A Study Of The Co-Principalship In Two Charter Schools

Susan M. Paynter

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A Study of the Co-Principalship in Two Charter Schools

By

Susan M. Paynter

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ABSTRACT

A Study of the Co-Principalship in Two Charter Schools

The impact of increased demands and complexity on school leadership is heightened in charter schools where leaders often carry the role of superintendent, vice principal, and principal. To ease the burden on overworked principals, some school districts are examining alternative leadership structures. The co-principalship, as an evolving reform in charter schools, has the potential to provide one solution to this emerging issue. The charter school movement provides a testing ground for traditional schools. How these publicly financed but largely autonomous schools are run is of increasing interest to those who believe school leadership needs to change. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the co-principalship model in two charter schools, looking at advantages and disadvantages, how it contributes or detracts from the manageability of the principalship, how decisions are made, how roles are defined, how power is shared, and how administrative responsibilities are divided and, in particular, how school type impacts the co-principalship. Data from field observations, interviews, focus groups, reactions to photographic prompts, and documents were analyzed. The findings suggest that the charter school principals, when they are also school founders, come to the position of principal to create and protect a vision of a different kind of school. This motivation for leadership impacts the way the co-principalship is manifested. The co-principalship allows overburdened charter leaders to share responsibilities but this may not translate to more time to
devote to the instructional program because of the time required to reach consensus and keep all parties informed. The model does appear to encourage more academic risks and quality decisions but this is largely dependent on the synergy, shared values, and trust between the co-principals. Further, the data suggests that the values of non-competition required to successfully share a co-principalship also contribute to a program design that incorporates collaboration rather than competition. The co-principalship, shared by well-matched leaders, may offer charter schools a model that fosters school reform and innovation.
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"All big things in this world are done by people who are naïve and have an idea that is obviously impossible." (Posted on the wall of Service Charter School)

-Frank Richards

There are those who have the idea that we might run out of love if we love too many people. There are those who believe that when they share a great idea they somehow lose possession and are diminished. Each of the five co-principals has amazed me with his or her generosity of spirit. They have given willingly of their best thinking, their best ideas, and their best lessons. Their reward is knowing that they are making a difference for children. Sharing love, sharing our best ideas multiplies what we share.

The generous school leaders who contributed to this research welcome educators to come out into the light of the hallways and open the doors of the classrooms and the schools and share what has been learned. Thanks to those who shared openly and willingly and gave it all away – it has already multiplied. As the first-century Stoic thinker Seneca once said, "The best ideas are everyone's property." My dissertation committee members, Dr. Chirine Darwiche and Dr. Greg Metz offered their invaluable expertise without hesitation. Dr. Ruzicka and Dr. Walker guided me every step of the way, pushing me to think more deeply and stretch my possibilities. When you share knowledge, you expand knowledge for all of our children.

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Dedication

To my husband Michael, of course

For being the wind beneath my wings
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

General Background of the Problem

School administration of the 1990's called for different and more complex levels of expertise that might not be present in the makeup of one person. Global and societal influences have increased the span of responsibility of today's principal beyond management responsibilities and now include motivating others, problem analysis, public relations, curriculum design, student guidance, and resource allocation (Dressler, 2001). An increasing shortage of administrators coupled with an increasing array of diverse responsibilities has forced us to look at how to retain and attract new school leaders. The reality is that the school administrator shortage is a national concern. A 1998 national survey completed by the Educational Research Service shows that about half of the surveyed districts reported a shortage of qualified candidates for principal positions. The shortage was present in all types of schools. The administrator's job has become more demanding and complex. Today's school administrators must deal with a multitude of tasks ranging from maintenance, safety, discipline, compliance, reporting, curriculum, and assessment. The role of schools and the programs they provide have increased. Recent federal and state reforms have increased the responsibilities and duties of administrators. Schools have been bombarded with pressures to raise test scores and integrate technology. School leaders have little or no training to fulfill these responsibilities. By reducing class size and increasing the number of teachers at each site we have further taxed the administrative resources (Campbell, 2001). Principals
increasingly say the job is not doable. Fewer teachers aspire to the principalship because they see it as a stressful job full of irate parents, irate students, increasing accountability and limitations on what they can do to change the schedule or instructional program. Other obstacles cited were: overbearing district leadership, uneven quality of teachers, profession's low status and poor image, insufficient resources, inadequate management training, and social problems that make it hard to focus on instructional issues (Ashford, 2000).

In addition to the difficulty in attracting new leadership, there is difficulty retaining leadership. A study of elementary and middle school principals conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals in 1998 found that the 42 percent turnover that has existed during the last ten years is likely to continue into the next decade (Doud & Keller, 1998). The shortage of applicants makes retaining current principals even more critical. To ease the burden on overworked principals, some school districts are now turning to job sharing (Hertling, 2001).

As schools continue to become more collaborative with the implementation of site based management and greater teacher autonomy, there will be a constant need for the principals to be effective leaders besides being effective managers. This trend towards decentralization has had an impact on the role of the principal. The principal is responsible for even more of the decisions made at the school level (Pruden, 1998). The willingness of professionals to work together to establish and attain goals pertinent to the educational program is cited by a number of authors as a prerequisite for school success in school improvement (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 1993; Hoerr, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1987). The co-principalship supports the development of collaborative norms between
the co-principal and other members of the school and will build on the research on collaborative decision making (Dass, 1995). The school principal, according to several authors, will need to develop participative management strategies and leadership skills which will instill a commitment to collaborative practice and encourage an atmosphere of trust among participants (Blasé & Blasé, 1997; Covey, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Rosenbach & Taylor, 1993). The study of the co-principalship represents an opportunity to examine the role of this leadership model on teacher perceptions of collaboration.

This case study provides an in-depth view of the co-principalship in two urban charter schools. There are currently 59 approved charter schools in New Jersey. The charter school model has been authorized in thirty-six states as an alternative form of public education. Charter schools provide, within the public education system, a new governance structure that is freed from most district and state regulations. Sarason (1999) has described charter schools as the "most radical educational reform effort in the post World War II era" (Tanti, 2000, p. vii). Charter school legislation, which enables parents, educators, and other community members to start public schools of choice from scratch, first emerged in Minnesota, in 1991. The movement has attracted bipartisan support of Congress, leading to millions of federal dollars going to help start charter schools (Nathan, 1999, p. xvi). Federal allocations for charter start-up funding have increased from $6 million in 1995 (p. xxix) to $145 million in 2000 ("The White House Education Budget," 2000, RPP International, 2000; Tanti, p. 10).

The role and function of principals must change, and charter schools provide an opportunity to pilot new roles and functions because of their freedom from many of the regulations:
Founders of charter schools have a clear purpose for their schools, a sense of accountability for determining the success of their schools, and they strive to identify staff who will be a proper fit among staff, the focus of the school, and what parents expect. (Dressler, 2001)

Nowhere is the increase in diverse responsibilities more at issue than in the charter schools. Charter school leaders often carry the role of superintendent, vice principal, and principal. Unlike in the traditional public school system, which splits duties between district superintendents and building-level administrators, there is little that charter school leaders don't do themselves. In some ways, it's a more demanding job than the typical superintendency because a superintendent doesn't have to worry about fostering a new school culture. It requires a wide array of skills and tasks that should probably not be assigned to one person (Tantillo, 2000).

Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997) point out that inexperienced founders, regardless of their commitment, had more difficulty proceeding once their charters were approved because of their lack of know-how. Sarason (1999) discusses the fact that charter leaders have to create new settings. Hausman, (1993) and Sarason (1999) point out that charter schools are expected to be innovative and unlike schools in the system from which they seek freedom to be different. The personal stakes are high and so is the level of stress.

Charter school principals also come to the leadership role from a different starting place than principals in traditional settings. Todd, (2001) reports that charter school leaders are former educators in regular public schools that found the traditional system too confining. He states that they open schools because they want the freedom to do things their own way. Dressler (2001) reports that charter school leaders are "self
selected" and may or may not emerge from traditional educational leadership programs and may not be adequately prepared to perform the tasks associated with being a principal. The majority of the principals in Dressler's study had assumed a leadership role prior to becoming the co-principal of the charter school.

In New Jersey, charter schools operate like mini-districts, facing the same reporting requirements as districts that are many times larger. The fiscal, resource, and site management responsibilities, even in a small charter school, are enormous. In addition to internal issues, charter leaders must deal with adversarial relationships between charter and district schools (Tantillo, 2001; Dressler, 2001).

