988; O'Malley, 2011; Simon, 2003). Extraneous factors can be unique to each superintendent and district; there can be similarities and differences in superintendents and their valued principal leadership characteristics (Weber, 2009). These characteristics are as diverse as the superintendents who make the decisions. For example, there may be similar districts with commonalities in their hiring practices as they go through a resume screening, first-round interviews, second-round interviews, and so on. Paralleling the hiring practices, superintendents of similar sized districts, number of years experience, or education level, can have common extraneous factors, which coincide with their hiring decisions (Rammer, 2007a; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009).

For principals, there is no mock "on-the-job" situation to replicate this ideal, so the onus is on the superintendent to select the most qualified candidate for the district. But, other factors might influence superintendents when selecting principals. What characteristics do superintendents identify with effective principals? The landmark study by Leithwood, Louis,

Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) supports the importance of the principal as secondary to impacting student achievement.

As the research shows, most superintendents are male, yet female administrators make up 50% of the doctorates in educational programs; therefore, an inequity in gender is evident (Dowell & Larwin, 2013). Hiring practices of principals are inconsistent and questionably effective in that the state department required examinations are not good predictors of effective school leaders (Clifford & Learning Point, 2010). Political pressures are proven to globally affect superintendents where they are appointed or elected; this indirectly or directly affects their overall decision-making skills (Deno & Mehay, 1987; Partridge & Stass, 2011). To avoid the inconsistent research findings of the previous identified factors, such as gender, hiring practices, and political pressures, this research will focus on the self-reported demographic data of superintendents on a semi structured questionnaire. Because demographic data are informational, this research will simply gather the self-reported responses about superintendents' district configurations, student enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope. Although the omitted factors of gender, hiring practices, and politics might be considered influencing factors, as cited in the research, it is not noteworthy for this study in New Jersey at this time. The motivation for this study is to create literature findings on AchieveNJ and uncover the impact it has on the hiring decisions of superintendents.

### **Problem Statement**

The assumption of the problem formulation that I am deducing is that while the literature helps us to understand what characteristics superintendents' value, it does not allow us to determine whether what they value could be influenced by the characteristics of the superintendents themselves. Over the last 3 years, the NJDOE has prepared for AchieveNJ's

implementation, yet there has been resistance from teachers and administrators due to the newness of the policy, its rigorous standards, and percepts of its initiated abruptness (“New poll”; 2014; Mooney). The Commissioner of Education maintains AchieveNJ discussions have been collaborative with teachers’ and administrators’ unions from the start (Cerf, 2014). The NJEA and NJPSA maintain the exact opposite; their stance is that AchieveNJ was a top-down directive omitting their input (Keyes-Maloney, 2013).

This policy shift has created imperatives for school districts, such as tripling the amount of observations per year, documenting student growth objectives, measuring educator effectiveness by student achievement, and so forth, which were all not required in the past. Since AchieveNJ is in its inaugural year, it is unknown if this new mandate has influenced the hiring and selection of principals by superintendents or whether superintendents’ own opinions of the new policy will shape their hiring decisions. Moreover, does this new policy create a set of standards for district superintendents to follow? The purpose of this study is to describe the influence, if any, AchieveNJ has on superintendents hiring decisions. A substantial amount of literature exists on the qualities superintendents value when making hiring decisions for principals; however, within this literature base, superintendents’ backgrounds influenced what principal qualities they looked for, such as their years of experience, education levels, district size, and so on (Arrowood, 2005; Clark, 2003; Dillon, 1995; Karol, 1988; Rammer, 2007b; Weber, 2009). Moreover, the principal characteristics superintendents’ value may be influenced by the characteristics of each individual superintendent. Research provides evidence on the principal leadership characteristics that are valued by superintendents (Cotton, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; McEwan, 2003; Stronge, Tucker, & Hindman, 2004; Whitaker, 2007). These characteristics include administrative experience,



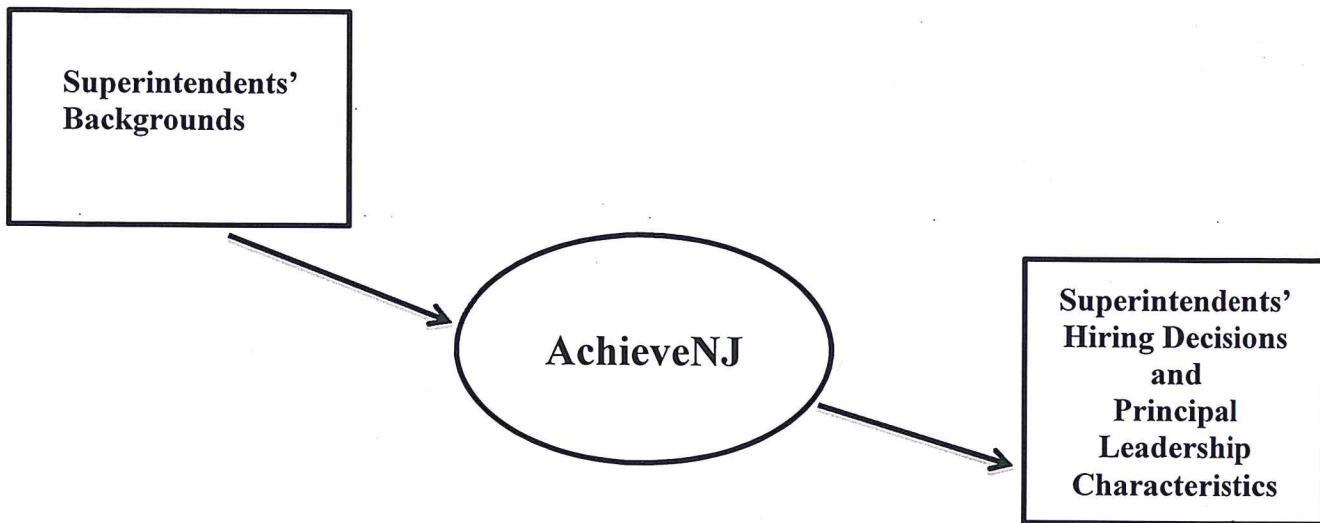
instructional leadership, fostering community relations, management skills, and so on. Given the findings from previous research, there is a lack of substantial literature conducted on the impact superintendents' backgrounds may have on the desired principal leadership characteristics, specifically in the areas of (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate if AchieveNJ has influenced superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. This cross-sectional, descriptive study sought to gain background information on superintendents and the level of importance they place on leadership characteristics of principals in the areas of instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication. Through this quantitative study, a survey was administered to New Jersey superintendents to understand their hiring decisions of principals when AchieveNJ has been in existence for one year.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this research study is diagrammed in Figure 3. Superintendents' backgrounds may have an impact on their views of AchieveNJ, which, in turn, will impact their hiring decisions of principals and those characteristics they associate with effective principals.



*Figure 3. Conceptual Framework for Study*

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?
2. To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?
3. To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

### **Significance of Study**

This study will contribute to the literature gap existing today on AchieveNJ. The importance of this study is to establish a baseline in the literature for this new policy. The stimulus of AchieveNJ is important because the data may impact trends, policies, or laws encompassing principal tenure, job responsibilities, performance standards, curriculum

development, and student achievement. The results of this study might provide more insight for how superintendents' decisions in hiring principals have been influenced by AchieveNJ. Furthermore, this study could lay the groundwork for future research regarding AchieveNJ and its impact on school districts. Heightened awareness on the effects of AchieveNJ will surface and be vital to superintendents, boards of education, principal candidates, and policy makers. Superintendents need to be cognizant of the factors that influence their hiring decisions of principals. Members of boards of education need to have confidence in their superintendents' decisions in selecting the best candidates. Potential candidates must be conscious of the increasing demands placed on principals, which include their ability to improve student achievement. Research supports an array of the most valued leadership characteristics of a principal, and AchieveNJ can influence superintendents' decisions on whom they decide is the successful candidate. Additionally, in today's high stakes accountability, principals are evaluated on their abilities to improve student achievement, and superintendents must ensure the successful candidate will be rated as an effective principal using AchieveNJ. Thus, this study will add a point of reference for future literature on AchieveNJ.

### **Methodology**

This quantitative study sought to identify the impact AchieveNJ has had on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Given the existing research on superintendents' hiring decisions, they have their own embedded values regarding principal leadership characteristics. This research will determine the importance superintendents' place on identifying the values in: (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communication; it will identify superintendents' backgrounds that influence the importance they place on principal leadership characteristics. A Likert scale survey was

administered to a convenience sample of New Jersey superintendents to determine the extent, if any, AchieveNJ influenced their hiring decisions of principals.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research study is limited by the following items, which I cannot control:

1. the New Jersey superintendents who volunteered to complete the survey;
2. the New Jersey superintendents serving as superintendents in the 2014-2015 school year, which is when the data were collected;
3. the superintendents' self-reported answers;
4. the data gathered in the 2014-2015 school year; and
5. AchieveNJ was in its second year of implementation, and trend data were unavailable prior to the 2014-2015 school year.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

This study is limited to the following items, which I have controlled and for reasons noted are purposeful in the current study:

1. Survey superintendents instead of teachers and principals to limit the variables outside the perceptions of subordinate staff.
2. Survey New Jersey superintendents due to the nuance of AchieveNJ.
3. The data were gathered in a climate of high stakes accountability.
4. Characteristics that I omitted from the study were: the hiring practices of principals, superintendents' gender, and political influences implanted in superintendents. This delimitation ensures the main focus of the study is maintained, which is to see what importance New Jersey superintendents place in principal leadership characteristics as identified in AchieveNJ.



5. Connect AchieveNJ into the potential effects on the hiring decisions to fill the literature gap on the New Jersey principal evaluation system.

### **Definitions of Terms**

The terms listed below are definitions for this research:

1. *Candidates* were principals.
2. *Communication* is defined by the survey questions in Part 5. It includes reach out and interact with stakeholders, gather input from stakeholders, communicate in writing, foster a positive school climate, and participate in the community (Rammer, 2007b; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009).
3. *Instructional leadership* is defined by the survey questions in Part 2. This includes evaluating teachers, assessing data, introducing technology, improving test scores, and motivating in instructional leadership (Rammer, 2007b; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009).
4. *Job scope* is defined as the amount of time superintendents are in full-time equivalent positions, as in some cases the superintendent is also the principal.
5. *Management* is defined by the survey questions in Part 3. This includes enforcing discipline, managing financial budgets, prioritizing managerial tasks, managing student conflict, and supervising classroom management (Rammer, 2007b; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009).
6. *Preparation and experience* is defined by the survey questions in Part 4. This includes previous principal experience, previous classroom experience, district familiarity, intrapersonal professional development, and professional demeanor (Rammer, 2007b; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009).



## **Organization of the Dissertation**

The outline of this dissertation will be composed of five chapters. Chapter 1 consists of an introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, summary of the methodology, limitations and delimitations of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter 2 presents an extensive literature review with subheadings in the areas of the accountability movement and AchieveNJ, principal leadership and student achievement, characteristics of effective principals, and superintendents' perceptions of the most valued principal traits. Chapter 3 describes an introduction of the methodology of the study, population, sample, instrument, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 4 explains the research findings and the answers to the research questions presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 5 provides a synopsis of the study with an overview of the discussion of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of this study is to identify if AchieveNJ, the newly instituted educational evaluation system, has influenced New Jersey superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Superintendents have their own set of most valued leadership characteristics to assess principal candidates, which can be influenced by their personal and professional backgrounds. The demand for this study is driven by the scant research about the effects AchieveNJ has on school districts, specifically in considering principal candidates. AchieveNJ ties principals' evaluations to student achievement, which never existed before; therefore, if principals cannot document improved student achievement, their job security and tenure are at risk. Hence, the principal plays a critical role in students' success. In an age of accountability, New Jersey is at the forefront of educational history. This literature review will connect the problem statement to the research consisting of: (a) the accountability movement and AchieveNJ, (b) principal leadership and student achievement, (c) characteristics of effective principals, and (d) superintendents' perceptions of the most valued principal traits.

#### **Accountability Movement and Achieve NJ**

An accountability trend was recognized in education reform and politics beginning in 1957 and continuing into present. Accountability is a major theme in education reform and usually has its underpinnings in politics. This concept relates to inquiries investigating whether or not American students are learning as much as students worldwide and if politicians fulfill their promises. Before 1960, educational testing was broadly implemented in the United States (Beaton et al., 2011). In 1957, President Eisenhower gave a speech portraying American education as inferior to Russia in relation to the launch of Sputnik, approximately 1 month earlier

(Tienken & Orlich, 2013). Throughout the 1960s an exploration of national assessments was trending, and the National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) earned a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to establish the Exploratory Committee for the Assessment of Progress in Education (ECAPE), and the first national assessment was conducted in 1969 (Beaton et al., 2011). From there, in 1983, the Reagan Administration, U.S. Department of Education, and the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) published *A Nation at Risk*, a report requesting an investigation of the status of the United States educational system. Specifically, the report (a) assessed the quality of teaching and learning in public and private schools, colleges, and universities; (b) compared schools and colleges in the United States with international counterparts; (c) examined the relationship between admission to colleges and secondary school achievement; (d) explored social influences on student achievement; and (e) identified problems to address in order to move our educational system forward (Gardner, 1983). The report summarized the variety of reasons American schools were failing our children (Tienken & Orlich, 2013). Next, under the Clinton Administration, came Goals 2000, which set standards and goals for American education to achieve ("Goals 2000," n.d.), and this can be viewed as the predecessor to the Bush Administration's No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). NCLB is the culminating reform that first put accountability on the map. This initiative required that students meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on state assessments, which, in turn, would affect state and federal aid given to school districts. The goal of NCLB was for 100% achievement for all students by 2014 (Tienken & Orlich, 2013), an almost unachievable and unrealistic goal. To address the unrealistic expectations of NCLB, the Obama Administration and the United States Department of Education, created a contest entitled Race to the Top (RTTT). The premise of this program was that schools would adopt the Common Core



State Standards (CCSS) and be in direct competition with each other and charters to gain higher point values. As a result, the schools achieving the higher point values would attract the brightest and the best students, while underperforming schools would either close or reform (USDOE, "Race to the Top Fund," n.d.). As outlined, the last 50 years of federal mandates on education reform clearly point to accountability, which sets the stage for this research in the current state of educator accountability.

Prior to 2011, the evaluation process was unique to each district. All non-tenured staff was evaluated three times a year, and then if positive ratings were earned all along, tenure was granted the first day of the employee's fourth year. That procedure had been the norm. Additionally, superintendents who typically evaluated principals were free to develop their own district evaluation instruments. Again, this was a common practice in New Jersey until 2010 when the Educator Effectiveness Task Force was formed (NJDOE, 2013a). As a result of this task force, a series of pilot studies were conducted to select evaluation tools for teachers and principals that would eventually be adopted by each public school district. Additionally, \$38 million was awarded to the state of New Jersey to support these efforts, and by 2013-2014, all districts would introduce improved evaluation systems (NJDOE, 2013a). To reiterate, at the core of the new evaluation system is an accountability regulation from NCLB and RTTT in which principal and teacher evaluations are tied to student achievement. For the first time, the concept of the principals' evaluations is being directly linked to their teachers' abilities to raise students' test scores. Although this is only one part of the evaluation, it is still a major reform across the country. Furthermore, the idea that instruction can be quantified, measured, and directly attack the tenure of a teacher or principal is the ultimate source of the current reform. These accountability regulations are meant to maintain good teachers, while putting into place data that

support letting bad teachers go; the same standards apply for principals. This concept is reiterated in 43 other states, as those states have adopted the CCSS and are under the same educator accountability. In relation to New Jersey, AchieveNJ can be seen as a tool to hold all educators accountable for how their students show growth based upon their SGOs and SGPs. There has been a considerable amount of resistance from the teachers' and principals' unions, as well as from the public ("Demanding a course of action," 2014; Keyes-Maloney, 2013; "Principals' Evaluation Issues," 2013). Concomitant push back was presented by the NJDOE and the Commissioner of Education, stating that the NJEA and NJPSA were collaborating in fine tuning the contents of AchieveNJ (Cerf, 2014). So, although AchieveNJ has been adopted and implemented in the 2013-2014 school year, it has been anything but a unified transition. Furthermore, the original weighting of student growth tied to teacher and principal evaluations was recently proposed to the NJDOE for a reduction and approved (Keyes-Maloney, 2014). Regardless of stakeholders' evaluations of AchieveNJ, it is a mandated policy that school districts must follow, and its influences on principal candidates are unknown at this present time.

With that being said, one can conclude that selecting the best candidate for a principalship is a vital link to principal and teacher evaluations and student achievement. Superintendents need to ensure they are identifying the qualities and characteristics that are proven in literature as well as fitting to their unique district. Moreover, the tools they use to assess those qualities are a critical piece to the selection puzzle. I will omit the research on the hiring instruments and processes from the study; however, it should be noted that whichever decisions are made by the superintendent on the criteria and assessment tools should be research-based and proven in literature. It should be noted that I identified a research gap in AchieveNJ; however, there are numerous resources citing research on the impact of principal effectiveness

on student achievement (Cheney & Davis, 2011; Fullan, 2002; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Marzano et al. 2005), the importance of an effective principal (Cotton, 1995, 2003; Jackson, 2004; Maciel, 2005), and the principal as an instructional leader (Alig-Mielcarek, 2003; Matos, 2006; Valenti, 2010). With the richness of literature in accountability and principals impacting student achievement, the logical progression is to identify if New Jersey's AchieveNJ mandate has any influence on the important tasks superintendents are faced with in hiring principals.

### **Principal Leadership and Student Achievement**

In order to meet the objectives of federal mandates such as NCLB and RTTT, as discussed previously, state departments of education were prompted to reevaluate the student achievement gaps and make drastic changes in their education systems. Some states have gone so far as to infuse tenure reform into the new legislature that has been created. New Jersey revised its educator evaluation system to improve student achievement and hold educators (teachers and principals) accountable for that improvement. TeachNJ and AchieveNJ were signed into law on August 6, 2012, which encompassed a bipartisan tenure reform law and effective educator evaluation system (NJDOE, 2013b). This became known as the Educator Effectiveness Code within the New Jersey Administrative Code (2013). Other states made similar revisions to their evaluation systems and base educator effectiveness with proving student growth. Teachers are the first line of improving student achievement, as noted in the research. The notion that principals influence student achievement has also been supported by a considerable amount of research. The current New Jersey principal evaluation system has a component in which principals are rated on how well students meet teacher-created growth objectives and how well students perform on state assessments. The notion that principals can



affect student achievement and to what degree they can do so is rich in research. The findings on its validity, reliability, and statistical significance as to whether or not a relationship exists between principal effectiveness and student achievement, and to what degree the parameters of effectiveness and student achievement are defined. I will present the comprehensive findings and highlight their significance in research, relate it to this study, and identify trends and gaps in the research.

The landmark study that laid the groundwork for proving that principals influence student achievement was by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004), titled, “Developing the Science of Educational Leadership.” Waters et al. (2004) conducted a 30-year meta-analysis of research beginning in the 1970s and reviewed 5,000 studies using quantitative student achievement data. The studies ranged from 1978–2001 and covered 2,802 schools, 1.4 million students, and 14,000 teachers. As a result of their research they found the famous 21 leadership responsibilities that are related to improving student achievement, and if properly executed, would impact student achievement positively. Conversely, if they were not executed, the leader could impact teachers and students negatively. The 21 leadership responsibilities found in Waters et al. (2004) even formulated the basis for further studies, specifically as seen in Rammer (2007b) in which a component of the research was whether or not superintendents used the 21 leadership responsibilities in the consideration of hiring principals.

Secondly, there is another prominent literature worthy of discussion in which an exhaustive review of research was conducted on leadership affecting student achievement by Leithwood et al. (2004) titled, *How Leadership Influences Student Learning: Review of Research*. Collectively, these researchers were part of the Learning From Leadership Project sponsored by The Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the

University of Minnesota, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), and The Wallace Foundation. Leithwood et al. (2004) wrote, reviewed, compiled, and analyzed research and concluded that leadership is second to classroom instruction and that direct and indirect leadership affects student learning, which can account for one fourth of the effects on an school's overall success. This report also reviewed the key characteristics as identified in the research for successful leaders to practice, which will be discussed in the next subsection. Research shows a larger influence on student achievement in failing schools rather than in schools that are maintaining student growth (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Among the substantial amount of research evidencing a relationship where principals influence student achievement, the meta-analysis study based on 30 years of research serves as the flagship for proving the principal has a “substantial effect on student achievement” (Marzano et al., 2005, p.12). Following their original study, Marzano et al. (2005) wrote the book titled *School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results*, in which they reviewed 69 studies related to principal effectiveness and student achievement. They concluded that taken separately, the 21 leadership responsibilities reveal that principals have a positive effect on student achievement. This book serves as the guideline for leaders to follow in order to create successful schools and defines their concept of balanced leadership, which is the framework encompassing a theoretical background for connecting a leader's responsibilities to his or her vision with a strategic approach to implement change by the use of quantitative evidence. Additionally, Waters and Cameron (2007) used the data from the original study by Waters et al. (2004) to write the handbook, *The Balanced Leadership Framework: Connecting Vision With Action*, which further defines the balanced leadership framework from the Mid-continent



Research for Education Learning (McREL), which can be used as a professional development leadership resource.

Throughout this literature review regarding leadership and student achievement, Kenneth Leithwood was a common researcher who consistently documented studies on this subject in collaboration with various colleagues. There were five studies that Leithwood conducted, which are worth mentioning. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) precipitated the work of Leithwood et al. (2004) and found that leaders indirectly influence student achievement by having a clear vision and goal and ensuring teachers have the tools they need to instruct well. They recognize that more research is needed and that there are gaps in their knowledge on the subject. Following Leithwood et al. (2004), there were three other studies in Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins (2006), Leithwood & Jantzi (2008), and Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi (2010). Leithwood et al. (2006) identified four general classifications of leadership practices and 14 more detailed classifications for effective school and non-school leaders, which reiterate and reinforce the works of Hallinger et al. (1996a, 1996b) and Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003, 2005). Similarly, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) identified seven claims regarding school leadership success through empirical research review and citations. As cited in Nason (2011, p.71) “The overriding conclusion is that ‘there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership’” (Leithwood et al., 2008, p. 5). To further deepen the research on principals affecting student achievement, Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) attempted to discover a more direct link from principal to student whereby they sought to find how a leader’s efficacy (school level, district, and state) affected student learning by studying 96 principals and 2,764 teachers. They found that a leader’s efficacy related to the district’s focus on student achievement and

instruction was the most significant (.66). The final study to note here is with Leithwood, Patten, and Jantzi (2010) in which they tested four paths of how leadership influences student learning: rational, emotions, organization, and family. They found that each path has its own variable with its own sets of conditions, and the leader can increase student learning by improving these variables, which improve the paths. They also note that improving instruction is not the only way to affect student achievement, which is the basis of their study (Leithwood et al., 2010).

“The research documenting the principal’s prominent role in promoting student achievement covers more than three decades” (Nason, 2011, p.67). In my final review of the literature on leadership and student achievement, the initial foundational work in the late 1980s and 1990s by Phillip Hallinger was redundantly referenced throughout most of my review. Hallinger and Heck (1996a) reviewed research linking principal leadership to student achievement and found little or no direct influence yet cited an indirect “but no less important effect on school effectiveness and student achievement” (p. 186). These findings were statistically significant even though the effect was small (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a). Also, Murphy and Hallinger (1992) concluded that principal behaviors are a major predictor of effective schools. In 1998, Hallinger and Heck led an extensive literature review of the research from 1980 to 1995, which involved 40 studies, and this work set the stage for understanding principal leadership and student achievement. They used three models in their experiments: direct (principals affect student learning is measured independent of other variables), mediated (principals affect student learning indirect), and reciprocal (a relationship exists when interacting between the school and its environment), which has not always been identified in the research when it is referenced. The larger influence of leadership with student achievement was evidenced in the indirect rather than the direct model (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Therefore, the

indirect findings were again reinforced as they suspected, and the effect was small, but again, statistically significant for principals influencing student achievement. This small, indirect, effect could be scrutinized as we have yet to find a study to prove a direct link to leadership and student achievement. In their findings “the principal’s role in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission, and goals came through in these studies as a primary avenue of influence” (p. 187) which validate the principal’s influence on a school’s success. So although Hallinger and Heck (1998) agree with the research on principals and student achievement, they identify that it is difficult to measure in a direct correlation.

Contradictions about principals’ abilities to influence student achievement are present in the literature. Some research states that no matter what variables are controlled for, such as student achievement, as determined by standardized test scores, students’ successes are based upon families’ socioeconomic status (SES), which is defined by lone-parent household, level of parental education, and household income levels (Tienken, Tramaglino, Lynch, & Turnamian, 2013). These studies and similar ones state that SES can predict student achievement on state assessments. Hence, one can speculate that no matter what a principal does or what school initiatives are implemented, the standardized test scores will not increase if the SES is low. Additionally, Wayne K. Hoy is synonymous with an alternative theory for impacting student achievement. His theory of “academic optimism” is the real predictor of student achievement (Smith & Hoy, 2007). Hoy’s academic optimism is composed of academic emphasis, faculty trust in students and parents, and teacher collective self-efficacy. Academic emphasis is the focus of pressure put on schools for high academic achievements, regardless of SES. When all teachers come together and believe they can make a difference and produce a desired outcome (high student achievement), they establish a culture for learning as a cohesive unit (Hoy, Tarter,



& Hoy, 2006). Generally, the above research identifies that there is conflicting research about the effects of the principal on student achievement.

The identified groundwork for the linkage between student achievement and principal leadership is clearly evidenced in the aforementioned section. Although there has not been an identifiable direct relationship, there is clearly and empirically an indirect one. I found 24 studies among books, journals, dissertations, reports, and so on where evidence shows principals can impact student achievement, yet there are many more citations (Blase & Blase, 1999; Cotton, 2003; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Matos, 2006; Robinson, 1985; Schmitt, 1990; Stronge et al., 2004; Waters et al., 2003). Therefore, one can conclude that selecting a principal is a very critical part in the process of improving student achievement. There are many ways a principal can impact student achievement, for example through improving instruction, improving the selection of teachers, creating a vision and goal for the school, or improving the total school effectiveness, and so on. Simon (2003) says it well by stating, "A first rate school has a first rate leader." (p.27). Regardless of the path the principal takes to improve student achievement, there is one commonality of effective schools: They hinge on superior school leadership (Norton, 2003).

Leadership related to instructional teachers can be a very influential piece to student achievement. Twenty-five percent of student growth is dependent on the principal, and he/she also can influence 33% of the learning by hiring and grooming teachers, as they account for the largest share of student growth (Cheney & Davis, 2011). Principals affect both the selection and motivation of teachers regarding goal setting in teachers' classrooms (Brewer, 1993). Knoepfel and Rinehart (2008) conducted a Kentucky study of 349 elementary schools over three school years, which included 349 principals. They found that the characteristics of principals such as

training and experience were the significant predictors of student achievement and explained 3.9% of the variance. Also, there was a direct influence to learning by the principal attracting, selecting, and retaining the effective teachers and setting directions for schools to be successful, which influences student achievement. Rammer (2007a) cites Zigarelli where he found 6 constructs of successful principals, and three of them are vital to student achievement: achievement-focused schools, hiring and firing teachers, and high teacher morale. Similarly, Uchiyama and Wolf (2002) found that successful principals intentionally collaborate with their teaching faculties to increase student learning (Jackson, 2004). Lastly, principals emphasizing structural factors such as staffing, goal setting, and operational organizations also impact student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004).

### **Characteristics of Effective Principals**

As discussed and cited in the first section of this chapter, the popularity of school reform emphasizing educational accountability has emerged with NCLB, RTTT, CCSS, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and AchieveNJ. These laws and initiatives hold the principal to be partially responsible for student achievement, whereas 10 years ago school reform did not have a component of school leadership (Wallace Foundation, 2012). As discussed in the second section of this chapter, research shows that principal and school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as impacting student growth (Leithwood et al., 2008, p. 27; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harrison, & Hopkins, 2006). In fact, Cheney and Davis (2011) reference that 25% of student learning is attributed to the principal, which is separate from the impact that occurs when they hire and cultivate teachers, where teachers account for 33% of student learning. So if the principal's role is so essential to student achievement, then we need to identify the characteristics of an effective principal, which will

ultimately ensure student growth. I found 25 cited works on identifiable practices, constructs, qualities, characteristics, themes, categories, domains, behaviors, dimensions, areas, concepts, functions, traits, descriptors, or responsibilities of effective principal leadership. Although there were similarities as well as differences, unison on a set of standards for effectiveness does not exist, but accepted models, frameworks, and guidelines do. Weber (2009) offers an excellent review of authors and how each set of research findings relating to effective leadership is associated with: (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communication and relationships, although the structure of his survey lends itself to criticism. These identified categories surfaced throughout the current review.

Clearly, there is a massive amount of research on leader effectiveness, and there will be specific characteristics superintendents favor more when selecting principals. Interestingly enough, Sergiovanni (1990) states that in behavioral sciences, the concept of leadership as compared to any other subject has more written about it, but less is known. This notion solidifies that although the abundance of research is plentiful and rich, there is no quintessential definitive answer to the precise characteristics of an effective leader. So while we can confirm the substantial amount of research, we can also review the historical framework of leadership and organizational theories.

Throughout history, the research pedagogy of effective school leadership varied. Lotulelei (2012) summarizes the shifts: 1920–early 1940 great leaders were able to make organizations more efficient through scientific management (Taylor, 1911); late 1940–1960 great leaders were defined by behaviors and methods to develop those behaviors; 1970–1980 focused on the interaction among leaders and followers; 1990s–2010 focused on effective leaders' abilities to institute systemic change. From manager to change agent, the principal's role in



today's educational society is one of an instructional leader moving teachers and students forward. Glass and Bearman (2003) found the research indicates the most important skill for a principal is instructional leadership (as cited in Rammer, 2007b). Simon (2003) stated:

You cannot have a first-rate school without first-rate leadership. And regardless of how charismatic or personable a school leader is, or how effective a manager, a principal is not going to improve academic achievement for all students unless he/she engages in his/her work differently. (p. 27).

Although there is an abundance of research identifying leadership characteristics, there are also theory-based models identifying organization and leadership theories. Herron (1994) uses a historical approach to identify four ideologies in organizational theory: scientific management, human relations, bureaucratic, and open systems. Bolman and Deal (2008) have noted a similar concept in that they view organizations as acting in frames such as: political, human resource, structural, and symbolic. School leadership standards were also developed, and two popular ones are ISLLC, which was discussed in Chapter 1 and from NASSP and NAEP. (National Association of Secondary School Principals and National Association of Elementary Principals).

Leadership theories are vast, and there is not a one-size-fits-all as far as categorical names and models. The ones that frequently arose from this research were leadership theories in trait, leadership behavior, contingency, charismatic, self-concept, transformational, transactional, constructivist, adaptive, power and influence, situational, and so on (Alig-Mielcarek, 2003; Gates, 2012, Hayes, 2012; Hopper, 2009; Larson, 2008; Maciel, 2005; Maness-Effler, 2012; Stewart 2012; Wiggins, 2013). The two most popular theories, which many dissertations referenced are transformation and transactional leadership, which was introduced by Burns

(1978). The discussion and distinction among the two can be summarized in stating that transactional is an exchange and transformational is about change. Hayes (2012) cites:

Burns (1978) introduced the theory of transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership occurs when leaders and followers participate in an exchange of needs and services to accomplish their independent objectives. The transformational process occurs when leaders and followers come together for the purpose of higher-level goals that are common to both (Sergiovanni, 1990). Burns considered transformational and transactional leadership as opposing concepts upon the leadership scale.

As mentioned above, the construct of this part of the chapter was to identify practices, constructs, qualities, characteristics, themes, categories, domains, behaviors, dimensions, areas, concepts, functions, traits, descriptors, or responsibilities associated with effective principals in the research. There were 25 authors found who each identified their own version of characteristics of an effective principal, all of which can be applied to the areas of instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication, as noted in Weber (2009).

While a significant amount of research and theories exist to define specific characteristics or qualities of effective principals and leadership, the fact that we cannot agree on a universal standard can be considered a research limitation. Additionally, the above citations do not account for the research that points to socioeconomic status being the sole predictor of student achievement, inferring that regardless of the strategic steps principals and/or teachers take to improve student achievement, their success will depend upon the students' socioeconomic status (Coleman et al., 1966; Jencks et al., 1972; Tienken et al., 2013; Turnamian, 2012). Hence,

students' family background and income are strong predictors of academic success. This research is worth mentioning here, as it ascertains a social dynamic effect on student achievement.