In addition to the numerous challenges confronting charter principals, Hallinger and Hausman (1993) report that principals in schools of choice spend significant time marketing the school's program and services. Specifically the principals in their study allocated additional time to parent tours, informational meetings, and in creating marketing tools such as brochures. More frequent interactions with the external community and pressures to "sell" the school to potential and current students compel effective principals to possess highly developed public relations skills. "As the charter school movement continues to grow, exactly how these publicly financed but largely autonomous schools are run is of increasing interest to those who believe school leadership needs to change" (Todd, 2001).

Wholstetter et al. (1995) asserted that charter schools offer a radical approach to centralizing management in education that allows individual schools to become self-governing. Proponents argue that autonomous schools – schools that are unencumbered by state and district rules – will be better able to design programs to fit the needs of their
schools. Charter schools present a complex case because although they have been freed from district rules, the staff can be held more accountable to the community. The findings of Bomotti, Ginsberg and Cobb (1999) support this idea. The findings of their study compared empowerment levels in charter schools and traditional public schools. They found that teachers in traditional schools are more empowered than teachers in charter schools. One of their conclusions is related directly to professionalism being subordinated to the interests of the community. Parents and other groups have often founded charter schools and as a result, teacher may be subjected to the philosophies and specific intentions of the founders of charter schools and not have the ability to act as professionals in the charter school classroom (Crawford & Forsyth, 2000).

Surveys indicate that most charter school leaders are former educators in regular public schools that found the traditional education system too confining. They open new schools because they want the freedom to do things their own way. But more autonomy for school leaders usually brings with it greater personal responsibility for the success or failure of their schools. Charter school leaders usually begin with fewer of the necessities that regular public school administrators take for granted, such as buildings, books, and support staffs. Covering those costs is the first big hurdle, and many school founders say they have to be literally more invested in their schools than regular principals. Many new charter principals are unprepared for the demands of running schools they must operate like a small business to survive. Fifty-two charter school principals in Texas filled out a 22 item questionnaire that revealed that charter school principals as a group do not have the same depth of educational experience as their colleagues in traditional Texas public schools (Todd, 2001).
Some charter school leaders have learned that taking on a partner can make all the difference. In a survey of 391 charter school leaders taken in 2000 by a Washington nonprofit group Standards Work Inc., thirty-nine percent of respondents said that their school split leadership duties between at least two people (Bowman, 2000). The addition of parental choice has further expanded the leader's role to include public relations and student recruitment.

The two charter schools included in this study are in urban areas. The majority of public school students attend schools in urban areas. There are increased demands on and challenges to education institutions in all of society, and particularly in urban settings. Fifty-one percent of all charter schools exist in urban or nearly urban settings (Dressler, 2001).

The charter schools used for this study are implementing the co-leadership model in schools with less than 300 children. Dass (1995) researched the co-principalship model in one high school. She recommends that the model be examined in other settings. She recommends further study on the impact of gender on the partnership. The two schools used for this study offer two different gender combinations. They include female-female-male, and female-female partners. This provides two different settings to examine the role of gender. Dass also suggests that schools that have used the model for longer than one year be examined. The schools selected for this study have used the model for three years. Dass also recommends further study of the affect of the leadership styles of the participating principals on the process of joint leadership.

Connell (2000) mentions the issue of gender and concludes that there is a difference in the way the gender pairs approached their roles and responsibilities. There
was also a difference in the way they were perceived. The limited conclusions on the issue of gender configurations merit further study. Connell studied the co-principalship in two school districts. She recommends that future research examine districts that have similar models in place and that research could explore the role of the co-principal model on an expansion of Sergiovanni’s notion of creating schools of character.

The most recent study by Jameson (2002), looked at one large high school using the co-principalship. His key findings reflect both advantages and disadvantages of using the model of the co-principalship. The advantages he included is the idea that when two individuals are paired with complementary skills the shortcomings or deficits are overcome and those interviewed believed that it was easier to retain co-principals. One of the disadvantages he found is that the co-principalship can be less efficient particularly because of the additional time required for decision making. He suggests that future research examine whether his findings can be generalized to other school settings.

**Significance of the Study**

In schools where achievement was high and where there was a clear sense of community, it was found invariably, that the principal made the difference (Dressler, 2001). Of all the variables that may have something to do with making some schools more successful, the most critical variable is the leadership behavior of the school principals. She states, "Good schools have good principals" (p.171). On the other hand, the role of the school principal is becoming more complex and difficult each day. Greater pressures are being placed on principals today (Dressler, 2001). Without dedicated and catalytic leadership, major reforms could be doomed. Parsons (1985) noted:
The main reasons so many exciting school reforms have failed to make significant changes in schools and schooling is that so few principals have led the way. Where the school principals have actively pursued the program, it has flourished ...where they have tolerated it, has floundered. (p. 32)

Yet with increased demands for a principal to pay close and constant attention to special interest groups as well as promote innovative and worthwhile instructional initiatives, it became more and more difficult for a single individual to display catalytic leadership (Connell, 2000). Although there have been some variations of alternative administrative models, in particular the co-principalship, throughout the country, there has been little study to determine its value and its impact on the development of a learning community. An internet search revealed that many of the schools currently using an alternative leadership configuration implemented these models because the school was either too large for one administrator or because the individuals had worked out a job sharing arrangement to accommodate life style choices. The integrative model of sharing every aspect of leadership was only found in the three dissertations included in this study.

The development of charter schools is intended to restructure public school education by innovating at the classroom level, utilizing shared governance at the school site, and embracing the market place metaphor of school choice. All of these are popular restructuring themes and strategies. Loveless and Jasir (1998) state that charter schools are "fundamentally a unique institution." Charters support the notion that educational innovations develop best from decentralized, bottom-up resources. States with charter schools grant local educators the freedom to make such choices (curriculum, instruction, management), radically altering the relationship of schools and school systems. Sarason
(1998) suggests that if careful attention is not paid to how these new settings are created in the early phases, then little will result from the educational reform except a few successful or failed charter schools throughout the country with little knowledge of how to replicate them.

An investigation of the co-principalship could contribute to the knowledge base of the collaborative model. Successful applications of school-based leadership concepts indicate that tomorrow's principal will be the leader of a proactive faculty that will collaboratively design educational programs and yet maintain the school's unique identity (Dressler, 2001).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine examples of the co-principal model, as embodied in two charter schools and in particular, looking at how this alternative configuration contributes or detracts from the manageability of the principalship, how decisions are made by the co-principals, how roles are defined, how power is shared, and how administrative responsibilities are divided. Results of this study will be of use to charter and other public schools as they determine whether this model might be a viable alternative to traditional public school administration.

Conceptual Framework

Leadership theory will be the conceptual framework of the study. As societal changes occurred, the literature reflected the trends of a particular time. Beginning with the trait theory in the early 20th century, the trend then shifted to leadership style, to behavioral studies, to contingency models and the situational approach, and finally to transformational leadership. A review of the literature will include charter school
leadership, factors contributing to administrative personnel shortages, charter schools in New Jersey, and the co-principalship model.

Assumptions

Because each of the two schools began during the first years of charter legislation in New Jersey, they will be going through many of the same developmental stages.

The second assumption is that small schools are superior to larger schools on most measures. Research has repeatedly found small schools to be superior to large schools on most measures and equal to them on the rest. This holds true for both elementary and secondary students of all ability levels and in all kinds of settings (Cotton, 2001). The two schools used for this study have total student populations under three hundred which places them in the category referenced in the research on small schools.

Guiding Questions

1. How were roles defined and how did the staff perceive the roles of each of the co-principals? Was the staff's perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

2. What role did gender play in the configuration of the roles?

3. What were possible configurations for areas of responsibility and how did the staff perceive the responsibilities of each of the co-principals? Was the staff's perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

4. How were decisions made and how did the staff perceive the decision making process of the co-principals?
Limitations of the Study

Because the study was limited geographically and demographically, there might be reluctance for readers to assume transferability. The scope of the study is confined to examining what is occurring in two charter schools. At this time it is believed that these are the only charter schools in NJ using this model for more than three years. Both of the schools are located in urban areas and there might be reluctance to assume transferability to suburban or rural charter schools. The schools serve populations of comparable demographics.

Definitions of Terms

Co-principalship: A co-principalship existed when two persons shared responsibilities for leading and managing a school without hierarchy (Connell, 2000, p. 12). An integrated team between two people who share the administrative and instructional supervisory responsibilities with equal authority (Dass, 1995).

Collaboration: This was reported to be distinguished from other social interactions such as cooperation or coordination by an outcome producing more than any one individual could achieve independently.