### **Superintendents' Perceptions of the Most Valued Principal Traits**

If the federal and state educational accountability mandates are here to stay and research supports the notion that school principals indirectly impact student achievement, then school districts need to ensure they hire the right person for the principalship, and that those individuals exude effective leadership characteristics. As mentioned in the previous section, there is empirical-based and theoretical-based evidence of what researchers identify as effective leadership; yet, there is not one widespread standard. However, there are accepted characteristics and practices associated with effective leadership. Hiring a principal to lead a school is the most critical task in the overall operations of a school district. They set the vision and mission for the school, safeguard the health and safety of students and staff, hire and fire teachers, serve as the instructional leader, monitor the data to ensure students are achieving, effect change in the overall school, and many more empirical and specific identifiers discussed previously. Although each potential principal has his/her own theory of leadership (i.e., transformational or transactional), principals are hired to execute the district's goals and enforce educational mandates, policies, and practices, and during this time in history, do so with the overarching focus of improving student achievement. As each school district has its own uniqueness, so does each superintendent. Influencing factors, such as district demographics or superintendent experience, will contribute to their preferred characteristics in hiring a principal. What one superintendent might consider being a "good fit" for a principal candidate, a different superintendent might not. The role of superintendents is to hire the best candidates, and their



decisions are influenced by their own personal and professional characteristics. Baltzell, Dentler, and Abt Associates (1983) and the National Institute of Education were the first to author a national report on school districts choosing leaders. They found that “good fit” for the community and personal characteristics sometimes are the deciding factors of successful candidate selection (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983). Contrary to Baltzell, Dentler, & Abt Associates (1983), Karol (1988) found that one’s ability to relate to his/her school’s demographics bears potentially greater clout than his/her professional qualifications; therefore, regardless of superintendents’ decisions on whom to hire, there are multiple influential factors that fluctuate among superintendents.

I found 20 studies relating to leadership characteristics superintendents valued in hiring principals; specifically, there were 12 studies in 11 different states where a variety of principal characteristics were important to superintendents. There were some similarities and some differences, but due to the varying nature and scope of the studies, the characteristics are not equally comparable. Therefore, an overall general view of the important characteristics associated with hiring principals will be presented. The analysis of the studies concludes that although there is not one set standard of characteristics valued in hiring principals, many of the characteristics are similar (i.e., instructional leadership, administrative experience, teaching experience, integrity, human relation skills, professional references, etc.). Once superintendents decide what it is they are looking for in principal candidates, they need to make hiring decisions that will match their criteria with their most valued qualities and skills for the principal candidacy.

Individual superintendents will conduct the hiring selection differently; some might use informal questioning or a homegrown rubric, while others might use a research-based



measurement tool or their own educator evaluation system. All of which are methods to collect information from candidates and see if their strengths match the leadership characteristics that are most important to superintendents. I found multiple tools used in the studies to measure principals' characteristics, such as, Van Meter, E. and Murphy's ISLLC Standards (1997), McEwan's *10 Traits of Highly Effective Principals* (2003), Cotton's 25 leadership behaviors (2003), Waters, Marzano, and McNulty's McREL's 21 Leadership Responsibilities in the Balanced Leadership Framework (n.d.), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP 2014) standards for effective principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, n.d.) Assessment Center Model of 10 skills important to the success of principals, and so forth. For the basis of this research, the specific measurement tool will not be considered in the study; rather, the factors influencing superintendents' hiring decisions of principals.

Regardless of what instrument, tool, or selected criteria that is used to hire principals, and despite the missing consensus on universally valued characteristics of principals, a summary integrating the literature findings presents a broad overview of the evidenced-based characteristics used to hire principals among the 11 states found. In chronological order, Table 1 represents the number of superintendents surveyed, the year they were surveyed, and the state in which the surveys were conducted. It should be noted that where there are fewer superintendents surveyed, these were qualitative studies. Table 2 lists the characteristics, traits, behaviors, indicators, and so forth in a variety of categories as an overview of findings in the 11 states.

Table 1

*Collection of Research on Superintendents' Surveyed*

| Date | State         | Author       | Superintendents surveyed |
|------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1987 | New York      | Van de Water | 576                      |
| 1988 | Arizona       | Karol        | 110                      |
| 1990 | Alabama       | Baron        | 35                       |
| 1990 | Massachusetts | Martin       | 136                      |
| 1995 | Indiana       | Dillon       | 191                      |
| 2000 | Iowa          | Muhlenbruck  | 44                       |
| 2001 | Virginia      | Baker        | 19                       |
| 2003 | New Jersey    | Clark        | 187                      |
| 2005 | Indiana       | Arrowood     | 173                      |
| 2007 | Wisconsin     | Rammer       | 200                      |
| 2009 | South Dakota  | Weber        | 120                      |
| 2011 | California    | O'Malley     | 29                       |

Although each superintendent values different leadership characteristics, they must all evaluate the effectiveness of their principals. In New Jersey, up until 2013-2014, superintendents could use any evaluation tool or model to evaluate principals. However, when New Jersey was unable to meet the requirements of NCLB, they adopted the Common Core State Standards, which mandated the establishment of a state-approved educator evaluation system, AchieveNJ, including student achievement components tied to teacher and principal effectiveness (NJDOE, 2013a). Since the culminating first year of the existence of AchieveNJ, there is hardly any data on the effects AchieveNJ has on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals; therefore, this study will contribute to the literature base in this area. This study seeks to identify the effects, if any, AchieveNJ has on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals.

Table 2

*Highlights of Superintendents' Most Valued Principal Traits*

| Author       | Highlights of Superintendents' Most Valued Principal Traits  |
|--------------|--|
| Van de Water | Instructional leadership, commitment to academic goals, human relations skills. Less important was being a business manager  |
| Karol        | Educational experience and expertise, curriculum expertise, program/staff development, understanding teaching and learning, interpersonal skills.  |
| Baron        | Professional references, standard administrative certificate, teaching experience, alignment of candidate goals with the school system goals   |
| Martin       | Leadership characteristics defined as: decision maker, change agent supervisor/evaluator, facilitator, and curriculum evaluator  |
| Dillon       | Human relations & instruction  |
| Muhlenbruck  | Human relation skills, instructional leadership, experience, and organizational fit with district  |
| Baker        | Experience, decision-making skills, good judgment, sense of justice, community focus, and management skills focused on instruction   |
| Clark        | Administrative experience, teaching experience and leadership, specifically: curriculum, human relations, special education experience, technology, data analysis and finance  |
| Arrowood     | Creating positive learning environments, student achievement, instructional leadership, child focused, integrity, goal setting, visible, hiring great teachers, communicating, staff development, enthusiasm, data use toward student achievement, involving staff in decisions                                      |
| Rammer       | McREL's 21 leadership responsibilities and six were significant and grouped as: Educational Vision/Practice, Conceptual Motivation, Awareness, Interaction, Achievement, and Adaptability. The four most important were: Communication, Culture, Outreach, and Focus. Communication was most important.              |
| Weber, R.    | Instructional leadership: classroom evaluation, motivate teachers to improve instruction. Communication and external relationships: working well with others and communicate in writing. Dealing with student conflict & creating positive learning environment. Preparation & experience: familiarity with district |



Table 2 (continued)

*Highlights of Superintendents' Most Valued Principal Traits*

| Author   | Highlights of Superintendents' Most Valued Principal Traits  |
|----------|--|
| O'Malley | Teaching experience, administrative experience, advanced degrees, human relations, instructional leadership, |

In summary, a significant amount of empirical research proves classroom instruction impacts student achievement followed by school leadership, where school leaders possess certain characteristics, which have proven to impact student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Waters et al., 2003). In fact, in almost every named research in this dissertation, this concept was mentioned; therefore, there are characteristics that are desirable to superintendents when hiring principals. These characteristics are identified in 11 states and encompass instructional leadership, management skills, preparation and experience, communications and external relationships, and so on as outlined in Table 2. What might be important to one superintendent might not be as important to another. Potentially, the superintendent's job scope, years of experience, district size, or other factors, might affect the criteria sought after (Weber, 2009). As the literature explains, superintendents hire principals, and their decisions are influenced by a variety of factors. The literature portrays the various characteristics superintendents consider when selecting a principal, and there is no agreement regarding what those characteristics are, although there are commonalities. Due to the newly implemented AchieveNJ, there is no research on the effects this policy might have on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals; hence, this is what this investigation explores.



### **Four Researchable Domains**

The lack of literature available on AchieveNJ and the evidence supporting the vast research conducted by Weber (2009) and Rammer (2007b) influenced the basis for the identified four research domains mentioned previously. Upon review of 50 references, I deem Weber (2009) and Rammer (2007b) the most comprehensive summary of the literature evidence on effective principal characteristics. The four areas, namely: instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication, will assist in the development of the literature on the effects of AchieveNJ and its influences on the hiring standards in the existing literature regarding superintendents' hiring decisions of principals and their views on the most valued principal leadership characteristics. The domains are covered by the findings from Weber (2009) and Rammer (2007b) in two charts located in Appendix B.

### **Three Critical Issues to Consider**

Three critical issues that emerged from this literature review and can be considered the foundation of this study are:

1. To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?
2. To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?
3. To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

## Chapter 3

### Research Methods

#### Introduction and Design

In this chapter, a summary of the research methodology will be explained, which will include the research design, population, sample, methodology, instrument, collection of data and analysis. This quantitative research was based on a cross-sectional design in which a semi structured questionnaire was administered to New Jersey superintendents in a convenience sampling.

Commencing in the 2013-2014 school year, New Jersey principals' evaluations had a student achievement component for the first time. AchieveNJ, the new evaluation system, requires principals to be evaluated in part by how successful they are improving student achievement. This newly instituted policy is mandated by the NJDOE. The policy, AchieveNJ, holds principals accountable for improving student test scores. This study is intended to determine any influence AchieveNJ might have on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. In an age of accountability, superintendents value different principals' leadership characteristics, which impact their hiring decisions. Furthermore, superintendents' backgrounds might also play a part in their hiring decisions. Additionally, this research will reveal introductory findings for any effects New Jersey's AchieveNJ might have on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals.

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, an abundance of literature exists on superintendents' backgrounds influencing their hiring decisions of principals. With this research base, there are a multitude of leadership characteristics valued by superintendents when considering principal candidates. In addition, superintendents' backgrounds influence the importance they place on

instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communications. In conjunction with the new mandate AchieveNJ, this study will uncover superintendents' shift, if any, on the importance placed on principal leadership characteristics. In summary, this quantitative research study sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?
2. To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?
3. To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

### **Population**

The population for this study encompasses the individuals who are New Jersey superintendents during the 2014-2015 school year, which consisted of 693 superintendents as identified by the New Jersey Department of Education's Public School Directory website. Superintendents must be employed in public school districts, as these superintendents are required to implement AchieveNJ. The array of public school superintendents in New Jersey consisted of rural, suburban, and urban school districts, varying in grade configurations such as, K-12, K-6, K-8, 9-12, and so on and superintendents who were fulfilling the shared role of principal and superintendent as well as pure superintendents.



## **Sample**

A purposeful convenience sample was chosen to identify and represent the population as to ensure a high success rate of return of the survey. Each executive county superintendent holds roundtable meetings for the superintendents within that specific county. I selected the counties of Morris, Sussex, Warren, and Passaic to represent the superintendent sample size. These counties offer a variety of district configurations and areas of living. The numbers of superintendents in each county are as follows: Morris (41), Warren (25), Sussex (27), and Passaic (27). If all superintendents listed completed the voluntary survey, the sample size would be 120 superintendents. In actuality, at each of the various county meetings, not every superintendent was present at the meetings. The attendance for each meeting was as follows: Morris (31), Warren (24), Sussex (20), and Passaic (20). The total number of superintendents at the four county meetings was 95. The total number of completed surveys was 61, which is a 64.2% response rate. Hard copies of the cover letter of solicitation and surveys were administered at the beginning of each county roundtable meeting where superintendents had the option of volunteering to complete the survey (See Appendix A). Although this is not a random sample, this is an expedient way to gather survey data within a small, captive audience; however, limits to generalizability will be noted when interpreting the data.

## **Instrument**

A survey was the selected instrument to gather the data because the basis of this research involves how superintendents view AchieveNJ in relation to hiring principals. The most direct way to attain answers to questions relevant to this topic would be to survey superintendents. As noted by McKenna, Hasson, and Keeney (2006), the limitations to choosing a cross-sectional survey is that it gathers data in one point in time and does not account for changes in subsequent



years (as cited in Coughlan, Cronin, & Ryan, 2009). The survey instrument was driven by three prominent studies of superintendents' perceptions on hiring principals (Rammer, 2007b; Reichhart, 2008; Weber, 2009) where intensive and thorough literature reviews of the effective characteristics of principals were synthesized and revealed. Each researcher tabulated the literature on leadership characteristics and adapted their own survey instrument while maintaining the fidelity of the literature. Over the course of my own review of the literature, a reiteration of the existing literature on characteristics of effective principals and superintendents' perceptions of the most valued principal traits surfaced. These findings and the aforementioned studies shaped the contents of the survey instrument for this study. This instrument measured: superintendents' reactions to AchieveNJ and its impact on their hiring decisions of principals in the areas of (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communication. Lastly, data on superintendents' backgrounds regarding their district configuration, district enrollment, education level, years of superintendent experience, and job scope were examined. Construct validity is maintained through the literature as well as having the survey field tested by four superintendents encompassing two current superintendents and two former superintendents. This focus group served to reinforce the reliability of the survey and ensure the questions were appropriate.

The survey consists of six parts with five subquestions in each relating to AchieveNJ, instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, communication, and superintendent background information. The first five parts asked superintendents to circle the level of importance they place on each item. The sixth part, consisting of five questions, asked for superintendents to complete background information about their district and professional characteristics. The content of each of the subquestions was driven by the literature review in

Reichhart (2008) and Weber (2009) and was consistently echoed in Chapter 2. In the studies conducted by Reichhart (2008) and Weber (2009), their survey instruments, although different, had commonalities among the questions. Each survey endured a critique and field test for item reliability. Due to the nature of the current survey, the previous surveys' reliability is justified for the item content in this instrument. The only literature on AchieveNJ is in the context of the policy and literature on stakeholders' reactions to AchieveNJ; therefore, the items on AchieveNJ are gathering superintendents' evaluations of how this mandate has impacted their view on principal accountability.

Part 1 of the survey instrument requests superintendents to evaluate how important AchieveNJ is regarding their hiring decisions of principals as attributed to education policy, principal practice, principal accountability, improving student achievement, and hiring effective principals. Part 2 of the survey instrument contains five subquestions on instructional leadership and requests superintendents to evaluate how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attribute to the principal's ability to evaluate teachers, analyze data, introduce technology, improve test scores, and be an instructional leader. Part 3 of the survey instrument contains five subquestions on building management and requests superintendents to evaluate how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attribute to the principal's ability to enforce discipline, manage financial budgets, prioritize managerial tasks, manage student conflict, and supervise classroom management. Part 4 of the survey instrument contains five subquestions on preparation and experience and requests superintendents to evaluate how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attribute to the principal's previous principal experience, previous classroom experience, district familiarity, intrapersonal professional development, and professional demeanor. Part 5 of the survey instrument contains five subquestions on communication and requests superintendents

to evaluate how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attribute to the principal's ability to outreach and interaction with stakeholders, gather input from stakeholders, communicating in writing, foster a positive school climate, and community participation. Part 6 of the survey instrument contains five subquestions on superintendents' backgrounds on their district configuration, enrollment, years of superintendent experience, education level, and job scope.

### **Data Collection**

County superintendents from Morris, Sussex, Warren, and Passaic were be contacted in the summer of 2014 to inquire when the superintendent roundtable meetings would be held in the fall. Roundtable meetings are monthly meetings where superintendents in each county meet to discuss current issues in education. Then, the president of each roundtable group was contacted to gain permission to attend a meeting in the fall to solicit volunteers to complete the survey. At each roundtable meeting, the cover letter of solicitation accompanied each survey and explained the purpose of the research study. Surveys were distributed to all superintendents in attendance, and those that volunteered completed the survey. Completed surveys were collected. Any absent superintendents would not be considered. The process of gathering all the completed surveys encompassed the months of October, November, and December. The length of time to administer the survey was no longer than 5 to 10 minutes at each roundtable meeting. The dates and locations of each roundtable meeting, the number of superintendents in attendance, and completed surveys are as follows: Because the nature of this study involves human subjects, this research had to be approved by Seton Hall University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), where I gained approval in September 2014. Prior to any data collected this approval was earned as to maintain the well-being of the participants.



The variables measured were superintendents' evaluations of AchieveNJ and any influence they might have on their hiring decisions. Given their reactions to AchieveNJ, the importance they place on principal leadership characteristics (instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication) was also measured. The final measure was how superintendents' backgrounds influence the importance of principal leadership characteristics (instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication). The framework of the study is the effect AchieveNJ has on superintendents' hiring decisions, their backgrounds, and principal leadership characteristics. Superintendents' backgrounds are measured by their answers to the fill-in questions relating to their professional and personal characteristics. Answers on their backgrounds will impact their importance placed on instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, and communication, during a point in time with the existence of AchieveNJ, as outlined in Table 3.

Once all surveys were completed and secured, the responses were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for easier interpretation preceding further data analysis. The next phase was to analyze the data for differences, similarities, trends, outliers, and other relationships.



Table 3

*Variables Defined*

| Variable                            | Category                             | Measurement  | Status      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| AchieveNJ                           |                                      | 5 items<br>K-12<br>K-8<br>K-6<br>7-12<br>9-12  | Dependent   |
| District Configuration              | Superintendents' backgrounds         | Other  | Independent |
| District Enrollment                 | Superintendents' backgrounds         | 200 - 500<br>501 - 800<br>801 - 1,100<br>1,101 or more   | Independent |
| Years as Superintendent             | Superintendents' backgrounds         | 0-5<br>6-10<br>11 or more  | Independent |
| Education Level                     | Superintendents' backgrounds         | MA – Master's Degree<br>EdD - Doctoral Degree<br>Ph.D – Doctoral Degree<br>EdS - Specialist Degree | Independent |
| Job Scope                           | Superintendents' backgrounds         | Full-time Superintendent<br>Superintendent/Principal<br>Shared Superintendent                      | Independent |
| Instructional Leadership            | Principal leadership characteristics | Other<br>Mean of 5 subquestions  | Independent |
| Management Preparation & Experience | Principal leadership characteristics | Mean of 5 subquestions   | Independent |
| Communication                       | Principal leadership characteristics | Mean of 5 subquestions   | Independent |

**Data Analysis**

Survey answers were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and exported into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 22.0) to prepare the results for analysis.

Descriptive statistics and cross tabulation were used, which covered frequencies, mean, standard

deviations, and scale scores. Additionally a 0.05 significance level was maintained. Results were interpreted using categorical methods of independent *t* tests, one-way ANOVA, chi-square test, and frequency distribution to determine if AchieveNJ has had any influence on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. The answers to the three research questions will be analyzed as follows:

*Research Question 1 Analysis*

To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?

*Research Question 2 Analysis*

To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?

*Research Question 3 Analysis*

To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

## Chapter 4

### The Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe the influence, if any, AchieveNJ might have on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. The newly instituted policy, AchieveNJ, was in its inaugural year in 2013-2014. During the time of the present study, 2014-2015, AchieveNJ was in its second year, and little if any research was available about the new policy. The newly mandated policy holds principals accountable for improving student achievement, which is a criterion of their evaluations, specifically their teachers' abilities to raise the students' scores on state assessments and the outcomes of individual teacher-created student growth objectives. If a principal has been rated ineffective or partially effective 2 years in a row, the superintendent must file tenure charges. The controversial and high profile AchieveNJ has caused much angst among New Jersey educators, as identified in the media over the past year (Cerf, 2014; Keyes-Mahoney, 2014; Mooney, 2014; NJDOE, 2013a).

The guiding questions of this study are as follows:

1. To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?
2. To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?
3. To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

The cover letter and survey were distributed to 95 New Jersey superintendents at their monthly superintendent roundtable meetings in the counties of Morris, Sussex, Warren, and Passaic during the months of October and November in 2014. The response rate was 64.2% which translated to 61 completed surveys returned.

The survey consisted of six parts. Part 1 was created to gather opinions on how superintendents viewed AchieveNJ. Parts 2 through 5 consisted of the importance superintendents' place on principal leadership characteristics during a time of abiding by AchieveNJ. Part 2 was created to gather opinions on the how the importance of each item relating to instructional leadership has impacted superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Part 3 was created to gather opinions on the how the importance of each item relating to management has impacted superintendents' hiring decisions. Part 4 was created to gather opinions on the how the importance of each item relating to preparation/experience has impacted superintendents' hiring decisions. Part 5 was created to gather opinions on the how the importance of each item relating to communications has impacted superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Parts 1 through 5 were rated on a Likert scale with a rating of 1–5 as indicated on the survey in Appendix A. Part 6 was created to gather information on the backgrounds of the superintendents and how that influenced what leadership characteristics they consider important. Each part had five questions embedded in the survey.

Findings from the study are presented in this chapter. Superintendents' backgrounds are explained by identifying their district configurations, student enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope. Superintendents' beliefs about AchieveNJ will be discussed by providing their Likert scale responses. The importance that superintendents place on principal leadership characteristics: (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c)



preparation and experience, and (d) communications is explained by drawing on the responses to the questionnaire. Finally, the chapter ends by presenting the results to the three research questions.

### Superintendents' Backgrounds

The purpose for gathering background information of superintendents was to discover if these identifiable items influence their beliefs of AchieveNJ. There were five background variables: district configuration, enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope.

**District configuration.** Superintendents were asked to identify their districts' configuration. Of those who responded, 47.5 % (28) of the superintendents were from K-8 districts, 30.5% (18) were K-12, 10.2% (6) were K-6, 6.8% (4) were 9-12, 1.7% (1) were each from 7-12, PK-8, and Special Services. Table 4 displays the district configurations.

Table 4

#### *New Jersey Superintendents' District Configurations*

|         |                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|---------|------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | 7-12             | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 1.7                |
|         | 9-12             | 4         | 6.6     | 6.8           | 8.5                |
|         | K-12             | 18        | 29.5    | 30.5          | 39.0               |
|         | K-6              | 6         | 9.8     | 10.2          | 49.2               |
|         | K-8              | 28        | 45.9    | 47.5          | 96.6               |
|         | PK-8             | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 98.3               |
|         | Special Services | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total            | 59        | 96.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | 99               | 2         | 3.3     |               |                    |
|         | Total            | 61        | 100.0   |               |                    |

**Enrollment.** The next variable for superintendents to identify was their districts' student enrollment. Twelve (20%) superintendents had enrollments between 200 and 500 students, 10 (16.7 %) superintendents had 501–800 students, 11 (18.3%) superintendents had 801–1,100 students, and 27 (45%) superintendents had enrollments of 1,101 and higher. See Appendix C for Table C1 results on the student enrollments of the superintendents, which were calculated from SPSS. Table 5 provides a snapshot of the results as well.

Table 5

*New Jersey Superintendents' District Enrollments*

| Background characteristics | <i>n</i> | Percentages |
|----------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Enrollment                 | 60       |             |
| 200 – 500                  | 12       | 20%         |
| 501 – 800                  | 10       | 16.7%       |
| 801 – 1,100                | 11       | 18.3%       |
| 1,100 or higher            | 27       | 45%         |

**Years as a superintendent.** The years superintendents have been in their position was the third background variable. The survey asked superintendents to indicate the number of years they have held the superintendent position. Twenty-nine (50%) superintendents were in their position for 0–5 years, 17 (29.3%) superintendents held their position 6–10 years, and 12 (20.6%) superintendents held their position 11 or more years. See Appendix C for Table C2 results on how many years the superintendents have held this position. Table 6 provides a snapshot of the results as well.

Table 6

*Years as Superintendent*

| Background characteristics | <i>n</i> | Percentages |
|----------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Years as superintendent    | 58       |             |
| 0 – 5                      | 29       | 50%         |
| 6 – 10                     | 17       | 29.3%       |
| 11 or more                 | 12       | 20.6%       |

**Education level.** Education level was another factor to consider when identifying superintendents' backgrounds. The survey asked superintendents to identify their education level with choices of master's (MA), doctoral (EdD), doctoral (PhD), or specialist degree (EdS). Sixty-one percent (36) of the superintendents had MA, 32.2% (19) had EdD, 5.1% (3) had EdS, and 1.7% (1) had EdD (ABD, all but the dissertation). There were no superintendents with a PhD. The educational level of superintendents is outlined in Table 7.

Table 7

*New Jersey Superintendents' Education Level*

|         |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | EdD       | 19        | 31.1    | 32.2          | 32.2               |
|         | EdD (ABD) | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 33.9               |
|         | EdS       | 3         | 4.9     | 5.1           | 39.0               |
|         | MA        | 36        | 59.0    | 61.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total     | 59        | 96.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | 99        | 2         | 3.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |           | 61        | 100.0   |               |                    |

**Job scope.** Superintendents were asked to indicate their job scope with choices of full-time superintendent, superintendent/principal, shared superintendent, or other. Of those who responded, 81.4% (48) of the respondents were full-time superintendents, 10.2% (6) were

superintendents/principals, 6.8% (4) were shared superintendents, and 1.7% (1) was an assistant superintendent. Table 8 displays the information on the job scope of the superintendents surveyed.

Table 8

*New Jersey Superintendents' Job Scope*

|         |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Asst. Super. | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 1.7                |
|         | FT Super     | 48        | 78.7    | 81.4          | 83.1               |
|         | Shared       | 4         | 6.6     | 6.8           | 89.8               |
|         | Super/Princ  | 6         | 9.8     | 10.2          | 100.0              |
|         | Total        | 59        | 96.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | 99           | 2         | 3.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |              | 61        | 100.0   |               |                    |

**Superintendents' beliefs about AchieveNJ.** Part 1 of the survey consisted of questions for superintendents to evaluate how important AchieveNJ is regarding their hiring decisions. There were five areas to consider: education policy, principal practice, principal accountability, improving student achievement, and hiring effective principals. The mean scores for each topic are outlined in Table 9. The mean scores would suggest that the most important areas in order of priority to superintendents are: principal accountability, principal practice, improving student achievement, hiring effective principals, and education policy last. The survey requested superintendents to evaluate how important AchieveNJ was regarding their hiring decisions. AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to principal accountability the most ( $M = 3.92$ ). The second factor they found important was principal practice ( $M = 3.74$ ). Next, AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to improving student achievement. Next to



last, was hiring an effective principal, while education policy was the least important factor impacted by AchieveNJ.

Table 9

*Mean Scores for New Jersey Superintendents' Level of Importance on AchieveNJ*

|           |         | Education Policy | Principal practice | Principal accountability | Improving SA | Hiring effective principals |
|-----------|---------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>N</i>  | Valid   | 61               | 61                 | 61                       | 61           | 61                          |
|           | Missing | 0                | 0                  | 0                        | 0            | 0                           |
| <i>M</i>  |         | 3.26             | 3.74               | 3.92                     | 3.69         | 3.64                        |
| Median    |         | 4.00             | 4.00               | 4.00                     | 4.00         | 4.00                        |
| Mode      |         | 4                | 5                  | 5                        | 5            | 5                           |
| <i>SD</i> |         | 1.401            | 1.471              | 1.394                    | 1.348        | 1.472                       |

It is interesting to also note the findings from the frequency tables from Part 1 of the survey, which are located in Table C3 in Appendix C. The findings are consistent with the mean scores, where 77% of superintendents ( $n = 57$ ) rated principal accountability as being *very important* or *important*. Of those who responded, 60.7% ( $n = 37$ ) rated education policy as having the lowest importance of all the indicators relating to AchieveNJ.

### **Superintendents' Importance Level of Principal Leadership Characteristics**

Parts 2 through 5 of the survey consisted of the importance superintendents' place on principal leadership characteristics. These sections were created to gather opinions on how the importance of each item in the areas of (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications has impacted superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Each part has five items pertaining to the areas described above in which superintendents evaluated the importance level impacting their hiring decisions. The mean scores will be discussed here as well as the frequency tables.

**Instructional leadership.** Part 2 surveyed the importance superintendents placed on instructional leadership in hiring principals. There were five areas to consider: evaluating teachers for improving student excellence, analyzing test data for improving student/teacher excellence, introducing new technologies, showing evidence in raising standardized test scores, and demonstrating motivation in instructional leadership. The mean scores for each topic are outlined in Table 10. Based on the findings, the mean scores would suggest that the most important areas in order of priority to superintendents are: evaluating teachers, raising test scores, analyzing data, demonstrating instructional leadership, and introducing new technologies last. The survey asked superintendents to evaluate how important each item impacted their hiring decisions of principals, specifically asking how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the five areas identified. AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to evaluating teachers the most ( $M = 3.64$ ). The second factor they found important was the principal's ability to raise test scores ( $M = 3.61$ ). Next, AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to analyzing data ( $M = 3.54$ ). After that was the principal's ability to demonstrate instructional leadership ( $M = 3.44$ ) and lastly, was introducing new technologies ( $M = 3.41$ ).

Table 10

*Mean Scores for New Jersey Superintendents' Level of Importance on Instructional Leadership*

|           | Eval teachers | Test data<br>analysis | New tech | Evidence of<br>raising scores | Instructional<br>leadership |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| N Valid   | 61            | 61                    | 61       | 61                            | 61                          |
| Missing   | 0             | 0                     | 0        | 0                             | 0                           |
| <i>M</i>  | 3.64          | 3.54                  | 3.41     | 3.61                          | 3.44                        |
| Median    | 4.00          | 4.00                  | 4.00     | 4.00                          | 4.00                        |
| Mode      | 4             | 5                     | 4        | 4                             | 4                           |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.461         | 1.501                 | 1.371    | 1.370                         | 1.511                       |

The findings from the frequency table for Part 2 of the survey, located in Table C4 in Appendix C, are consistent with the mean scores, where 70.5% of superintendents ( $n = 43$ ) rated evaluating teachers to be the most important indicator of instructional leadership in that they rated it *very important* or *important*. Tied for the least important was demonstrating instructional leadership (62.3%,  $n = 38$ ) and introducing new technologies (62.3%,  $n = 38$ ).

**Management.** Part 3 surveyed the importance superintendents considered on the topic of management when hiring principals. There were five areas to consider: enforcing rules, managing the budget, executing managerial tasks, dealing with discipline, and supervising staff. The mean scores for each area are outlined in Table 11. The mean scores suggest that the most important areas in order of importance are: executing managerial tasks, supervising staff, managing the budget, enforcing rules, and then, dealing with discipline. The survey asked superintendents to evaluate how important each item impacted their hiring decisions, specifically asking them how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the five areas of management. AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to executing managerial tasks the most ( $M = 3.13$ ). The second most important area of management was supervising staff ( $M = 3.00$ ), following managing the budget ( $M = 2.43$ ). The second to last most important area was enforcing rules ( $M = 2.39$ ) with dealing with discipline as the last area ( $M = 2.30$ ).



Table 11

*Mean Scores for New Jersey Superintendents' Level of Importance on Management*

|        |         | Rules | Budget | Managerial | Discipline | Supervise |
|--------|---------|-------|--------|------------|------------|-----------|
| N      | Valid   | 61    | 61     | 61         | 61         | 61        |
|        | Missing | 0     | 0      | 0          | 0          | 0         |
| M      |         | 2.39  | 2.43   | 3.13       | 2.30       | 3.00      |
| Median |         | 2.00  | 2.00   | 4.00       | 2.00       | 4.00      |
| Mode   |         | 1     | 1      | 4          | 1          | 4         |
| SD     |         | 1.509 | 1.396  | 1.533      | 1.453      | 1.592     |

The frequency table for management reveals superintendents rated the principal's ability to supervise staff (57.4%,  $n = 35$ ) to be the most important indicator, in that they rated it *very important* or *important*. Slightly lower results should also be noted in 55.7% ( $n = 34$ ) of superintendents considered the principal's ability to execute managerial tasks to be *very important* or *important* was (55.7%,  $n = 34$ ), which received the second highest rating. When comparing the frequency table findings to the mean scores, these areas are reversed, where executing managerial tasks had a higher mean than supervising staff.

The percentage of superintendents who rated three areas of *no importance* in making hiring decisions consisted of: enforcing rules (45.9%,  $n = 28$ ), managing the budget (41%,  $n = 25$ ), and dealing with discipline (49.2%,  $n = 30$ ). One can delineate that the top two areas superintendents consider important are supervising staff and executing managerial tasks, while a lot of them, feel there is no importance in their hiring decisions when considering the principal's ability to enforce rules, manage the budget, and deal with discipline. See Appendix C for Table C5, which displays the frequency table for these response items in Part 3 of the survey on management.