Summary

The expanding role of the principal and the subsequent shortage has prompted an investigation of alternative models for school administration. The study of the co-principalship in two urban charter schools will provide additional research on this model as an alternative to the traditional hierarchical model of school administration. In studies by Dass (1995), Connell (2000) and Jameson (2002), the authors recommend
future research on the co-principalship in other settings. This study is the first study on
the co-principalship in small schools, particularly charter schools.
CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Four bodies of literature inform this study. This chapter begins with a review of the changing role of the principal and the principal shortage and examines some of the possible causes for this growing concern. This is followed by a review of the literature on charter school leadership that highlights the unique responsibilities of charter leaders. The review of research on leader decision making provides a background on this critical aspect of educational leadership. Lastly, a review of research on the co-principalship provides a foundation for examining alternatives to the traditional leadership model.

Changing Role of the Principal and the Principal Shortage

Educational leadership today requires different and more complex levels of expertise. Global and societal influences have increased the span of responsibility of today's principal beyond management responsibilities and now include motivating others, problem analysis, public relations, curriculum design, student guidance, and resource allocation (Dressler, 2001). The role of schools and the programs they provide have increased. Recent federal and state reforms have increased the responsibilities and duties of administrators. Schools have been bombarded with pressures to raise test scores and integrate technology. School leaders have little or no training to fulfill these responsibilities. By reducing class size and increasing the number of teachers at each site we have further taxed the administrative resources (Campbell, 2001).
A study of elementary and middle school principals conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals in 1998 found that the 42 percent turnover that has existed during the last ten years is likely to continue into the next decade (Doud & Keller, 1998). The shortage of applicants makes retaining current principals even more critical. To ease the burden on overworked principals, some school districts are now turning to job sharing. Dividing tasks between two leaders who possess skills in different areas, such as supervising instruction and managing discipline, lets schools benefit from better-rounded leadership. Farragut High School in Knoxville Tennessee has a team of six as the administration. One principal for each grade level moves along with his or her class. There is a chief principal whose role is to work closely with teachers as an instructional leader. A curriculum principal is in charge of curriculum matters. Educational Research Service reported that one of the most frequently requested opportunities for development was the chance to network with other principals to exchange ideas, evaluate the demands of their jobs, and discuss how to implement change (Hertling, 2001).

Several literature reviews have concluded that the principal has become the significant "link" to the success of the school (Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Gild, 2000). The prevalent view among most research contends that a new type of leader is necessary to reach high levels of performance (McCurdy, 1983; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Duke, 1987; Starratt, 1995; Gild, 2000). Bennis and Nanus (1997) have projected a new leader, evolving from the traditional hierarchical figure to a transformational leader. Bennis and Nanus (1997) discovered four major common themes, which they developed into four major domains: vision, communication, empowerment, and trust (Gild, 2000). Charter
school leaders represent a group of leaders that must carry the weight of traditional leadership in combination with the added burdens of functioning much like a superintendent in a mini-district (Tantillo, 2000). The next body of research examines the unique responsibilities of the charter school principals.

Charter School Leadership

Several researchers have studied the co-principalship, but this is the first study that examines this model in the unique context of the charter school. Charter school leaders have more responsibilities than traditional school leaders (Tantillo, 2000; Dressler, 2001; Sarason, 2001). They often have the additional burden of dealing with inadequate facilities, adversarial relations with the local district school, and increased parental expectations (Tantillo, 2000). When you consider that charter school principals must meet these increased demands without the support of a superintendent the issue of alternative leadership structures becomes more important.

Increased Demands

Administrative leadership demands at charter schools have been compared to running a public school district rather than a single school because it requires such a wide array of skills and tasks. "In New Jersey, charter schools operate like mini-districts, facing the same reporting requirements as districts that are a dozen times larger" (Tantillo, 2001).

Sarason (1999) discusses the fact that in addition to the other expanding roles of the principal, charter principals must also create a new setting. He cites three reasons why this is particularly stressful. The first is that with rare exceptions these leaders have never created a new setting; there has been nothing in the professional training to prepare them
for the task. The second reason he states is that because a charter school is explicitly intended to be innovative, to be unlike schools in the system from which it seeks freedom to be different, the personal stakes are high and so is the level of stress. The third reason, a variant of the first, is that the leader has no conceptual road map that lays out the predictable problems ahead.

According to Sarason (1999) there is an additional reason for the stress experienced by charter school leaders. Leaders of charter schools are often self-selected because they are often the founders of the schools they lead. According to Sarason, the self-selection of charter school leaders is potentially a plus and a minus. It can be a plus because it indicates that the person is critical of the existing state of affairs, has developed a vision of an alternative school, has mustered support, and is dedicated to a clear vision. It can be a problem if the leader has chosen this path because of personal gain.

Dressler (2001) raises several other aspects of the complexity of the charter school leaders’ job. He completed a beta study in Colorado that had two primary purposes. First, it intended to gain baseline data and information about the kind of day-to-day leadership present in charter school schools. Second, the study attempted to identify the role, function, and challenges of charter school principals. The focus of the study was to gain knowledge about the perceptions of the day-to-day leadership responsibilities and challenges of charter school leaders. Specifically, are the challenges faced by principals in urban and other charter schools, the same as those in traditional schools? Dressler included individual comments made by administrators in his study. These included the adversarial climate between a charter school and the school district. The majority of respondents shared that they spent a great deal of time on fundraising.
Dressler (2001) collected data about student enrollment, programs, accountability, duties and responsibilities of the sample schools and their principals in relation to the challenges of traditional schools. The study used a two-part questionnaire. The first section included background information such as the grades of the charter school, enrollment, and theme of school, success criteria, and teacher numbers. The second part dealt specifically with leadership information. This included their leadership title, degrees earned, training, prior experience, personal and leadership challenges, duties and responsibilities, and hiring process. A three page, two-part questionnaire was developed including sections on background information and leadership information. Success in the charter schools was described as student achievement, financial accountability, customer satisfaction, systems growth, and design implementation. There were no particular accountability criteria other than the extensive use of tests in a variety of forms. Leadership titles of the responding schools indicated that 10 were considered principals, three were executive directors, two were deans, and two were administrators. Of the 17 responses, 10 administrators indicated that they had one to two years of experience as the leader of the charter school. Forty-one percent said they had formal training as an educational leader.

Autonomy and Freedom

Triant (2002) finds that charter schools grant significant autonomy to their principals. Most of the principals turned to charter schools out of frustration with the limitations they encountered in the traditional public school system, and they view their new sense of freedom and ability to create a school environment as the best parts of leading charter schools. Triant (2002) concludes that charter school principals are using
the freedom granted to them to create schools that would not be possible if the charter law did not exist. Charter schools in the ideal, take power away from malfunctioning education bureaucracies and place it in the hands of those who are closest to, and who often care most, about students. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of charter schools as compared to regular district schools is the significant autonomy granted to their principals. Aside from the board, charter schools are free to develop any management structure they choose. Several of the leaders said that their schools' small size allowed them to eliminate what one of them called "the middle management layer." Although nearly all of the principals interviewed felt that charter schools were not completely autonomous, it is clear that freedom was what they savored most in the experience of running a charter school. The question of whether the newness of the schools plays a major role in the autonomy will take years to answer. The question of how charter principals will see themselves if they assume leadership of a school that has existed for 50 years and inherit a faculty with some members who have outlasted three principals has not been researched. Triant (2002) suggests that charter schools benefit from newness and freedom from inherited orders.

Charter legislation was designed to provide autonomy to charter schools in trade for more accountability. Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997) found that operators of charter schools that have realized autonomy are consumed by managerial decisions. Even though they wanted to have decentralized decision making processes, they found that a more centralized hierarchical structure of decision making worked the best. The results of studies by Bomotti et al. (1999); Crawford (2001); Crawford and Forsyth (2000) and
Wholstetter and Griffin (1997) suggest that charter schools may not be realizing the promise of autonomy granted in the charter school legislation.

**Outlaw Mentality and the Hierarchy**

Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997) found that Charter school leaders often perceived themselves as having an "outlaw mentality," coming from outside the public school system or having a willingness to fight the status quo in public education. Many charter school leaders shared a sense of entrepreneurship in that they forged linkages with resources outside their district including professional networks. Individuals involved in the initial design and development of charter schools generally rejected hierarchical structures typical of the public school system and valued a more even distribution of power with the school community. Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997) point out that inexperienced founders, regardless of their commitment, had more difficulty proceeding once their charters were approved because of their lack of know-how. Sarason (1999) also points out that charter schools are expected to be innovative and unlike schools in the system from which it seeks freedom to be different. The personal stakes are high and so is the level of stress.

Charter school principals also come to the leadership role from a different starting place than principals in traditional settings. Todd, 2001 reports that charter school leaders are former educators in regular public schools that found the traditional system too confining. He states that they open schools because they want the freedom to do things their own way.
Transformational Charter Leaders

Gild (2000) examined the basic tenets of transformational leadership in relation to the organizational structure of a school. An alternative school was defined as a school that provided a "choice". Bennis and Nanus' (1997) transformational model, consisting of four domains (strategies), vision, communication, empowerment, and trust served as the framework for comparison and evaluation. Results indicated that the organizational structure and school administrator worked together in shaping the leadership practices. Charter school leaders tended toward a transformational leadership approach (Gild, 2000).

Research by Mestinsek (2000) identified the preferred leadership practices among a random sample of principals of traditional elementary schools in the United States and Canada. He identified the leaders' perception on their use of seven leadership factors and the degree to which three outcome factors, pertaining to leadership, contributed to their success. The findings clearly indicated that American Charter School principals perceive themselves as transformational leaders significantly more than traditional principals at the 0.05 level of confidence. Charter school principals also scored significantly higher on three of the four transformational leadership factors when compared to traditional Canadian principals on charisma, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation. They scored significantly higher on charisma than traditional principals in California (Mestinsek, 2000). As much as fifty percent of a principal's time is spent making decisions (Gordon & Schneider, 1991). The next body of literature examines decision making.
Charter Schools and the Development of the Learning Community

Wohlheter and Griffin (1998) examined 17 charter schools in Boston, Los Angeles and Minneapolis/St. Paul in search of elements central to the creation of "high performing learning communities. Their study considered "how school missions were developed and translated into classroom practice; how charter schools learned from what they were doing; and what factors were likely to produce high-quality teaching and learning" (p. ii). They identified four building blocks critical to the development of high quality learning communities: the school mission, the school instructional program, the accountability system, and school leadership (pp. 25-26). They found that the school's approaches to these building blocks both supported and hindered their development in learning communities. "For example, the schools appeared to benefit from the commitment and 'outlaw mentality' of the stakeholders (founders, teachers, and parents) but the lack of clarity around school mission, instruction, professional development, and governance interfered with school progress." (p. 26). Wohlheter and Griffin also identified three enabling conditions that helped to distinguish schools in their abilities to establish critical building blocks: schools that had higher levels of autonomy, that were linked to supportive networks/organizations, and that had high levels of support from parents tended to be more successful in creating learning communities (p. 26).

Decision Making in Schools

Recent reforms have stressed the need for ongoing collaboration in daily practice among school level professionals. The emphasis has been on expanded involvement in decisions regarding the governance of the school. This has resulted in a large body of literature, which examines shared decision making in schools, with the emphasis on
principal and leader shared decisions. A second body of literature examines individual principal's decision making practices. Every day in schools across the country principals are making numerous difficult decisions. Unfortunately there is a lack of empirical evidence describing collaborative decisions made between leaders. This lack of information constitutes a gap in the knowledge base that this study will address. This literature review examines shared decision making amongst leaders and their subordinates as well as the decision making practices of individual school leaders. An emphasis has been placed on the role of gender, charter school decision making, and collaborative decision making.

Santin (1998) examined the relationship between leadership style and selected demographic characteristics of principals, including gender, degree level, school level, and years of experience, and their predisposition to use creative insubordination in decision making. The Survey revealed data that indicated that the only relationship that was significant was the relationship between school level and their predisposition to use creative insubordination (Santin, 1998). Because decision making strategies involving goal ambiguity have been common in large organizations, a variety of school studies have been conducted which investigated the relationships between principal decision making and organizations which operate on the basis of trial and error, with changing boundaries and a loose collection of ideas rather than structure. (Crowson & Morris, 1985; Crowson & Porter-Gehrie, 1980; Haynes & Licata, 1995; Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, & Hurwitz, 1984; Rizzo et al., 1970). Within the hierarchy of the school organization, the principal has had the important role of carrying out the policies of the school system through decision making (Lunenburg, 1995). Consequently, several
investigations have examined the decision making role of the principal in relation to leadership style (Firestone & Herriott, 1982; Firestone & Wilson, 1985; Kunz & Hoy, 1976); gender (Eagly & Karau, 1992; Fishel & Pottker, 1977; Gross & Trask, 1985); years of experience (Allison & Allison, 1993; Leithwood & Stager, 1989); school level (Kmetz & Willower, 1982; Leithwood, Cousins, & Smith, 1990; Martin & Willower, 1981) and degree level (Haynes & Licata, 1995).

The principal's key relationship with the hierarchy of the school organization has been through an obligation to execute system policy through decision making. Decision making has pervaded the entire administrative process, since the decision itself as well as the affect on the organization's course of action are included. Decision making is a principal's main responsibility (Santin, 1998).

*Gender and Decision Making*

A review of the literature revealed that there was a difference between decision making of principals in relation to gender. In general, female principals scored somewhat higher than male principals on measures of task-oriented style and were also evidence as having adopted a more democratic or participatory style than their male counterparts (Egley et al., 1992; Shakeshaft, 1987; Santin, 1998). Shakeshaft (1987) pointed out that women principals were more likely to use strategies that included long-range planning and use of evaluation data in decision making. Males showed greater flexibility in decision making than females (Williams, 1997). In contrast to the study by Williams (1997) a study of 95 high school principals and assistant principals (59 males and 36 females) in three large urban school districts examined the influence of gender and role on administrative decision making and concluded that gender was not an issue in
decisions. Subjects were asked to make decision about how they would respond to five different situations commonly encountered in secondary schools. Scenarios ranged from situation involving handling school policy infractions and scheduling changes to choosing representatives and tackling inappropriate teacher behavior. Respondents were asked to choose among word pairs representing different gender loaded preferences such as "efficiency/harmony." As a whole, results do not find gender a salient factor in high school principals' approach to decision making (Mertz & McNeely, 1997).

Lessard (1999) explores how a female principal leads her school and reaches decisions on a daily basis. According to Lessard, little is known about how women lead schools and specifically how female principals reach decisions. Shakesshaft (1987) reports that many scholars have demonstrated that theories and concepts emerging solely from a male conscious may be irrelevant for the female experience. Lessard (1999) summarizes the early decision making literature as largely conducted on top-down, bureaucratic, male-dominated environments. The focus of contemporary models is on initiatives aimed at building a shared vision and developing collaborative decision making (Lunenburg, 1995). The findings Lessard (1999) suggest that the principal she studied played three distinct leadership roles to which metaphoric labels were associated. She was a peacekeeper when assuming a socio-political stance, a gatekeeper when establishing and preserving the instructional standards of the school, and a gardener when tending to the health of both individuals and the institution. Her decision making process was found to differ from traditional models in its application. The subject's process included five stages: receiving incoming information, lending a critical ear, reaching down for further information, analyzing the information and sharing the decision. She led
and reached decisions based on care, courage, respect, vision, order, fairness, collaboration, excellence and intuition. Lessard (1999) used a framework, which looks at leadership decisions through the lens of gender. She suggests future study on the perceptions of staff on educational leadership and decision making. Cuddy (2001) explored whether gender is a factor that impacts high school assistant principals' job responsibilities, relationships with their principals, and their influence on the decision making process. Four urban high schools and eight administrators were used in configurations of the four possible gender combinations. Data were obtained from observations, document, and interviews. Gender was a factor in improving or impairing the relationship between assistants and their principals. Gender was not found to facilitate or impede decision making.

Other Factors Influencing Decision Making

Allison and Allison (1993) emphasized that expertise in decision making was heavily dependent on experience. Leithwood and Stager (1989) concluded that novice principals interpreted problems narrowly and with little confidence whereas experienced principals showed coherent responses to problems and were confident in their problem solving abilities.

Williams (1997) in a correlational study, surveyed 259 principals to determine if a relationship existed between patterns of leadership style flexibility and either selected characteristics of the principal as a person or the situational complexity of the school. Rowe's (1987) Decision Style Inventory provided the data for style flexibility patterns. Rowe combined the task/relationship dichotomy with the cognitive complexity dichotomy to produce a decision making style inventory for leaders (Rowe & Mann,
1987). Rowe’s questionnaire was used to separate leaders into four styles: a) directive, low in cognitive complexity and task oriented, b) analytical, high in cognitive complexity and task oriented, c) behavioral, low in cognitive complexity and people oriented, and d) conceptual, high in cognitive complexity and people oriented.