**Preparation and experience.** Part 4 surveyed the importance superintendents placed on preparation/experience in hiring principals. There were five areas to consider: principal experience, teacher experience, district familiarity, professional development/education, and professional demeanor. The mean scores for each topic are outlined in Table 12. Based on the findings, the mean scores would suggest that the most important areas in order of priority to superintendents are: teacher experience, professional development/education, principal experience, professional demeanor, and district familiarity last. The survey asked superintendents to evaluate how important each item impacted their hiring decisions, specifically asking how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the five areas identified. AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to the principal having classroom teaching experience the most ( $M = 3.16$ ). The second area they found important was the principal's own professional development and his/her education level ( $M = 3.13$ ). The third area they found important was how much prior experience the principal had as a principal ( $M = 2.75$ ). Second to last of the importance level was the principal's professional demeanor ( $M = 2.61$ ). Finally, the least important area was the principal's familiarity with the district ( $M = 2.38$ ).

Table 12

*Mean Scores for New Jersey Superintendents' Level of Importance on Preparation/Experience*

|           |         | Principal exp | Teacher exp | Familiarity | PD & educ | Prof. Demeanor |
|-----------|---------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| N         | Valid   | 61            | 61          | 61          | 61        | 61             |
|           | Missing | 0             | 0           | 0           | 0         | 0              |
| <i>M</i>  |         | 2.75          | 3.16        | 2.38        | 3.13      | 2.61           |
| Median    |         | 3.00          | 4.00        | 2.00        | 4.00      | 3.00           |
| Mode      |         | 1             | 4           | 1           | 4         | 1              |
| <i>SD</i> |         | 1.513         | 1.572       | 1.368       | 1.522     | 1.541          |

The findings in the frequency table for preparation/experience reveal that there was a tie where superintendents rated previous experience as a teacher (54.1%,  $n = 33$ ) and professional development/education (54.1%,  $n = 33$ ) as the most important indicator in this part of the survey, by rating it *very important* or *important*. Yet, the mean scores listed teacher experience to be valued first and professional development/education second. It is also interesting to note that a large percentage of superintendents responded that district familiarity (41%,  $n = 25$ ) and professional demeanor (42.6%,  $n = 26$ ) had no importance to them when hiring principals. See Appendix C for Table C6, which displays the frequency table for these response items in Part 4 of the survey on preparation/experience.

**Communication.** Part 5 surveyed the importance superintendents placed on communication when hiring principals. There were five areas to consider: outreaching, soliciting stakeholder input, written communication, fostering the school climate, and community participation. The mean scores for each area are outlined in Table 13. The mean scores suggest that the most important areas in rank order are: school climate, writing, outreach, stakeholder input, and community participation last. The survey asked superintendents to evaluate how important each item impacted their hiring decisions, specifically, asking how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the five areas identified. AchieveNJ impacted the importance they attributed to fostering a school climate the most ( $M = 3.03$ ). The second area they found important was communicating well in writing ( $M = 2.97$ ). Next, AchieveNJ impacted the importance superintendents placed on outreaching to staff, students, parents, and the community ( $M = 2.89$ ). The last two areas valued in order of priority were soliciting stakeholder input ( $M = 2.87$ ) and the principal being a community participant last ( $M = 2.67$ ).



Table 13

*Mean Scores for New Jersey Superintendents' Level of Importance on Communication*

|           |         | Outreach | Stakeholders | Writing | School climate | Community |
|-----------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|----------------|-----------|
| N         | Valid   | 61       | 61           | 61      | 61             | 61        |
|           | Missing | 0        | 0            | 0       | 0              | 0         |
| <i>M</i>  |         | 2.89     | 2.87         | 2.97    | 3.03           | 2.67      |
| Median    |         | 3.00     | 3.00         | 3.00    | 4.00           | 3.00      |
| Mode      |         | 1        | 1            | 1       | 1              | 1         |
| <i>SD</i> |         | 1.654    | 1.607        | 1.732   | 1.683          | 1.620     |

The findings from the frequency table for Part 5 of the survey, located in Appendix C in Table C7, are consistent with the mean scores, where 55.7% of superintendents ( $n = 34$ ) rated school climate to be the most important indicator of the area of community, in that they rated it *very important* or *important*. The least important area was being a community participant (42.6%,  $n = 26$ ), which was aligned to the findings from the mean scores.

**Data Results for Research Question 1**

The research question was:

To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?

The summary variables of superintendents' overall attitudes about AchieveNJ were created. The resulting variables were: AchieveNJ summary, instructional summary, preparation/experience summary, and communication summary. The statistical analysis used at this point in time was a Pearson correlation ( $r$ ); Table 14 presents the correlations between the variables. A strong  $r$  value is associated with the correlation between AchieveNJ summary and

instructional summary ( $r = .799, p < 0.000$ ). This means that superintendents' overall attitudes about AchieveNJ are strongly correlated with their attitudes about instructional leadership and that relationship is statistically significant. Furthermore, since  $r$  is positive, this means the more value superintendents placed on AchieveNJ the more value they also would place on instructional leadership. In fact, it was the strongest variable out of the all of summary variables. The next strongest and statistically significant relationship correlated superintendents' values in the principals' preparation/experience ( $r = .616, p < .000$ ) and AchieveNJ. The third strongest relationship was between AchieveNJ and communication ( $r = .597, p < .000$ ), and it was statistically significant. The weakest relationship, although still statistically significant, is the management summary variable ( $r = .479, p < .000$ ).

Table 14

*Correlations of Summary Variables*

|                       |                     | AchieveNJ<br>summary | Instructional<br>summary | Management<br>summary | PrepExp<br>summary | Comm<br>summary |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| AchieveNJ summary     | Pearson Correlation | 1                    | .799**                   | .479**                | .616**             | .597**          |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                      | .000                     | .000                  | .000               | .000            |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                 | 61              |
| Instructional summary | Pearson Correlation | .799**               | 1                        | .650**                | .736**             | .710**          |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 |                          | .000                  | .000               | .000            |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                 | 61              |
| Management summary    | Pearson Correlation | .479**               | .650**                   | 1                     | .797**             | .783**          |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 | .000                     |                       | .000               | .000            |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                 | 61              |
| PrepExp summary       | Pearson Correlation | .616**               | .736**                   | .797**                | 1                  | .839**          |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 | .000                     | .000                  |                    | .000            |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                 | 61              |
| Comm summary          | Pearson Correlation | .597**               | .710**                   | .783**                | .839**             | 1               |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 | .000                     | .000                  | .000               |                 |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                 | 61              |

Note. \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The means for all summary variables range from 14 – 18. AchieveNJ had the highest mean of all the summary variables ( $M = 18.2459$ ), which means that the majority of superintendents felt AchieveNJ impacted their hiring decisions. The next highest mean was associated with instructional leadership ( $M = 17.6393$ ), which suggests that AchieveNJ changed the importance attributed to the principal's ability to be an instructional leader. Next, communication was the third highest mean ( $M = 14.4262$ ) and preparation/experience was after that ( $M = 14.0328$ ). The lowest mean score was related to AchieveNJ and its importance attributed to the principal's ability to be a manager. One can delineate that according to the superintendents surveyed, this analysis suggests that the value superintendents placed on AchieveNJ and instructional leadership are considerably stronger than the other three (management, preparation/experience, and communication). See Table 15.

Table 15

*Mean Scores for Summary Variables*

|        |         | AchieveNJ<br>summary | Instructional<br>summary | Management<br>summary | Prep/Exp<br>summary | Comm<br>summary |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| N      | Valid   | 61                   | 61                       | 61                    | 61                  | 61              |
|        | Missing | 0                    | 0                        | 0                     | 0                   | 0               |
| M      |         | 18.2459              | 17.6393                  | 13.2459               | 14.0328             | 14.4262         |
| Median |         | 20.0000              | 20.0000                  | 13.0000               | 16.0000             | 17.0000         |
| Mode   |         | 23.00                | 20.00                    | 5.00                  | 5.00                | 5.00            |
| SD     |         | 6.37091              | 6.53971                  | 6.57940               | 6.42123             | 7.75341         |

The second part of this research question was to investigate the importance superintendents' place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications in their hiring decisions. As described above, instructional



leadership was the strongest characteristic superintendents considered when hiring principals given AchieveNJ (Table 9, Table 10, Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13). The weakest characteristic was management; therefore, one can conclude that since AchieveNJ has been in existence, superintendents value instructional leadership as the most important factor when hiring principals.

### **Data Results for Research Question 2**

The second research question was:

To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?

The background variables examined were district configurations, enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope. Since the variables defining superintendents' backgrounds are both numeric and nominal, I had to conduct two different statistical analyses. First, the numeric variables, years as a superintendent and district enrollment, were correlated with the summary variables. After correlating these variables in SPSS with the summary variables, the findings suggest that the years as a superintendent and district enrollment were not significantly related. See Table 16.

Table 16

*Correlations of Summary Variables, Years as a Superintendent, and Enrollment*

|                       |                     | Years as super | Enrollment |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|
| AchieveNJ summary     | Pearson Correlation | .168           | .138       |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .208           | .293       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |
| Instructional summary | Pearson Correlation | .099           | .123       |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .461           | .349       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |
| Management summary    | Pearson Correlation | -.046          | .086       |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .729           | .516       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |
| PrepExp summary       | Pearson Correlation | -.019          | .046       |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .885           | .725       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |
| Comm summary          | Pearson Correlation | .048           | -.024      |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .719           | .857       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |
| Years as super        | Pearson Correlation | 1              | -.050      |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                | .709       |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 58         |
| Enrollment            | Pearson Correlation | -.050          | 1          |
|                       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .709           |            |
|                       | <i>n</i>            | 58             | 60         |

*Note.* \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, the nominal variables of district configuration, education level, and job scope were examined by running a variety of statistical analysis, such as a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), independent *t* test, and crosstabs with chi-square. First, to examine the results of how superintendents' district configuration impacts their view on AchieveNJ, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with AchieveNJ summary as the dependent variable and district configuration as the independent variable. A code of "1" was given to those districts with

configurations of 7–12, 9–12, K–12, and Special Services, as to encompass those districts with high schools. Then a code of “0” was given to K–8, K–6, and PK–8 districts. A new, numeric district configuration code variable was created. An ANOVA was chosen to investigate if there is a difference between the two groups: AchieveNJ summary and district configuration. Post hoc tests were not performed because SPSS noted that there are fewer than three groups. The results are displayed in Table 17.

Table 17

*One-Way ANOVA for AchieveNJ Summary and District Configuration*

*AchieveNJ Summary*

|                | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|----------|----------|
| Between groups | 24.906         | 1  | 24.906      | .638     | .428     |
| Within groups  | 2225.501       | 57 | 39.044      |          |          |
| Total          | 2250.407       | 58 |             |          |          |

The ANOVA model was not statistically significant as evidenced by  $p = .428$ . These findings suggest that there is no significant difference between AchieveNJ summary and superintendent’s district configuration; hence, the district configuration does not impact the answers on the survey regarding AchieveNJ.

To test the variable education level, I chose to run an independent *t* test with AchieveNJ summary to compare the mean of one sample with the mean of another sample and conclude if there is a significant difference among the two. AchieveNJ summary was the dependent variable, and education level was the independent variable, coded with a “0” for those superintendents with master’s degrees and a “1” for those with post master’s degrees. Table 18 displays the results.



Table 18

*Independent t test for AchieveNJ Summary and Education Level*

| Group Statistics |                 |          |          |           |            |  |  |  |  |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|--|--|--|--|
|                  | Education level | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> |  |  |  |  |
| AchieveNJSummary | MA              | 36       | 18.0556  | 6.27441   | 1.04574    |  |  |  |  |
|                  | Post-MA         | 23       | 19.0000  | 6.25227   | 1.30369    |  |  |  |  |

| Independent Samples Test |                             |   |          |          |           |                                     |                 |                       |   |         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------|----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|---------|
|                          |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |          |          |           | <i>t</i> test for Equality of Means |                 |                       |   |         |
|                          |                             | <i>F</i>                                | <i>p</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | Sig. (2-tailed)                     | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |
|                          |                             |   |          |          |           |                                     |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper   |
| AchieveNJ Summary        | Equal variances assumed     | .028                                    | .868     | -.565    | 57        | .575                                | -.94444         | 1.67260               | 4.29377                                   | 2.40488 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed |   |          | -.565    | 47.149    | .575                                | -.94444         | 1.67128               | 4.30634                                   | 2.41745 |

The independent *t* test was not statistically significant as evidenced by  $p = .868$ . These results purport that although the two variables have different means, those means are not statistically significant; therefore, superintendents' education levels has no impact on their opinions about AchieveNJ.

The third statistical analysis conducted on the last nominal variable was a crosstab with chi-square with AchieveNJ summary and job scope. In running crosstabs in SPSS, I identified the numbers were too small for reporting purposes, so no statistical analysis was necessary. The

description here suggests that a superintendent's job scope has no bearing on his/her evaluation of AchieveNJ. See Appendix C for the SPSS calculation for this section in Table C8.

The outcomes regarding the summary variables of how superintendents answered Parts 1 through 5 of the survey compared to any impact their years as a superintendent and district enrollment had on them was not statistically significant; therefore, background information had no impact on how superintendents answered the survey. Likewise, superintendents' district configurations, education levels, and job scope are not significant indicators of their AchieveNJ evaluations. These findings suggest that superintendents' backgrounds do not impact their opinions when hiring principals.

### **Data Results for Research Question 3**

The next research question was:

To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

The outcomes of the overall analyses conducted describe obvious observations about the sample pertaining to superintendents' backgrounds, their opinions about AchieveNJ, and principal leadership characteristics. Together, these factors contribute to how superintendents make decisions when hiring principals.

Most of the superintendents were from K–8 districts with enrollments of 1,101 or more students, had 0 to 5 years experience as a superintendent, possessed a master's degree, and were full-time superintendents. Overall the results of the five subquestions on how important AchieveNJ is regarding superintendents' hiring decisions of principals was either *important* or *very important* to the majority of superintendents, where they had to evaluate the importance level of how AchieveNJ impacted the importance attributed to education policy, principal

practice, principal accountability, improving student achievement, and hiring effective principals. For each principal leadership characteristic, there were some interesting results. Instructional leadership was important to the majority of superintendents in all five subquestions. Management was important in only a principal's ability to complete managerial tasks and supervise staff, where the other three subquestions were somewhat important or of no importance. For preparation/experience, the most frequent answer of having no importance was in the areas of previous principal experience, district familiarity, and professional demeanor, whereas the most frequent response was that teaching experience and education level of a principal was important. Finally, the most frequent response to communication in five subquestions was that these factors were not important when hiring a principal.

Background information on each superintendent was gathered and analyzed. All findings suggest that district configuration, years as a superintendent, enrollment, education level, and job scope were not statistically significant for impacting their opinions of hiring principals regarding AchieveNJ.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter explained the results from a six-page survey distributed to New Jersey superintendents in the counties of Morris, Sussex, Warren, and Passaic. Distribution was conducted at monthly superintendent roundtable meetings in each county during the months of October and November. The convenience sample of counties selected provides a variety of school districts in the areas of suburban, rural, and urban, and a variety of superintendents' backgrounds in their district configuration, district enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope. Of the 95 superintendents in attendance, 61 returned the survey, which calculates to a 64.2% response rate. The tabulation of the data was conducted and



observations were made since the response rate was high. The next chapter will unveil the findings from the observations of the survey results.

## Chapter 5

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

AchieveNJ is the controversial, newly instituted educator evaluation policy, which mandates that New Jersey teachers and principals be evaluated on NJDOE approved criteria, one being how well they can improve student achievement as measured by state assessments and student growth objectives. When hiring a principal, this newly instituted policy may impact the factors superintendents consider when making hiring decisions of principals. This policy was initiated in the 2013-2014 school year in order to meet the federal accountability mandates regarding educator effectiveness (NJDOE, 2013a), and it is unknown if this new mandate and whether superintendents' own evaluations of the new policy will shape their hiring decisions of principals. Since AchieveNJ has completed its first implementation year, little or no data are available on its effects on educational practice, specifically on superintendents' hiring decisions of principals. Therefore, this study will address the literature gap.

The impact a principal can have on student achievement is embedded in the existing literature beginning with the landmark study by Waters et al. (2004), their follow-up study in 2005, and the flagship study by Leithwood et al. (2004). These studies laid the groundwork for proving that the principal has a "substantial effect on student achievement" (Marzano et al., 2005, p.12) and that leadership is second to classroom instruction. In addition, direct and indirect leadership affects student learning, which can account for one fourth of the effects on an overall school's success (Leithwood et al., 2004). Therefore, superintendents' hiring decisions of principals are critical and vital to students' success.

With the richness of literature in accountability and the notion of principals impacting student achievement, the logical progression is to identify if New Jersey's AchieveNJ mandate has any influence on the hiring decisions of superintendents.