Williams (1997) found that more university education increased analytical and decreased behavioral decision making style preferences. Flexibility in decision making decreased with the number of siblings in the principal’s family. Flexibility in decision making decreased when principals perceived an increase in external pressures and it increased with principals perceived their staff cooperation was greater. Williams concluded the tendency for principals to be less flexible when under greater external pressure threatened the chance of success for externally imposed change. The positive correlation between principal style flexibility and perceived staff cooperation reinforced then need for a more collegial leadership approach as school complexity increases.

Nolte (2001) examined the factors that influenced rural principals during complex decision making situations. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with thirteen selected principals. The interviews consisted of the principals telling stories about making difficult decisions. The research findings revealed that principals were influenced by factors in four theme areas including other people, self, context, and time. Other people had the greatest influence on principals during decision making situations. Influence from other people included affirmation, support, and political pressure. Self, or the principal’s personal experiences, beliefs, and intuition also played a substantial decision making role. Context influenced principal decision making through community expectations and social norms. Time influenced principals by serving as a marker for
legal actions or constraints especially in teacher non-renewal or dismissal situations. The study produced two descriptive decision making models. The Experience Model reflects decision making as experienced by principals in the study. The Process Model describes the process that principals used to make difficult decisions in complex situations.

Law (2001) examined the relationship between values and decision making. Her study examines the values of Protestant Secondary School Principals in Hong Kong and their influence in the way in which principals perceive and manage problems. The author chose this theme because "problem solving involves decision making, which is a vital function of administration, while values acting like filters are known to predispose administrators to certain preferred paths of actions" (p. 1). The grounded theory that emerges from the research is termed value-based congruence theory. It implies that values heavily influence principals' perception and management of school problems. Second, that the particular value orientation of individual principals are found to match or correspond with their subsequent behavior in the perception, choice of strategies in managing problems, and the outcomes experienced.

An administrator's daily life is full of decisions that often involve "on the spot" solutions. Stine (1996) discusses some of the principles involved in drawing inferences research and decision making and describes how knowledge of decision making errors can help administrators. A case study of one junior high school's decision making process illustrates common judgment errors made during periods of complex decision making (Stine, 1996).

A study by Mangrum (2000) revealed that many faculty and administrators believe most decisions are made in informal meetings that occur at times other than in the
formally convened and formally conducted business meetings. The concept of meeting is expanded to include any gathering of members of an organization who assemble together informally and deliberately in an attempt to solve the problems of the organization (Mangrum, 2000).

Shapiro (1994) looks at organizational decision making as a social enterprise. His theoretical perspective is based on three propositions: 1. decision making is at the heart of the administrative and supervisory process, 2. successful organizational change must involve all members, and 3. people learn to make effective decisions through experience. The paper presents a four-phase decision making process: identify the problems, generate interactions among the players, negotiate, and deal with the consequences.

Collaborative Decision Making

Esposito (1999) examines the relationships between leadership dimensions and collaborative relationships. She notes that recent school reform literature centers on facilitating collaboration among professionals to address these new challenges in education. She concludes that the literature on school leadership has tended to focus on a number of different prescriptions for leadership, which may or may not be effective in addressing recent reform initiatives in collaborative decision making. The responses of 769 teachers were examined by Esposito to determine if the dimensions of assertive, participative and authentic leadership identified from the literature are associated with collaborative relationships within schools. The data indicated that when teachers are asked to describe their own principals, their reports of leadership dimensions are associated with collaborative relationships within individual schools. A dichotomy in the leadership function of the school principal appears to be evidenced when the expectations
of reform efforts for facilitating collaboration and broad consensus in decision making
come in conflict with public demands for action to improve student achievement (Evans,
1996; Wilkinson, 1992). Public priorities for school leadership and the direction of
current reform initiatives which focus on shared governance and participative
management strategies are in direct conflict with one another (Fullan, 1993; Kelly 1999).

Jones (1998) considered the inevitable issues that emerge when the traditional
organizational structure of top-down management is replaced with shared governance.
This move precipitates a debate over who has certain powers, who has certain
responsibilities, and which roles are clearly delineated. The concept of shared governance
provokes questions and thoughts about the institutional structures of power, authority,
conflict and role definition as they relate to organizational effectiveness. Semi structured
interviews, the Decision Involvement Analysis Survey, and the Sense of Power
Questionnaire were major instruments utilized for data collection for this study. The
author concludes that decision making teams are essential to the success of shared
governance. She asserts that formal and informal training are essential to preparing
principals and teachers for a new kind of collaborative governance. The conceptual
framework for the study was the relationship between power and social relationships
describe two concepts of power. The first is based on a competitive notion of power; that
is power is a finite and scarce resource. Another view is that power is an infinite resource
with the possibility of releasing untapped reserves of creativity and energy; the idea of
shared power.
In a paper presented by Meyers, Barbara, et al. (1997) the authors compare three case studies describing the leadership and decision making of three shared decision making teams in three schools over a four-year period. Shared decision making is a dynamic phenomenon that is susceptible to many factors and varies across teams. The data demonstrate that decision making patterns are likely to change over time; individuals in leadership roles tend to participate in a disproportionately high number of decisions and discussions; teams may go through a clarifying stage in which they decide what to decide; conflict may be necessary to promote team growth, role clarification, and delineation of the team's vision; decision making patterns can be directly influenced by training and by stability of team membership.

Pruden (1998) completed a study to get an understanding of how decisions are made in schools through investigating why and how principals decide to exercise their decision making power unilaterally, share their decision making power, or delegate their decision making power.

Lizano (1995) used Janis' (1989) decision making model as the conceptual framework for analyzing decision making strategies in three elementary schools. One of the most striking results obtained in this study was that although administrators gave teachers the impression that they had equal input in decision making process, this was not the case in reality. In fact, teachers had a minimal role. Participants perceived cognitive constraints as lack of time, knowledge, and financial support that interfere with quality decisions.

In a study by Kouba (1996), various methods were addressed that are used to identify problems. The stages in the decision making process were examined, and the
effectiveness of involving others in decisions was studied. The results of this study indicate the importance of training in group process skills, a schedule of meetings that allows for adequate time for the work, an approach to decision making that is data driven, and both the time and commitment to reflect upon the projects and processes.

In a study by Magnuson (1998), characteristics in principals who used a shared decision making system were examined to determine aspects of successful leadership. The study addressed the following two research questions: 1) what personal leadership characteristics emerge in a shared decision making system and 2) what do stakeholders participating in a shared decision making system perceive to be important components of the process? A qualitative design using a case study approach was used to collect the data. A specific decision was examined by interviewing the four principals and the parties involved with a particular decision selected by the principal. The focus of the interview was to identify what behaviors the principal exhibited that facilitated the decision making and helped to keep it shared. Four themes or core leadership characteristics emerged: personal commitment to the philosophy of shared decision making, professional respect, maintaining a neutral position, and a keeper of the purpose (Magnuson, 1998).

Wilkes (2000) joins several other researchers in her conclusion that administrators would benefit from preparation programs in group dynamics and decision making. Her study identified specific knowledge and skills used by principals to sustain site-based decision making at selected elementary schools. Eight principals who had sustained site-based decision making for three years were selected for the qualitative study. Active listening and people skills used to foster trust building and a nurturing environment were critical skills that were reinforced through well-defined organizational procedures.
develop in a collaborative setting. The findings suggest that stakeholders must intentionally build in organizational processes that foster and encourage decision making; a climate of trust and strong culture for participatory decision making promotes an environment for shared decisions and effective leaders should develop interpersonal skills and strategies to sustain shared decision making groups over time.

Public school superintendents consider situation and organizational variables when determining whether to involve others in decision making processes. A sample of 240 superintendents from Washington, Oregon, and Ohio were sent the Situational Administrative Decision making Inventory. Respondents were asked to characterize each situation according to the extent to which they would make their decisions alone or with some degree of participation of others. The results suggest that only in rare cases do superintendents feel called upon to include others in decision making formally, and even more rarely do they act with only minimal advice. The great majority of decisions, under all types of time constraints, tend to be made after a significant amount of input has been sought through informal means (Sorenson, 1985).

Decision Making in Charter Schools

A study of Georgia charter school teachers' and principals' perceptions of the ideal and actual practices examined eight key areas of shared decision making: budgeting, curriculum/instruction, facilitating procedures, goals/visions/mission, operations, staffing, staff development, standards, and their overall impressions of shared decision making. The study's purpose was to enable practitioners to assess their ideal and actual practices in shared decision making and to determine congruencies and incongruencies in perceptions. The research sample included 21 charter schools with a combined student
populations of 22,000. The results show that teachers' perceptions of the ideal and actual practices in, and overall consistent knowledge base about shared decision making are significantly different from the principals', indicating that they did not have the same mental models of how charter schools and mandated shared decision making should be implemented. (Merriwether, 1999)

Kirkpatrick (1999) analyzes democratic decision making from data based on 52 interviews with teachers, administrators, students and parents, and 45 observations of decision makers' meetings. The research focused on decision making as an end in itself, rather than as a means to a desired educational outcome, and centered on three questions: What is the appeal of democratic decision making processes? What sorts of tensions arise from the processes or what is difficult about democratic decision making? How are the tensions attended to and/or resolved, if at all? The findings show that democratic theory is useful in explaining the issues that the stakeholders articulate and reflect the concerns expressed by democratic theorists. The paper highlights ways in which democratic theory may offer answers that schools involved in democratic decision making may find useful.

A survey of 96 Texas public school superintendents and business managers by Ross (1995) revealed that superintendents were more often collaborative than autocratic in decision making, particularly during the "selling" and "occupation" phase of facilities' planning. The last body of literature examines the co-principalship and includes the first study of this alternative leadership configuration by Thurman (1969). The emphasis of this review is on the "integrative model" first identified by Dass (1995).
The Co-Principalship

The conclusions and recommendations of three qualitative studies of the co-principalship provide a foundation for this study. The three studies used a limited sample size of one and two schools. They were each done in traditional, large, elementary, middle and high schools.

The Integrative Model

The "integrative model", as identified by Dass (1995), which describes the co-principalship as a model in which the leaders share all responsibilities interchangeably, was the model that was explored in the three qualitative studies that form the foundation for this study. The integrative model is distinctly different from the co-principal models referenced in earlier studies by Groover (1989) which described co-principalships as job sharing with each principal working alone for half of the time and Thurman (1969), which describes a model of dual leadership for schools that categorically split the administration and instructional supervisory functions between two administrators.

Advantages of the Model

The research cites several examples of the advantages of the co-principalship. These include the idea that the co-principalship may afford greater attention to instructional issues (Connell, 2000; Chirichello, 2003; Jameson, 2002). Another advantage discussed by Jameson (2002), is that when two individuals are paired with complementary skills the shortcomings or deficits are overcome. Connell (2002) also found that accessibility, availability, and visibility were perceived by a number of the respondents to be the foremost benefit of the model. Dass (1995) concluded that the model created a more democratic climate in the school, was effective in bringing about
balance among interest groups by legitimizing equal voice for all, and promoted collaborative decision making. The research suggests that the success of the co-principalship is dependent on a variety of factors including trust, small egos, collaborative rather than competitive personalities, and shared values ((Dass, 1995; Connell, 2000; Jameson, 2002; Chirichello, 2003).

Disadvantages of the Model

In contrast to the reports of increased time for instruction, other researchers discuss the disadvantage of the increased amount of time devoted to communication between the co-principals. This included increased time necessary to avoid staff going to a second principal after the first refused a request. Jameson (2002) calls this phenomenon "mom and pop" because of its relationship to children asking both parents. A second drawback was that too much time was spent on reaching consensus (Wohlstetter and Griffin, 1997). The inefficiency of two people attending to the same issue was another drawback (Jameson, 2002). The additional time required for presenting a consistent voice was described as critical for the success of the model (Dass, 1995; Connell, 2000).

Three Studies of the Integrative Model

The earliest of the three studies on the "integrative co-principalship" was done by Dass (1995). Dass examined a high school in the Northwest in its first year of implementation. Her focus was on the emerging process of establishing collaborative leadership. Dass refined the earlier definitions of the co-principalship, which typically divided tasks into managerial and instructional. She outlined four prior models including: the simultaneous co-principalship where both serve simultaneously, the triad in which
three co-principals serve simultaneously in two schools with one person in charge of administration and two persons in charge of instruction, the alternate model with each serving half the time and sharing the position, and the co-ordinators with one in charge of instruction and one in charge of administration. She then identified the model found in her study, which she called an integrative model in which both principals shared all responsibilities interchangesably. Her data showed that the co-principals, instead of resorting to a simple categorical division of labor, interchanged administrative responsibilities according to availability, expertise, or personal preference. At the point her study was done the researcher believed this was the only principalship in the country using this model. Dass cited research by Groover (1989) that when there was a separation of task, when not backed by well integrated personalities, good communication and trusting relationship, may lead to turfdom and power struggles which can weaken the school from inside. For Dass, this was further confirmation of the importance of the integrative model. The teachers in the study went to both principals for any task irrespective of their individual foci. Twenty percent of the teachers showed preference for one principal over the other but attributed this to personal choice alone. The co-principals in her study were one male and one female principal. The researcher suggests that future study might address whether the gender mix of the team makes a difference in the kind of partnership, the effect of leadership styles on the process of joint leadership, and the professional preparation that would be required to create a co-principal team that can work effectively in chaotic environments.

Dass concluded that the model created a more democratic climate in the school, was effective in bringing about balance among interest groups by legitimizing equal
voice for all, promoted collaborative decision making, and established a male/female team.

The second more recent study done by Connell (2000), included two settings: one large, suburban elementary and one large suburban middle/high school. This study of the co-principalship, concluded that this model could be a viable alternative to the traditional model of public school administration. Connell recommends that subsequent studies could determine implications and applications for school reform. She found a difference in the way the man and woman, and the two women teams approached their roles and responsibilities. She also concluded that there was a difference in the way the model of each of these gender configurations was perceived by other individuals. Her study suggests that a co-principal model may afford greater attention to instructional, security and safety issues. Connell found that being part of a team does not necessarily imply an equal distribution of responsibilities.

The most recent study by Jameson (2002) looked at one large high school using the co-principalship. His key findings reflect both advantages and disadvantages of using the model of the co-principalship. The advantages he included are the ideas that when two individuals are paired with complementary skills the shortcomings or deficits are overcome and those interviewed believed that it was easier to retain co-principals. One of the disadvantages he found is that the co-principalship can be less efficient, particularly because of the additional time required for decision making. The co-principals in his study divided responsibility in such a way that one was in charge of instruction. This provided the school with 30% more attention directed to the instructional program that a traditional model would provide. He found that trust was paramount and that the two
must be willing to collaborate, share information, and delineate responsibilities for the model to be successful. The model was found to be efficient when the two leaders can attend to different matters at the same time and inefficient when the two must attend to the same matter at the same time. Because both of these situations occurred, Jameson found that the model is no more or no less efficient than the traditional principalship. He suggests that future research examine whether his findings can be generalized to other school settings.

Other Forms of the Co-Principalship

A study of the co-principalship was first proposed by Thurman (1969) as a model of dual leadership for schools that categorically split the administration and instructional supervisory functions between two administrators. Although some empirical reports on co-principalship have since appeared in school literature (Gordon & Meadows, 1986; Groover, 1989; Shockley, Smith & McCrum, 1981; West, 1978) research on the co-principalship is still at an early stage.

In 1969 Robert S. Thurman proposed, along with the expectation for innovative practices in curriculum, that there must be an equal amount of vigor applied to promoting creativity in instructional and managerial leadership. He maintained that one person could not do it all and suggested a split between instructional and administrative functions of school leaders. Thurman's (1969) construct called for "co-coordinators." He proposed a Co-ordinator of Learning and a Co-ordinator of Administrative Services (Connell, 2000, p. 31). West (1978) looked at "simultaneous" co-principalship, a model in which two co-principals served simultaneously and divided responsibilities between instructional and administrative lines. Ten years later Groover (1989) examined those examples of co-
principalships that were still in existence in North Carolina. She investigated perceptions of parents, teachers, students, and division officials. Though detailed in presenting the specific nature of role responsibilities of co-principals, the study did not address the concepts of collaboration and shared decision making. West concluded that the model resulted in an increase in administrator interaction with classroom activity, fewer discipline problems, greater staff participation in training opportunities, increased custodial efficiency, and better job satisfaction for administrators. A drawback to West's findings was the lack of reference to methods of data collection and analysis (Connell, 2000, p. 32). Certain characteristics were thought to be necessary for a successful co-principalship arrangement. Predominant among them was an individual's ability to be a team player and suppress ego for the greater good. Other desirable characteristics for co-leaders included compatibility and a shared vision, flexibility, a sense of humor, honesty, integrity, a knowledge of educational issues and a commitment to principles. It was believed that they should have the ability to present a united front. Connell (2000) also found that accessibility, availability, and visibility were perceived by a number of the respondents to be the foremost benefit of the model. Different levels of expertise were seen as being able to address different levels of concern. Opportunities to collaborate with a peer of equal responsibility were seen as a positive outcome. There was a belief that more than one perspective in decision making made for better decisions. Division of labor was seen as giving the principals a chance to see the largeness without having to shoulder the burden. The drawback of the model was contradictory discipline, and confusion of roles and responsibilities. Delayed decision making was also seen as a problem. Instructional programs were consistently seen as benefiting from the model.
The model would positively affect shortages in the field. The narrowing of duties and perhaps narrowing of the responsibilities opens the principalship to more people. Certain factors must be in place for the model to work. Paramount was the need for a goodness of fit of the personalities of the co-principals (227). Respondents' perceptions of traits necessary in effective co-principals are comparable to hallmarks of effective co-leadership as stated by Heenan and Bennis (1999). Their "human assets approach" is evident in participants' repeated statements of need for school leaders to be visible, available, accessible, and approachable. The author suggests further study on whether the co-principalship facilitates the creation of schools of character. Results of the study reveal that a co-principalship model might be a viable alternative to the traditional model if conditions are right (Connell, 2000).