It should be noted that this study can be viewed as an exploratory one, thus it may be preempted by follow-up studies consisting of larger sample sizes. This study is limited to a small sample size and the intentional convenience sampling.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive, quantitative study was to investigate how superintendents' evaluations of AchieveNJ influence their hiring decisions of principals, the importance level they place on principal leadership characteristics, and to what degree is there an association between superintendents' backgrounds and the leadership characteristics they value in the principalship. The framework for this study is based on previous research relating to accountability factors throughout the country and New Jersey, the empirical findings that principals influence student achievement, identified evidence-based principal leadership characteristics, the AchieveNJ research gap, and the influence superintendents' backgrounds have on their value of principal leadership characteristics.

### **Statement of the Problem**

While the literature helps us to understand what characteristics superintendents' value, it does not allow us to determine whether that value could be influenced by the characteristics of the superintendents themselves, specifically in a time of the debated AchieveNJ. This policy shift has created imperatives for school districts, such as tripling the amount of observations per year, documenting student growth objectives, measuring educator effectiveness by student



achievement, and so on, which were all not required in the past. The purpose of this study is to describe the influence, if any, AchieveNJ has on superintendents' hiring decisions.

A substantial amount of literature exists on the qualities superintendents value when making hiring decisions for principals; however, within this literature base, superintendents' backgrounds influenced what principal qualities they looked for, such as their years of experience, education levels, district size, and so on (Arrowood, 2005; Clark, 2003; Dillon, 1995; Karol, 1988; Rammer, 2007b; Weber, 2009). Moreover, the characteristics superintendents' value in principals may be influenced by the characteristics of each individual superintendent. Research provides evidence on the principal leadership characteristics that are valued by superintendents (Cotton, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan 2003; Stronge et al., 2004; Whitaker, 2007). Given the findings from previous research, there is a lack of substantial literature conducted on the impact superintendents' backgrounds may have on the desired principal leadership characteristics, specifically in the areas of (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications, specifically within the existence of AchieveNJ.

The importance of this study is to establish an AchieveNJ baseline in the literature. The stimulus of AchieveNJ is important because the data may impact trends, policies, or laws encompassing principal tenure, job responsibilities, performance standards, curriculum development, and student achievement indicators. The results of this study will provide more insight for how superintendents' decisions in hiring principals have been influenced by AchieveNJ. Furthermore, this study will lay the groundwork for future research regarding AchieveNJ and its impact on school districts.

## **Participant Descriptions**

I developed a cover letter and survey and secured a convenience sample of superintendents by attending four monthly superintendent roundtable meetings. New Jersey county superintendents from Morris, Warren, Sussex, and Passaic counties were contacted to schedule appointments at monthly meetings to distribute the survey. The counties chosen provide an array of urban, suburban, and rural communities. Only those superintendents in attendance at the meetings were able to complete the survey, which can be a limitation of the sample. Additionally, the survey was voluntary, and some superintendents opted out. The total sample size of those superintendents who completed the survey was 61. Data analysis was conducted, and the sample provides interesting observations about superintendents' evaluations on AchieveNJ.

## **Research Methods**

The survey consists of six parts with five subquestions in each relating to AchieveNJ, instructional leadership, management, preparation/experience, communication, and superintendents' backgrounds. The first five parts asked superintendents to circle the level of importance they place on each item. The sixth part, consisting of five questions, asked superintendents to complete information about their district and professional characteristics. In Parts 2 through 5, the content of each of the subquestions was driven by the literature review in Reichhart (2008) and Weber (2009) and was consistently echoed in Chapter 2.

## **Findings Summary Regarding the Research Questions**

Research Question 1: To what extent are superintendents' hiring decisions of principals influenced by their opinions about the new policy AchieveNJ? What importance in their

hiring decisions do superintendents place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications?

When superintendents were asked to evaluate the importance of AchieveNJ regarding their hiring decisions of principals, specifically identifying if AchieveNJ impacted the importance attributed to: education policy, principal practice, principal accountability, improving student achievement, and hiring effective principals, 77% (47 out of 61) said that principal accountability was *very important* or *important*. This was the highest percentage on any part of the frequency tables with the entire survey. Moreover, the percentage of superintendents who rated all five of the AchieveNJ indicators were as follows: principal practice (72.3%), improving student achievement (67.2%), hiring effective principals (6.2%), and education policy (60.7%). Regarding the mean scores, this part of the survey had the highest range of the means (3.36 to 3.92). These results conclude that the majority of superintendents in the sample said that the AchieveNJ factors impacted the importance they placed when making hiring decisions for principals. Since there is no research on AchieveNJ at this time, I established a baseline for the impact AchieveNJ has had on school districts through the lens of the superintendent. This research implies AchieveNJ has changed the importance superintendents' place on hiring principals in these five areas and that AchieveNJ is being considered in their hiring decisions. With all the push back AchieveNJ has received, these findings prove the change it has had in New Jersey public school systems. Regardless of whether AchieveNJ is favored or not, is not the question, but it reveals it has impacted the decisions of superintendents. In the eyes of superintendents, principal candidates will be held accountable for their own performance, their teachers' abilities to raise student achievement, and their students' abilities to achieve. Although principals may have already been doing this, there of course, were some that were not, and they



were not required to. AchieveNJ is the law, and principals will be held accountable for all the facets of school improvement. Their evaluations will depend upon how well they can do this. Principal candidates should not fear AchieveNJ because the effective principals will keep on doing the work, yet the ones that were not, will be rated ineffective and will lose their jobs. At a cursory glance, AchieveNJ increases the probability of keeping great principals and getting rid of the bad ones. From personal experience of being a principal, researcher, and doctoral candidate, AchieveNJ has challenged my professional competencies and made me strive to achieve more. If I had this experience, maybe other principals in the state have as well; hence, AchieveNJ will increase the probability of continually improving the principal's practice overall, which is the goal of education: to be a lifelong learner.

The second part of the research question investigated the importance superintendents' place on (a) instructional leadership, (b) management, (c) preparation and experience, and (d) communications. Each part of the survey asked five subquestions in the areas mentioned previously, where superintendents responded on how AchieveNJ had changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the indicators in each area. See Table 19 for the comprehensive content in each area.

Table 19

*Survey Subquestions for Principal Characteristics Parts 2 Through 5*

| Principal characteristic | Subquestion 1        | Subquestion 2       | Subquestion 3            | Subquestion 4        | Subquestion 5                          |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Instructional leadership | Evaluate teachers    | Analyze data        | Introduce new tech       | Raise test scores    | Demonstration instructional leadership |
| Management               | Enforce rules        | Manage budget       | Execute managerial tasks | Deal with discipline | Supervise staff                        |
| Preparation & experience | Principal experience | Teaching experience | District familiarity     | PD & education level | Professional demeanor                  |
| Communication            | Outreaching          | Stakeholder input   | Writing well             | School climate       | Community participation                |

Of the 61 superintendents who completed the survey, instructional leadership had the highest ranges in the mean scores (3.41 to 3.64) and frequency table percentages, where 62.3% to 70.5% of superintendents rated the indicators of instructional leadership to be *very important* or *important*. The summary variable correlation also indicates that instructional leadership had the highest correlation with AchieveNJ ( $r = .799$ ). These findings are consistent with the literature regarding the role of a principal is to be an instructional leader (Alig-Mielcarek, 2003; Dufour & Eaker, 1999; Marzano et al., 2005; Matos, 2006; Reichhart, 2008; Stronge et al., 2004; Valenti, 2010; Weber, 2009). The majority of superintendents' responses to this part of the survey indicate that AchieveNJ had impacted the importance they place on the indicators of instructional leadership, and they viewed it to be the most important characteristic among the other three.

The next part of the survey asked superintendents to respond to how AchieveNJ had changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the indicators of management. The mean scores (2.30 to 3.13) and frequency percentage ranges were considerably lower in this area, where 27.9% to 57.4% of superintendents felt the areas of management were *very important* or *important*. The 57.4% of superintendents felt that supervising staff was the most important area of the five subquestions. Also, superintendents responded that three areas were of *no importance* to them: dealing with discipline (49.2%), enforcing rules (45.9%), and managing the budget (41%). The responses here identify that management is not as important as instructional leadership when considering leadership characteristics of principals. The summary variable correlation indicates that management is the least strong correlation with AchieveNJ ( $r = .479$ ). The literature supports these findings where

the paradigm shift is that the principal is expected to be an instructional leader rather than a manager (Glass & Bearman, 2003; Rammer, 2007b; Simon, 2003; Van de Water, 1987).

Part 3 of the survey questioned superintendents in the area of the principal's preparation/experience, regarding how AchieveNJ changed the importance superintendents attributed to the principal's ability to meet the subquestions related to preparation/experience. The mean scores (2.38 to 3.16) and frequency percentages (26.3% to 54.1%) ranges were again lower than those associated with the section on instructional leadership, as evidenced by this percentage range on the preparation/experience areas being *very important* or *important*. The two areas that gained the highest percentages were the principal having prior teaching experience (54.1%) and their own professional development/education level (54.1%). These findings are interpreted to mean that AchieveNJ has changed the importance attributed to the principal's ability to meet the indicators of preparation/experience but not as much as instructional leadership. However, the summary variable correlation indicates that preparation/education is the second highest correlation with AchieveNJ. As previously cited, the principal is currently viewed and expected to act as an instructional leader. Although his/her demands may include managerial tasks, it does not supersede the priority of being an instructional leader. Furthermore, the main impetus for being an instructional leader would be to improve student achievement and the success of the school. The summary variable correlations indicate that the principal's preparation/experience is the second most important area next to instructional leadership superintendents value regarding AchieveNJ ( $r = .616$ ). This means that an effective and strong principal would have to have the background, preparation, and experience to be an effective instructional leader, which is supported in the literature base (Smith & Hoy, 2007; Marzano et al., 2005; Norton, 2003; Waters & Cameron, 2007). Successful schools are associated with



successful principals, and those principals analyze data, introduce technologies, raise test scores, evaluate teachers with purposeful feedback, and so on.

Part 4 of the survey related to this research question asked superintendents to respond to how AchieveNJ changed the importance they attributed to the principal's ability to meet the indicators of communication. The mean score range was 2.67 to 3.03 and the frequency table percentages of *very important* or *important* were 42.6% to 55.7%. This translates to AchieveNJ having changed the importance superintendents' place on the principal's ability to meet the criteria of communication but not as much as instructional leadership. The summary variable correlation places communication as second to last (or third among all four characteristics) in the ranking of most important indicators of hiring decisions considering AchieveNJ ( $r = .597$ ). So, although keeping up with communication is a factor in considering a principal, it is third most important.

Simply stated, the correlation of summary variables show that the leadership characteristics superintendents' value most in priority order are: instructional leadership, preparation/experience, communication, and management last. These findings contribute to the substantial literature base regarding qualities of an effective leader and the array of characteristics superintendents' value (Arrowood, 2005; Cotton, 2003; Dillon, 1995; Leithwood et al., 2004; O'Malley, 2011; Van Meter & Murphy, 1997). It is interesting to note that the four characteristics were supported by the literature, and this study explains the ratings given to the four areas in priority order. The difference in this study is that AchieveNJ was the variable impacting superintendents' views on the four principal characteristics when making hiring decisions. One can infer that AchieveNJ has forced superintendents to consider the factors in

rank order when hiring principals. It appears that the demands of AchieveNJ increase the probability that superintendents are more strategic when hiring principals.

Overall, the findings related to this research question support the results found in the first part of the survey regarding AchieveNJ. The majority of superintendents in the sample agree that AchieveNJ has impacted their hiring decisions and the leadership characteristic they value most is instructional leadership. AchieveNJ has changed the importance they place in the other three areas (management, preparation/experience, and communication) as well when hiring principals, but not as much as instructional leadership. Moreover, since boards of education hire superintendents, their expertise and ability in hiring a leader is paramount. Boards of education must ensure the superintendents they hire are, in turn, equipped to hire effective principals with the skill set to be successful as measured by AchieveNJ. Additionally, superintendents must have their own skill set pertaining to instructional leadership, even though this is not their role in school operations. In order to effectively evaluate principals, superintendents need to be versed and proficient in the necessities of exuding instructional leadership. This study assumes that superintendents are the locus of control in the hiring of principals, although in some districts this might not be true. In some cases the human resources department or assistant superintendent does the hiring.

Again these conclusions state that if there was any doubt about the importance placed on instructional leadership regarding the principalship, AchieveNJ simply reinforced this notion. Moreover, AchieveNJ should now get the positive attention it deserves because it has impacted how superintendents hire principals. For the principal candidates, it confirms that if you have been selected to be a principal, it is expected you will lead your staff instructionally, be accountable for raising student achievement, evaluate teachers for improving student excellence,

analyze test data for improving student/teacher excellence, introduce new technologies, and so on. The other facets of leadership are important, such as management, preparation/experience, and communication, but they are not as vital to the principalship as instructional leadership. These findings suggest superintendents want leaders who keep current in the educational field and be exemplars for their staff. With the growing accountability regulations and the plethora of literature on effective principals, the days of being a manager are gone. If people are going to take the principalship, they are going to work to keep that position by showing evidence of how and what they are doing to move the school and its teachers forward. In fact, their annual observations will evaluate how well they do it. Our school systems are too important not to hold all educators accountable for the learning of our youth. For too long, accountability was absent in education, yet, now, accountability for all educators is the law. If we want our children to grow up and continue to be lifelong learners and strive for the very best they can be, why would we not model that in our educational systems? Again, effective leaders have been present in education and will continue to be; AchieveNJ simply solidifies educator accountability to ensure schools are held to high standards.

Research Question 2: To what degree is there an association between a superintendent's background and the leadership characteristics that he/she values in the principalship?

There were five indicators defining the superintendents' backgrounds, where the survey asked superintendents to identify their district configuration, student enrollment, years as a superintendent, education level, and job scope. The variables are both nominal and numeric, and the statistics were applied accordingly. First, a correlation with the summary variables was conducted, which included the numeric variables years as a superintendent and enrollment. There was no statistical significance in these two variables impacting superintendents' opinions



about AchieveNJ and principal leadership characteristics; therefore, irrespective of how many years a superintendent has been in his/her position it did not impact their value on leadership characteristics. Coinciding with that, the number of students enrolled in the superintendents' school districts did not impact their opinion either. This study shows that regardless of district size, superintendents exhibit consensus about AchieveNJ and its influence in hiring principals and the value placed on instructional leadership.

The remaining variables: district configuration, education level and job scope, were examined using a variety of statistics, such as ANOVA, independent *t* test, and crosstabs with chi-square. All analyses were not statistically significant. When there is a noticeable difference in groups, yet that difference is not significant, we cannot assume this happened by chance. Since all five superintendent background variables were not significant, these findings suggest that superintendents make evaluations about hiring principals independently of their backgrounds and their districts' backgrounds. Superintendents may differ on their opinions about AchieveNJ and the leadership characteristics they value, yet those differences have nothing to do with their professional backgrounds and district demographics. However, it should be noted that the majority of superintendents have a clear and evident consensus about the principal leadership characteristics they value, as stated above, which is in rank order instructional leadership, preparation/experience, communication, and management last. Any outside information such as superintendents' district configurations, education levels, and job scope had no impact on the characteristics they valued.

I did not anticipate any significant differences in superintendents' backgrounds influencing their evaluations of AchieveNJ and principal leadership characteristics, as the research outcomes support. The overabundance of literature validating all four leadership

characteristics exists, yet with the new policy of AchieveNJ, only one characteristic was ranked above all the others. With the implementation of AchieveNJ and its importance on principal accountability, instructional leadership is the most sought after trait. If superintendents hire effective principals with exceptional instructional leadership skills, then as evidenced in the research, those principals will establish successful schools. Building and maintaining successful schools begins with leadership. The 21st century leader is transformational (Burns, 1978; Williams, 2006). Such leaders will critically evaluate teachers, supervise staff, have prior teaching experience, engage in ongoing professional development, and improve the school climate, all of which are confirmed in this study's findings. The revolutionary policy AchieveNJ added another dimension to leadership and schools. Never before in the literature has there been a new policy implemented, which could have an impact on the value superintendents place on principal leadership characteristics. In prior research, superintendents were asked what characteristics they valued in general, whereas this study asked them to assess leadership characteristics regarding AchieveNJ. No other study involved a new educational policy as the driving factor of how superintendents view principal leadership characteristics and how a new policy influences their hiring decisions. It is through that lens that we can infer that because of the existence of AchieveNJ, superintendents have definite opinions of what they are looking for in principal candidates to run their schools and the majority view instructional leadership superior. Since schools are no longer similar to a factory model and the managerial leadership paradigm is eliminated as well, our school systems yearned for an accountability policy for schools and leaders. AchieveNJ is New Jersey's version of enforcing accountability and measuring educator effectiveness. Obviously, the newness of AchieveNJ frightens many educators, but the idea is not new. Most all other businesses have accountability goals and

targets to meet, so why would education not have them? Also, the underpinnings of AchieveNJ's components are parallel to effective leadership. Principals should want to be responsible for their staff and students' successes and failures. As stated above, great principals will still be great; yet ineffective ones will not make the cut. The demands of AchieveNJ will not only ensure New Jersey schools maintain the best leaders, we will ensure our students have the best chance at improving their achievement levels. Principals ensure teachers are moving students forward, and principals empower their teachers to grow professionally and excel.