Tantillo (2001) includes a co-principal led school as one of her two case studies for an analysis of culture development in charter schools. Her study analyzed the skill sets of the two principals and their approach to internal and external (public relations) responsibilities. She asserts that the different perspectives of the two contribute to an ongoing dialogue about the creation and implementation of strategies that build the culture of the school.

Chirichello (2003) also examines the developmental of culture in schools using a co-principalship. He states, "The co-principals build trusting relationships between each other and work collaboratively. This promotes a school culture that values these beliefs". The research on the traits of successful co-principals was later substantiated by Chirichello who also found that respondents believed that compatible personalities, small egos, humor, good interpersonal "chemistry" and trust were essential for the model to be
successful. He found that the model provided more time for the principals to get involved in curriculum and classroom visits.

*Elements of Collaborative Partnerships*

Research done by Bennis (1997) indicates that groups make better choices than individuals. According to Bennis, many great groups have a dual administration. They have a visionary leader, and they have someone who protects them from the outside world. Bennis speculates that there are several reasons why group decisions are often of higher quality than individual decisions. These reasons include that more options are shared, lesser ideas are abandoned more quickly, another thinker may see a way to improve an idea or she or she could not necessarily originate, competition may spur the production of ideas, and the group may benefit from the fact that no one person has to bear all the responsibility for the results. Much of the communication of great groups is nonverbal. Great groups tend to be nonhierarchical; members make contributions based on talent, not on role. Bennis has found that people who are engaged in groundbreaking collaborations have high regard for people who challenge and test their ideas.

Heifetz (2000) raises doubts about our ability to overcome hierarchical tendencies. He asserts that when men and women don't know one another and form a new group they routinely establish a hierarchy of roles. They informally select and authorize one of their own members to chair the group. The level of tension diminishes dramatically as soon as an authority is selected.
CHAPTER III
Methodology

Overview of Methodology

The researcher designed a qualitative study to answer the research questions introduced earlier. This methodology was selected to allow for observations of the co-principalship in its real-life context using case study methods (Merriam, 1998). Data was collected over a two and one half month period. Adjustments were made to methodology as unanticipated possibilities emerged. This investigation was intended to be a case study of a phenomenon. The value of a case study research exists in its attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of actions within a system. The researcher identified themes that were consistent among the in-depth interviews, observations, focus groups, and document analysis that were included in the methodology. Pattern codes were developed and supported by the use of coding software by Atlas/ti. Pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, one that identify an emergent theme, configuration or explanation. They pull together a lot of material into more meaningful units of analysis. Pattern coding reduced large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units. It gets the researcher into analysis during the collection phase so that later fieldwork can be more focused and it lays the groundwork for cross-case analysis by surfacing common themes (Miles 1994). A system of memoing was used routinely throughout data collection and analysis. Memoing is a technique in qualitative investigation in which the
researcher determines how patterns relate as relationships emerge during coding. Memos can go well beyond codes. They are one of the most useful and powerful sense-making tools at hand (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Selection and Description of the Site

This study examines the co-leadership model in two urban charter schools by evaluating the decision making and role definitions of the co-principals. The sites being used in the study represent the two charter schools currently using an alternative administrative structure, namely the co-principalship who have been in operation and used this design for at least three years.

The first criterion for selection was the leadership structure of the school. The two charter schools selected use a co-principal structure. The selection of the two schools was made because they share the variables of being charter schools of small size, location in the urban center, and each opened more than three years ago. The fact that they were each among the state's earliest operating cohorts gives them a relative maturity and the most extensive longitudinal data. The two schools used for this study offer two different gender combinations. They include female-female-male, and female-female partners.

Subjects

The co-leaders, the self-selected name used by the co-principals of Innovative Charter School, are both females. They were the founding leaders of the school, which opened its doors in 1999 and currently enrolls 75 students in grades 4-8. There are 200 students on the waiting list. The curriculum develops workplace readiness skills and builds on students' natural curiosities. The school features a Kids in Business Program.
One of the co-coordinators, the self-selected name used by the co-principals of Service Charter School, is male and the other is a female. They were the founding leaders of the school, which opened its doors in 1998 and enrolls 275 students in a PreK-12 program. The program is experientially based and features a School Leaders Network, community-wide service learning projects, and service-based clubs. There are 230 students on the waiting list.

Validity

The researcher employed multiple methods of data collection and analysis. The data were triangulated using formal and informal interviews, observations, document analysis and a photographic prompt. This allowed the researcher to compare information collected from interviews with actions observed and information contained in documents for accuracy and trustworthiness of sources. Validity in this study was also ensured through the accurate reflection of participants' views provided by tape-recorded sessions and subsequent verbatim transcriptions. Inclusion of extensive quotations also ensure content validity of the evidence instances. Direct quotations of respondents provide the reader with specific examples of evidence instances and allows them to see for themselves that the conclusions are logical (Connell, 2000).

Data Collection

The researcher collected data over a two and one half month period. The researcher visited the schools on fourteen separate days, seven days at each site. Table one provides a matrix of each of the research questions and the matching codes and data sources. Initial formal interviews were conducted with each of the five co-principals. Field observations were conducted at each site. Observations were confirmed with follow
up informal interviews. The questions that guided the informal interviews included their perception of their role, areas of responsibility, and decision making approach. Verbal responses were checked with actual behavior. Interviewing was an ongoing process combined with nonparticipant field observation to get the contextual information about the observed events.

**Interviews**

The researcher began this emergent study by conducting in-depth interviews with each of the five co-principals to understand the co-principals perceptions of their roles and to collect data on the co-principals educational background, years of experience, specific administrative training, why they chose to lead a charter school, and their philosophy of education. There were 18 questions. The full sequence of questions can be found in Appendix A. Each interview took approximately one and one half hours to conduct and set the stage for future observations. The questions were guidelines and were modified to supplement the conversations. The researcher chose to hand write these interviews to facilitate the co-principals' sense of comfort in sharing their thoughts. A partially structured format was selected in which questions are formulated in advance but the order is up to the interviewer. The interviewer added questions or modified them as deemed appropriate. Questions were open-ended and responses were written as close to verbatim as possible, periodically checking with the interviewee to confirm accuracy (Krathwohl, 1998).

Validity reliability in qualitative research is also ensured by the conscious search for "negative" or "deviant" cases. Such cases exist when the researcher uncovers data that do not support and are often contrary to some of the emerging themes. In this particular
study, efforts were made to frame questions so that such instances would freely arise. Deviations from a certain emerging theme were presented, such as how responsibilities were assigned to the co-principals and the original motivation for becoming a charter leader. Inclusion of direct quotations affords the reader of the study opportunities to assess in detail whether evidence is positive or negative (Connell, 2000).

As the study progressed, informal interviews were conducted in which the questioning was increasingly more focused as hypotheses were formed and tested (Krathwohl, 1998). E-mail as well as phone conversations supplemented the on-site informal interviewing and clarifications.

A Constant Comparison, method that intertwines data gathering and analysis was used from the outset. This inductive method involves the researcher in analysis to develop grounded theory from the very start of the observation. Explanations are constantly compared with new data from the field (Krathwohl, 1998).