Research Question 3: To what extent, if any, are there consistencies across districts regarding superintendents hiring principals?

This research identified that the majority of superintendents surveyed were from K-8 districts with enrollments of 1,101 or more students, had under 5 years superintendent experience, held master's degrees, and were full-time superintendents. These variables have no statistical influence on their opinions of AchieveNJ and how those evaluations impact their opinions of AchieveNJ and their preferences of principal leadership characteristics. What is important to note is that the majority of superintendents felt the factors associated with AchieveNJ changed the importance they place on hiring principals, and instructional leadership was the most important characteristic they consider when hiring a principal today. In and of itself, the results of this survey signify the vast majority of the superintendents in this sample have changed their importance level in hiring principals because of the new policy AchieveNJ. Furthermore, they also placed more importance on the principal being an instructional leader than management, preparation/experience, and communication. This is supported in the research stated previously where successful schools are associated with effective principals, who lead teachers instructionally rather than structurally.



## **Limitations**

It is appropriate to recognize some limitations to the study, as is customary in any study. Limitations are defined by those factors, which are uncontrolled by the researcher. They are as follows:

1. The sample size was restricted to four New Jersey Counties. The convenience sample is not identified as a limitation, if and only if, other researchers will replicate this study in the 2015-2016 school year at all 21 New Jersey county superintendent roundtable meetings. It is a realistic goal to replicate this study knowing the magnitude AchieveNJ has had on New Jersey school districts and the convenience of the monthly superintendent meetings occurring around the state.
2. The completion of the sample was during the 2014-2015 school year of those superintendents who were in attendance at their monthly superintendent roundtable meetings.
3. The survey answers were based on superintendents' self-reported responses.
4. There is no prior research on AchieveNJ, yet, this study can be the stimulus for future replication in New Jersey.

## **Future Research Recommendations**

In order for this study to situate itself in the larger literature base, replication is the most important recommendation for future research. If this study were to be conducted in all 21 New Jersey counties in the 2015-2016 school year, we would have the most comprehensive data on the power AchieveNJ has over superintendents and their hiring decisions of principals.

Furthermore, it would be extremely easy to conduct this study at all superintendent roundtable meetings in the 21 counties. Having these data will further tell the New Jersey Department of

Education, state legislators, local government officials, superintendents, principals, and boards of education the impact this new policy has instituted on our educational system here in New Jersey. It will also provide some implications to how that fits into the larger federal mandates of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Next, a task force should be formed composed of members from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), New Jersey Executive County Superintendents, and local superintendents from all 21 counties to review the replication results of this study. In addition it is important to gather more information on how AchieveNJ is being received by local districts in practice and how its implications affect hiring decisions. This task force can also serve as the group to review the replication results of the future study recommended above.

Finally, principal preparation programs should be examined to focus more closely on providing specific guidance on how to lead instructionally. What are some of the evidence-based practices that help teachers become better instructors and what is the principal's role in the process? If principal preparation programs approach their curriculums from an instructional leadership standpoint, it would vastly change how we are currently preparing principals. Instructional leadership has to be the focus around all other standards of the programs. Also, principals should be versed in the components of AchieveNJ and how it will impact their role in the school. There are great principals who have overcome AchieveNJ and supportive of the accountability movement, and striving principals should see what an exemplar looks like.

There is no question that AchieveNJ has impacted the way schools operate. There are: (a) more observations to conduct, (b) student growth objectives for teachers, (c) administrator

goals for principals, (d) principal evaluations are based on their ability to raise student achievement, and so on. Yet, no research has yet to study these effects and how AchieveNJ is impacting superintendents who hire principals and the principal role itself in the school. This study lays the groundwork for all future studies regarding the effects of AchieveNJ. Since this policy is only in its second year, at the time this study was conducted, we need to evaluate how it is comprehensively affecting New Jersey educational systems. The essence of this study serves the most vital data analysis available at this point in time. I urge any and all school personnel who are involved with AchieveNJ to share these findings with their colleagues. Finally, I implore other researchers to replicate this study in New Jersey so we can truly assess the implications AchieveNJ has had on our education structure. While at first glance educators may shy away from being held accountable, it is nothing more than documenting what it means to be an effective principal. The only difference is that now it is the law.



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[balanceleadership/http://education.ky.gov/teachers/HQT/Documents/KY%20Principal's%20Impact.pptx](http://prezi.com/-cfqonroesui/waters-marzano-mcnulty-balanceleadership/http://education.ky.gov/teachers/HQT/Documents/KY%20Principal's%20Impact.pptx)

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## Appendix A

### Cover Letter of Solicitation & Survey Instrument

October/November, 2014

Dear Superintendent:

My name is Gina Cinotti and I am a doctoral candidate at Seton Hall University. I am conducting a survey examining if AchieveNJ influenced your hiring decisions of principals. Since the 2013-14 school year was the inaugural year of AchieveNJ, this study would provide some preliminary findings on the policy and how it impacts schools. This research is being conducted under the direction and approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Executive Educational Doctorate program.

The survey consists of six parts with five sub-questions in each relating to AchieveNJ: instructional leadership, management, preparation and experience, communication, and demographic information. The first five parts will ask you to circle the level of importance you place on each item. The sixth part, consisting of five questions, will ask for you to complete background information about your district and your professional characteristics. This research is free of any risks or costs and is strictly voluntary. All responses will be anonymous and completed surveys will be destroyed after the data is tabulated. Your responses will directly contribute to the gap in the literature on AchieveNJ as well as provide interesting data for you to consider in your hiring decisions of principals. The survey should take approximately five minutes.

If you decide to participate in this survey, please complete the attached survey and return it to me today. It should not take more than five minutes. If you have any concerns about your rights as a human subject, please contact IRB at 973-313-6314. If you require any additional information, please contact me at [ginacinotti6@gmail.com](mailto:ginacinotti6@gmail.com) or 201-874-1411.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Sincerely,

Gina Cinotti  
Seton Hall University Doctoral Candidate  
Hopatcong Borough Schools Director of Guidance

## SUPERINTENDENT SURVEY

### Introduction:

This survey will be distributed to New Jersey superintendents. Their participation is completely voluntary. All responses will be anonymous and will be destroyed after data is tabulated. You are being asked to answer questions on how AchieveNJ changed the importance you attribute to instructional leadership, preparation/experience, management, and communication.

If AchieveNJ had no importance, indicate that by circling "no importance".

There are six parts of the survey:

- |        |                             |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Part 1 | AchieveNJ                   |
| Part 2 | Instructional Leadership    |
| Part 3 | Management                  |
| Part 4 | Preparation & Experience    |
| Part 5 | Communication               |
| Part 6 | Superintendent Demographics |



Directions: Please evaluate how important each item below has impacted your decisions in hiring principals. Approach this survey as if a principal position were open in your school.

**PART 1: ACHIEVE NJ**

*Please evaluate how important AchieveNJ is regarding your hiring decisions of principals*

1) Has AchieveNJ impacted the importance you attribute to:

a. Education Policy

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

b. Principal Practice

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

c. Principal Accountability

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

d. Improving Student Achievement

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

e. Hiring Effective Principals

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

**PART 2:****INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

*Please evaluate how important each item below has impacted your hiring decisions of principals*

1) How has AchieveNJ changed the importance you attribute to the principal's ability to:

a. Evaluate teachers for improving student excellence

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

b. Analyze test data for improving student/teacher excellence

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

c. Introduce new technologies

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

d. Show evidence he/she improved performance of raising standardized test scores

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

e. Demonstrated motivation in instructional leadership

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

**PART 3:****MANAGEMENT**

*Please evaluate how important each item below has impacted your hiring decisions of principals*

1) How has AchieveNJ changed the importance you attribute to the principal's ability to:

a. Enforce rules and maintain a safe and orderly environment

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

b. Manage the school budget

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

c. Prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and efficiently execute managerial tasks

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

d. Demonstrate abilities to deal with student conflict and discipline

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

e. Manage and supervise staff effectively by exhibiting previous classroom experience

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|



**PART 4:****PREPARATION & EXPERIENCE**

*Please evaluate how important each item below has impacted your hiring decisions of principals*

1) How has AchieveNJ changed the importance you attribute to the principal's:

a. Previous experience as a principal

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

b. Previous experience as a classroom teacher

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

c. Familiarity with the district

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

d. Own professional development & education level

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

e. Professional appearance and demeanor

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

**PART 5:**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

*Please evaluate how important each item below has impacted your hiring decisions of principals*

1) How has AchieveNJ changed the importance you attribute to the principal’s ability to:

a. Outreach and interact with staff, students, parents, and community

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

b. Solicit input from stakeholders

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

c. Communicate well in writing

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

d. Create and foster a positive school climate

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

e. Be an active participant in the community

|                                 |                         |           |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Has Become<br>Very<br>Important | Has Become<br>Important | Undecided | Has Become<br>Somewhat<br>Important | No<br>Importance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|

**PART 6: SUPERINTENDENT BACKGROUND**

*Please answer the questions pertaining to you and your school district*

1) Please circle your district configuration:

K-12      K-8      K-6      7-12      9-12      Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please specify

2) Please list the number of students in your district. \_\_\_\_\_

3) How many years have you been Superintendent? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Please circle your level of education:

MA-Masters      Ed.D -Doctoral      Ph.D - Doctoral      Ed.S -  
Specialist

5) Please circle your job scope:

Full-time Superintendent      Superintendent/Principal      Shared Superintendent  
Other

\* \* \*

*Thank you for your time and assistance*

\* \* \*



**Appendix B**

**Research Organization of Four Domains**

**Table B1**

Note: This is the research where the contents of my survey derived.

| References<br>Weber 2009   | Instructional<br>Leadership | Management | Preparation &<br>Experience | Communication<br>& Relationships |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Anderson, M. (1991)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Austin, S., Bennet, B., Lindaur, P.,<br>& Petrie, G. (2001).                     | X                           |            |                             | X                                |
| Baker, L. (2001)   | X                           |            | X                           |                                  |
| Baltzell, D., & Dentler, R. (1983)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Becerra-Fernandez, I., &<br>Stevensen, J. (2001)                                 | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Bennet, Finn, & Bencivenga, (1987)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Blaise, J., & Kirby, P. (2000)   | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2001)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Bradshaw, L. (1999)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Brice, R., Chrispeels, J.,<br>McCormick, S., Pollack, S., &<br>Watson, D. (1988) | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Brown, G., & DeZwann, J. (2002)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Bryant, B. (1978)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Buell, N. (1992)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Costetter, W. (1986)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Council of Chief State School<br>Officers (2008)                                 | X                           | X          |                             |                                  |
| Cruz, J., (1995)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Cuban, L., (1988)  | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Deal, T., & Peterson, K. (1998)  | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Dillon, W. (1995)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Dilullo, B. (2004)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Domenech, D. (2002)  |                             |            |                             | X                                |
| Duffy, M., & Goertz, M. (2003)   | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Duke, D. (1985)  | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |

| References<br>Weber 2009                      | Instructional<br>Leadership | Management | Preparation &<br>Experience | Communication<br>& Relationships |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (1999)                | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Ediger, M. (2001)                             | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Elmore, R., & Burney, D. (1997)               | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Farr, D. (2004)                               | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Feirsen, R. (1994)                            | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Fisher, R. (2000)                             |                             | X          |                             | X                                |
| Gideonese, H. (1988)                          | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Glass, T., & Bearman, A. (2003)               | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hall, G., & Rutherford, W. (1983)             | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1987)            | X                           | X          |                             |                                  |
| Heck, R. (1998)                               | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hertling, E. (1999)                           |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hill, M., & Lynch, D. (1994)                  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hooker, K. (2004)                             | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Hard, S. (1992)                               | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Iheanacha, S. (1992)                          | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Johnson, J. (2003)                            | X                           |            |                             | X                                |
| Karol, K. (1988)                              | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Kelley, C., & Peterson, K. (2001)             | X                           | X          |                             |                                  |
| Lane, B. (1992)                               | X                           | X          |                             |                                  |
| Lashway, L. (1997)                            | X                           | X          | X                           |                                  |
| Lashway, L. (2001)                            | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Leiberman, A., & Miller, L. (1990)            | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Marzano, R., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005) | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Morford, L. (2002)                            |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Murphy, J., & Hallinger, P. (1992)            | X                           | X          |                             |                                  |
| Murf:>b_y, J., & Shipman, N. (1999)           | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |



| References<br>Weber 2009   | Instructional<br>Leadership | Management | Preparation &<br>Experience | Communication<br>& Relationships |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Muse, I. (1996)  |                             |            |                             | X                                |
| Nelson, J. (1997)  |                             | X          |                             | X                                |
| Newton, R. (2001)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Osterman, K. (1994)  |                             |            |                             | X                                |
| Pearce, M. (2007)  |                             |            | X                           | X                                |
| Pierson, P., & Bredson, P. (1993)                                    |                             |            |                             | X                                |
| Parton, B., Schneider, P.,<br>DeArmond, M., & Gundlach, L.<br>(2003) | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Pounder, D., & Young, I. (1996)                                      |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Rammer, R. (2007)  |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Reichhart, W. (2008)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Rose, L., & Gallup, A. (2002)  |                             |            |                             | X                                |
| Rosse, J., & Levin, R. (1997)  |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Schmitt, N., & Cohen, S. (1990)                                      | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Schmitt, N., & Schechtman, S.<br>(1990)                              |                             |            | X                           |                                  |
| Sergiovanni, T. (1990)   |                             | X          |                             |                                  |
| Short, P. (1998)   |                             | X          | X                           |                                  |
| Sias, P. (2005)  |                             | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Simon, N. (2003)   | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Snow, L., & Whitaker, T. (1996)                                      |                             | X          |                             | X                                |
| Stutsman, K. (2007)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Terry, P. (1999)   | X                           | X          |                             | X                                |
| Walker, L. (1995)  | X                           | X          | X                           | X                                |
| Washington, J. (2007)  | X                           |            |                             | X                                |

|                               |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| Wheatley, M. (2001)           |  | X |  | X |  |   |
| White, C., & White, J. (1998) |  | X |  | X |  | X |

| References   | Instructional Leadership | Management | Preparation & Experience | Communication & Relationships |
|--|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Weber 2009   |                          |            |                          |                               |
| Wise, A., Darling-Hammond, L., & Berry, B. (1987)                        | X                        | X          |                          | X                             |
| Young, I., & Ryerson, D. (1989)  |                          | X          |                          |                               |
| Yuki, G. (2006)  | X                        | X          |                          |                               |
| Zellner, L., Jinkins, D., Gideon, B., Doughty, S., & McNamara, P. (2002) | X                        | X          | X                        | X                             |



Rammer 2007 Effective Principal Descriptors

| Descriptors                                    | Rosenthal (2003) | Klauke (1988) | Dufour, Eaker (1987) | Peterson (1999) | Mendez-Morse (1997) | Whitaker (1997) | McEwan (2003) | Cotton (1995) | Teske Schneider (1999) | Day (2000) | Teschke (1996) | Day, Harris, Hadfield (2001) | Zigarelli (1996) | Portin (2004) |
|--|------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|------------|----------------|------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Shape Vision and Mission                       |                  |               |                      | *               | *                   |                 | *             |               | *                      | *          |                |                              |                  |               |
| Manage and Administer Complex Processes        |                  |               |                      | *               |                     |                 |               |               |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Shape Culture and Climate                      |                  |               |                      | *               |                     |                 | *             |               |                        | *          |                |                              |                  |               |
| Maintain Positive Relations with Parents/ Comm |                  |               |                      | *               |                     |                 |               |               |                        | *          |                |                              |                  |               |
| Lead and Support School Improvement/ Change    |                  |               |                      | *               |                     |                 | *             |               |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Resource provider                              |                  |               |                      |                 |                     | *               |               | *             |                        |            |                |                              |                  | *             |
| Instructional Resource                         |                  |               |                      |                 |                     | *               | *             |               |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Producer                                       |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 | *             |               |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Trustworthy/ Integrity                         |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 | *             |               |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Identify Staff Development Needs               |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 |               | *             |                        |            |                | *                            |                  |               |
| Understand School Mission                      |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 |               | *             |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Establish Instructional Focus                  |                  |               |                      |                 | *                   |                 |               | *             |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Hire or Fire Staff Around School Mission       |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 |               | *             | *                      |            |                |                              | *                |               |
| Seek Innovative Curr. Programs                 |                  |               |                      |                 | *                   |                 |               | *             |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |
| Monitor Student Progress                       |                  |               |                      |                 |                     |                 |               | *             |                        |            |                |                              |                  |               |



**Appendix C**  
**Survey Result Tables**

Table C1

*New Jersey Superintendents' Student Enrollments*

|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 30        | 1       | 1.6           | 1.7                |
|       | 219       | 1       | 1.6           | 3.3                |
|       | 225       | 1       | 1.6           | 5.0                |
|       | 230       | 1       | 1.6           | 6.7                |
|       | 320       | 1       | 1.6           | 8.3                |
|       | 325       | 1       | 1.6           | 10.0               |
|       | 360       | 1       | 1.6           | 11.7               |
|       | 450       | 1       | 1.6           | 13.3               |
|       | 480       | 1       | 1.6           | 15.0               |
|       | 500       | 3       | 4.9           | 20.0               |
|       | 525       | 1       | 1.6           | 21.7               |
|       | 540       | 1       | 1.6           | 23.3               |
|       | 575       | 1       | 1.6           | 25.0               |
|       | 600       | 3       | 4.9           | 30.0               |
|       | 650       | 1       | 1.6           | 31.7               |
|       | 700       | 1       | 1.6           | 33.3               |
|       | 750       | 1       | 1.6           | 35.0               |
|       | 800       | 1       | 1.6           | 36.7               |
|       | 830       | 1       | 1.6           | 38.3               |
|       | 832       | 1       | 1.6           | 40.0               |
|       | 853       | 1       | 1.6           | 41.7               |
|       | 900       | 2       | 3.3           | 45.0               |
|       | 958       | 1       | 1.6           | 46.7               |
|       | 960       | 1       | 1.6           | 48.3               |
|       | 975       | 1       | 1.6           | 50.0               |
|       | 1000      | 2       | 3.3           | 53.3               |
|       | 1100      | 1       | 1.6           | 55.0               |
|       | 1150      | 1       | 1.6           | 56.7               |
|       | 1200      | 3       | 4.9           | 61.7               |
|       | 1250      | 1       | 1.6           | 63.3               |

|         |    |       |       |       |
|---------|----|-------|-------|-------|
| 1375    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 65.0  |
| 1469    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 66.7  |
| 1600    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 68.3  |
| 1700    | 2  | 3.3   | 3.3   | 71.7  |
| 1800    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 73.3  |
| 1920    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 75.0  |
| 2022    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 76.7  |
| 2080    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 78.3  |
| 2200    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 80.0  |
| 2400    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 81.7  |
| 3000    | 3  | 4.9   | 5.0   | 86.7  |
| 3350    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 88.3  |
| 3500    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 90.0  |
| 3680    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 91.7  |
| 3800    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 93.3  |
| 4000    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 95.0  |
| 4100    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 96.7  |
| 7000    | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 98.3  |
| 11000   | 1  | 1.6   | 1.7   | 100.0 |
| Total   | 60 | 98.4  | 100.0 |       |
| Missing | 99 | 1     | 1.6   |       |
| Total   | 61 | 100.0 |       |       |

Table C1 - continued

*New Jersey Superintendents' Student Enrollments*

Table C2

*Years as a Superintendent*

|         |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative<br>percent |
|---------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | 1     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.9           | 6.9                   |
|         | 2     | 6         | 9.8     | 10.3          | 17.2                  |
|         | 3     | 9         | 14.8    | 15.5          | 32.8                  |
|         | 4     | 6         | 9.8     | 10.3          | 43.1                  |
|         | 5     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.9           | 50.0                  |
|         | 6     | 3         | 4.9     | 5.2           | 55.2                  |
|         | 7     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.9           | 62.1                  |
|         | 8     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.9           | 69.0                  |
|         | 9     | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 70.7                  |
|         | 10    | 5         | 8.2     | 8.6           | 79.3                  |
|         | 11    | 2         | 3.3     | 3.4           | 82.8                  |
|         | 13    | 2         | 3.3     | 3.4           | 86.2                  |
|         | 14    | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 87.9                  |
|         | 15    | 2         | 3.3     | 3.4           | 91.4                  |
|         | 20    | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 93.1                  |
|         | 21    | 2         | 3.3     | 3.4           | 96.6                  |
|         | 24    | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 98.3                  |
|         | 30    | 1         | 1.6     | 1.7           | 100.0                 |
|         | Total | 58        | 95.1    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | 99    | 3         | 4.9     |               |                       |
| Total   |       | 61        | 100.0   |               |                       |

Table C3

*Items Related to AchieveNJ Responses*

| <b>Education Policy</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                         |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                   | 1     | 14        | 23.0    | 23.0          | 23.0               |
|                         | 2     | 2         | 3.3     | 3.3           | 26.2               |
|                         | 3     | 8         | 13.1    | 13.1          | 39.3               |
|                         | 4     | 28        | 45.9    | 45.9          | 85.2               |
|                         | 5     | 9         | 14.8    | 14.8          | 100.0              |
|                         | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Principal Practice</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                           |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                     | 1     | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          | 16.4               |
|                           | 2     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 23.0               |
|                           | 3     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 27.9               |
|                           | 4     | 19        | 31.1    | 31.1          | 59.0               |
|                           | 5     | 25        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 100.0              |
|                           | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Principal Accountability</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                                 |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                           | 1     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 11.5               |
|                                 | 2     | 6         | 9.8     | 9.8           | 21.3               |
|                                 | 3     | 1         | 1.6     | 1.6           | 23.0               |
|                                 | 4     | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          | 52.5               |
|                                 | 5     | 29        | 47.5    | 47.5          | 100.0              |
|                                 | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



Table C3 - continued

*Items Related to AchieveNJ Responses*

| <b>Improving SA</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                     |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid               | 1     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 11.5               |
|                     | 2     | 6         | 9.8     | 9.8           | 21.3               |
|                     | 3     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 32.8               |
|                     | 4     | 20        | 32.8    | 32.8          | 65.6               |
|                     | 5     | 21        | 34.4    | 34.4          | 100.0              |
|                     | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Hiring Effective Principals</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                                    |       | Frequency | percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                              | 1     | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          | 16.4               |
|                                    | 2     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 24.6               |
|                                    | 3     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 32.8               |
|                                    | 4     | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          | 62.3               |
|                                    | 5     | 23        | 37.7    | 37.7          | 100.0              |
|                                    | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C4

*Items Related to Instructional Leadership Responses*

| <b>Eval Teachers</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                      |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                | 1     | 11        | 18.0    | 18.0          | 18.0               |
|                      | 2     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 23.0               |
|                      | 3     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 29.5               |
|                      | 4     | 22        | 36.1    | 36.1          | 65.6               |
|                      | 5     | 21        | 34.4    | 34.4          | 100.0              |
|                      | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Test Data Analysis</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                           |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                     | 1     | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          | 19.7               |
|                           | 2     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 24.6               |
|                           | 3     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 36.1               |
|                           | 4     | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          | 65.6               |
|                           | 5     | 21        | 34.4    | 34.4          | 100.0              |
|                           | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>New Tech</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                 |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid           | 1     | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          | 16.4               |
|                 | 2     | 6         | 9.8     | 9.8           | 26.2               |
|                 | 3     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 37.7               |
|                 | 4     | 25        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 78.7               |
|                 | 5     | 13        | 21.3    | 21.3          | 100.0              |
|                 | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C4 - continued

*Items Related to Instructional Leadership Responses*

| Evidence of Raising Scores |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                            | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                      | 1         | 9       | 14.8          | 14.8               |
|                            | 2         | 4       | 6.6           | 21.3               |
|                            | 3         | 7       | 11.5          | 32.8               |
|                            | 4         | 23      | 37.7          | 70.5               |
|                            | 5         | 18      | 29.5          | 100.0              |
| Total                      | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Instructional Leadership |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                    | 1         | 14      | 23.0          | 23.0               |
|                          | 2         | 1       | 1.6           | 24.6               |
|                          | 3         | 8       | 13.1          | 37.7               |
|                          | 4         | 20      | 32.8          | 70.5               |
|                          | 5         | 18      | 29.5          | 100.0              |
| Total                    | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C5

*Items Related to Management Responses*

| Rules |           |         |               |                    |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid | 1         | 28      | 45.9          | 45.9               |
|       | 2         | 6       | 9.8           | 55.7               |
|       | 3         | 10      | 16.4          | 72.1               |
|       | 4         | 9       | 14.8          | 86.9               |
|       | 5         | 8       | 13.1          | 100.0              |
| Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C5 - continued

*Items Related to Management Responses*

| <b>Budget</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|               |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid         | 1     | 25        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 41.0               |
|               | 2     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 52.5               |
|               | 3     | 11        | 18.0    | 18.0          | 70.5               |
|               | 4     | 14        | 23.0    | 23.0          | 93.4               |
|               | 5     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 100.0              |
|               | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Managerial</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid             | 1     | 15        | 24.6    | 24.6          | 24.6               |
|                   | 2     | 9         | 14.8    | 14.8          | 39.3               |
|                   | 3     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 44.3               |
|                   | 4     | 21        | 34.4    | 34.4          | 78.7               |
|                   | 5     | 13        | 21.3    | 21.3          | 100.0              |
|                   | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Discipline</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid             | 1     | 30        | 49.2    | 49.2          | 49.2               |
|                   | 2     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 57.4               |
|                   | 3     | 9         | 14.8    | 14.8          | 72.1               |
|                   | 4     | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          | 91.8               |
|                   | 5     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 100.0              |
|                   | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Supervise</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid            | 1     | 21        | 34.4    | 34.4          | 34.4               |
|                  | 2     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 39.3               |
|                  | 3     | 2         | 3.3     | 3.3           | 42.6               |
|                  | 4     | 25        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 83.6               |
|                  | 5     | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



Table C6  
*Items Related to Preparation and Experience Responses*

| <b>Principal Exp</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                      |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid                | 1     | 22        | 36.1    | 36.1          | 36.1               |
|                      | 2     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 44.3               |
|                      | 3     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 55.7               |
|                      | 4     | 20        | 32.8    | 32.8          | 88.5               |
|                      | 5     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 100.0              |
|                      | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Teacher Exp</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                    |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid              | 1     | 17        | 27.9    | 27.9          | 27.9               |
|                    | 2     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 34.4               |
|                    | 3     | 7         | 11.5    | 11.5          | 45.9               |
|                    | 4     | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          | 75.4               |
|                    | 5     | 15        | 24.6    | 24.6          | 100.0              |
|                    | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Familiarity</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                    |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid              | 1     | 25        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 41.0               |
|                    | 2     | 8         | 13.1    | 13.1          | 54.1               |
|                    | 3     | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          | 73.8               |
|                    | 4     | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          | 93.4               |
|                    | 5     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 100.0              |
|                    | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>PD and Educ</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                    |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid              | 1     | 15        | 24.6    | 24.6          | 24.6               |
|                    | 2     | 8         | 13.1    | 13.1          | 37.7               |
|                    | 3     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 45.9               |
|                    | 4     | 20        | 32.8    | 32.8          | 78.7               |
|                    | 5     | 13        | 21.3    | 21.3          | 100.0              |
|                    | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C6 - continued

*Items Related to Preparation and Experience Responses*

|       |   | Prof. Demeanor |         |               |                    |
|-------|---|----------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |   | Frequency      | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid | 1 | 26             | 42.6    | 42.6          | 42.6               |
|       | 2 | 2              | 3.3     | 3.3           | 45.9               |
|       | 3 | 11             | 18.0    | 18.0          | 63.9               |
|       | 4 | 14             | 23.0    | 23.0          | 86.9               |
|       | 5 | 8              | 13.1    | 13.1          | 100.0              |
| Total |   | 61             | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C7

*Items Related to Communication Responses*

|       |   | Outreach  |         |               |                    |
|-------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid | 1 | 23        | 37.7    | 37.7          | 37.7               |
|       | 2 | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 44.3               |
|       | 3 | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 50.8               |
|       | 4 | 17        | 27.9    | 27.9          | 78.7               |
|       | 5 | 13        | 21.3    | 21.3          | 100.0              |
| Total |   | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

|       |   | Stakeholders |         |               |                    |
|-------|---|--------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |   | Frequency    | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid | 1 | 21           | 34.4    | 34.4          | 34.4               |
|       | 2 | 7            | 11.5    | 11.5          | 45.9               |
|       | 3 | 4            | 6.6     | 6.6           | 52.5               |
|       | 4 | 17           | 27.9    | 27.9          | 80.3               |
|       | 5 | 12           | 19.7    | 19.7          | 100.0              |
| Total |   | 61           | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C7 - continued

*Items Related to Communication Responses*

| Writing |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|         |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid   | 1     | 23        | 37.7    | 37.7          | 37.7               |
|         | 2     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 44.3               |
|         | 3     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 50.8               |
|         | 4     | 12        | 19.7    | 19.7          | 70.5               |
|         | 5     | 18        | 29.5    | 29.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| School Climate |       |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid          | 1     | 22        | 36.1    | 36.1          | 36.1               |
|                | 2     | 3         | 4.9     | 4.9           | 41.0               |
|                | 3     | 2         | 3.3     | 3.3           | 44.3               |
|                | 4     | 19        | 31.1    | 31.1          | 75.4               |
|                | 5     | 15        | 24.6    | 24.6          | 100.0              |
|                | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Community |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
| Valid     | 1     | 26        | 42.6    | 42.6          | 42.6               |
|           | 2     | 4         | 6.6     | 6.6           | 49.2               |
|           | 3     | 5         | 8.2     | 8.2           | 57.4               |
|           | 4     | 16        | 26.2    | 26.2          | 83.6               |
|           | 5     | 10        | 16.4    | 16.4          | 100.0              |
|           | Total | 61        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table C8

Crosstabs with Chi-Square for AchieveNJ Summary and Job Scope

| Case Processing Summary |                              |         |               |         |          |         |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------------|---------|----------|---------|
|                         | Valid                        |         | Cases missing |         | Total    |         |
|                         | <i>n</i>                     | Percent | <i>n</i>      | Percent | <i>N</i> | Percent |
|                         | AchieveNJSummary * Job Scope | 59      | 96.7%         | 2       | 3.3%     | 61      |

| AchieveNJSummary * Job Scope Crosstabulation |       |             |          |        |             |       |  |
|--|-------|-------------|----------|--------|-------------|-------|--|
| Count  |       | Job Scope   |          |        |             | Total |  |
|  |       | Asst. Super | FT Super | Shared | Super/Princ |       |  |
| AchieveNJSummary                             | 5.00  | 0           | 5        | 0      | 0           | 5     |  |
|  | 8.00  | 0           | 2        | 0      | 1           | 3     |  |
|  | 9.00  | 0           | 1        | 0      | 1           | 2     |  |
|  | 10.00 | 0           | 1        | 0      | 0           | 1     |  |
|  | 14.00 | 0           | 2        | 0      | 0           | 2     |  |
|  | 15.00 | 0           | 0        | 1      | 0           | 1     |  |
|  | 17.00 | 0           | 3        | 1      | 0           | 4     |  |
|  | 18.00 | 0           | 4        | 0      | 1           | 5     |  |
|  | 19.00 | 0           | 1        | 1      | 0           | 2     |  |
|  | 20.00 | 0           | 5        | 0      | 1           | 6     |  |
|  | 21.00 | 0           | 4        | 0      | 1           | 5     |  |
|  | 22.00 | 0           | 1        | 0      | 0           | 1     |  |
|  | 23.00 | 1           | 7        | 1      | 0           | 9     |  |
|  | 24.00 | 0           | 7        | 0      | 1           | 8     |  |
|  | 25.00 | 0           | 5        | 0      | 0           | 5     |  |
| Total  |       | 1           | 48       | 4      | 6           | 59    |  |

## Chi-Square Tests

|                         | Value               | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square      | 40.054 <sup>a</sup> | 42 | .557                  |
| Likelihood Ratio        | 29.309              | 42 | .931                  |
| <i>N</i> of Valid Cases | 59                  |    |                       |

Note. a. 58 cells (96.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.