Focus Groups

A second data source was focus groups. Focus group methodology is an accepted practice that allows individuals to share ideas and "when one person speaks out on a sensitive issue it, it releases the inhibitions of others who might not do so in a one-to-one situation" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 295). The focus groups were conducted for one and one half hours with a sample of teachers from each school. The interview guide to the focus group sessions was a modification of the one used with the co-principals. See Appendix B. Questions ranged from the general to the specific. If an unexpected direction emerged, the response was probed, and new questions were added as necessary. All of the four full time classroom teachers from Innovative Charter School participated in the focus group.
Seven of the Service Charter School teachers volunteered to participate in the focus group. The limited numbers of teachers available for the focus group made it impossible to be purposeful in the sample. The Innovative Charter School focus group teachers were all teachers who had not taught in another public school setting. Half were female and half male. The Service Charter School focus group included both veteran and new teachers and was made up of equally male and female participants. Each of the participants was provided with a brief description of the project, a request for voluntary participation, and the researcher’s stated affiliation with Seton Hall University. The guarantee of anonymity for the participants was highlighted. Participants selected pseudonyms, which were used in place of their real names throughout the focus group process. Responses were recorded and verbatim transcripts were coded.

The researcher served as facilitator of the group. In addition to responses to open ended questions the moderator observed how the groups reacted to photographic prompts of the co-principals engaged in a conversation with one another. The participants were asked to explain what they saw happening in the photos. This technique, called the Projective Technique, uses ambiguous images that allow the respondents to bring their own typical and most salient interpretations to the scene (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 240).

Reliability was achieved by the use of consistent procedures. As Piercy and Nickerson (1996) noted, it was important to follow a standard protocol in the focus groups. That practice helped to make the focus group procedures trustworthy and accountable (Connell, 2000).
Document Analysis

A third data source was document analysis. Documents were obtained from the Charter School Resource Center as well as the school archives. Annual reports and charter applications were downloaded from the Internet. A full list of documents can be found in Appendix C and D.

Observations

A fourth data source was field observations and shadowing, which was conducted at each site for seven days. These observations included the co-principals daily routines, such as arrival and departure, meetings, and special gatherings. The researcher observed how the co-principals interacted with teachers, staff, and most importantly, each other. Decision making behaviors were noted. Consistency in roles and responsibilities was also noted. The researcher observed faculty meetings in both schools as well as three formal co-principal meetings at Service Charter School. Observations of the co-principals informal meetings with individual teachers and students were observed as well as informal conversations they shared while working together in their office. Nonparticipant observation was used because it provided the researcher with the freedom to concentrate entirely on the observation of the co-principals (Krathwohl, 1998). Field notes were taken in the setting as the dominant form of data collection. Most observations were limited to 90-minute periods to allow for more complete post-observation recall.

The researcher found it was more difficult to collect data on decision making at Innovative Charter School because the co-principals don't have any regularly scheduled meetings for themselves. They shared that they make most of their decisions while
commuting together in the car. Additionally the researcher was only able to attend one faculty meeting because they hold their faculty meetings once every two months.

**Procedures**

The researcher visited each school site to explain the study to the co-principals prior to scheduling the initial interviews and observations. Seton Hall University's Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research provided the guidelines for the informed consent forms, solicitation letters, recruitment letters and signatures from all members of the dissertation committee. A brief description of the project, a request for voluntary participation by the teaching staff, and the researcher's stated affiliation with Seton Hall University was shared with the participants in the study. The guarantee of anonymity for the participants was highlighted. The names of the school leaders and the names of the schools were changed.

**Data Analysis**

The literature on qualitative methods suggests that data analysis and data collection should be performed simultaneously (Merriam, 1998, p. 162). In qualitative analysis the problem focus is not clear from the outset but is emergent. Interviews and field notes were transcribed and themes were identified. The data themes were sorted into 65 codes using Atlas/ti software. The list of codes and definitions can be found in Appendix E 1-4. Atlas/ti, is a qualitative software program that allows for coding, networking and data chunking. Text from the individual data codes were merged to allow review of the textual evidence of each theme. The researcher then inductively analyzed across the cases as well as within the cases to find commonalities and case variety in the areas included in the coding scheme. This information was used to guide the next
interview or observation. Appendix B lists and defines each code. Table one provides a matrix of each of the research questions and the matching codes and data sources.

The units of analysis were the individuals interviewed and those who were surveyed and participated in focus groups as well as impressions gleaned from observations and shadowing experiences. The primary data source was verbatim dialogue and focus group sessions, which have been transcribed from taped interviews. Five co-principals were interviewed and there appeared to be some redundancy in answers and a perceived appropriate level of saturation was reached.

In addition to the coded data, a series of matrix tables were developed to provide easy comparisons of roles and responsibilities. The self-perceptions of the co-principals were compared to the perceptions of the other co-principals of one another, teacher perceptions, as well as the perceptions of the researcher during field observation. The last category on the matrix listed roles and responsibilities identified from the document analysis.

A matrix was also developed to compare perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the model.

A typology of decision making methods was created using codes which classified decision making processes. The following decision categories were included:

1) Independent - One leader makes the decision without consulting the other.

2) Cooperative - The second leader agrees to a decision made by the partner when asked for agreement.

3) Compromise - The final decision is a meeting in the middle and neither leader's recommendation is the final decision.
4) Collaboration - The final decision has some elements of each idea and

5) Synergy - The decision is a win-win that represents a totally new idea that is a result of the discourse between the two leaders and both agree is better than either of their original ideas. A category of cooperative was adapted during the study because of observations of conciliatory responses. This category was renamed cooperative/conciliatory.

**Document Analysis**

Document analysis of newsletters, memos, and flyers was conducted. Documents that contained an in depth philosophical narration were entered into the computer and coded for identified themes with Atlas/ti along with interviews and observations. These documents included the annual reports, charter renewal applications, and charter applications for both schools. In addition to coding these documents a frequency count of words was done on the annual reports and the charter applications for both schools. Additional documents were reviewed to determine authorship. These can be found in Appendix C and D and included: newsletters to parents, memos to teachers, memos to co-principals from staff and from other co-principals, committee and meeting minutes, special events flyers, handbooks and program descriptions. A matrix of responsibilities was developed which included the category of authorship of particular documents as evidence of responsibility. The researcher analyzed these for consistency in the areas of decision making responsibilities, and roles.

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### Table 1

**Data, Coding, the Research Questions, and Themes**

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<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
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<th>Field</th>
<th>Documents</th>
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<th>Atlas/i Codes (Appendix F)</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Issues that Emerged During Study</td>
<td>The mem and pop syndrome</td>
<td>Playing both</td>
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<td>The unique learning styles and attitudes of the leaders</td>
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<td>The five co-principals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV

Findings

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the co-principalship model in two urban charter schools. The sites being used in the study represent the two charter schools currently using an alternative administrative structure, namely the co-principalship that have been in operation and used this design for at least three years. The five subjects are the co-principals who lead the two schools. The results include reports of interview and focus group sessions, observations, and content analyses of pertinent documents. A brief description of the two school sites and the five co-principals are also provided.

The discussion is organized around the four research questions and the 65 codes that categorize the data into organized units. Appendix E lists and defines each code. The first set of codes was derived from the interview and focus group questions found in Appendix A and B. Subsequent codes were added when consistent patterns among the interviews, focus groups, field observations, and documents were found.

The researcher analyzed a wide variety of documents to find evidence of congruity between the document text and the perceptions of the teachers and the
principals in each of the identified themes. The flyers and single page announcement and factual documents were analyzed for authorship. Documents that contained philosophy or more complex reports were coded using the sixty-five codes identified as themes by the researcher.

A frequency count of the words community, competitive, achievement, partners, collaboration, share, and collaborative was done for the Renewal applications and charters. A full list of the documents that were analyzed can be found in Appendices C and D.

Presentation of Data

Data were co-mingled across cases as well as across data type with Atlas/ti software, to examine common themes. Extensive use of quotations in the presentation of the results provides a richness that would be lost in paraphrase. Direct quotations can be compared to the inclusion of tables to display results in quantitative investigation. Direct reporting of quotations is an accepted practice in qualitative presentation that can minimize the interviewer's influence in reporting data. This is an extension of Fontana and Frey's (1995) polyphonic approach to interviewing:

in which the voices of the subjects are recorded with minimal influence from the researcher and are not collapsed together and reported as one through the interpretation of the researcher. Instead, multiple perspectives of the various subjects are reported and differences and problems encountered are discussed rather than glossed over. (Connell, 2000, pp. 368-369).

The findings on research questions one and three that examine the perception of the roles and responsibilities of the co-principals were entered into individual cells to
provide a brief summary of what the researcher recorded in the coded field notes. These role and responsibility matrix’s can be found in tables 2 through 11. “A role-ordered matrix sorts data in its rows and columns that have been gathered from or about a certain set of role occupants-data reflecting their views.” This matrix lets the reader see how perspectives differ according to role, as well as within role. Reading across the rows gives the analyst a thumbnail profile of each informant and provides an initial test of the relationship between responses (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 123-129). Each column represents a different perspective on the role of each of the co-principals.

Shared Characteristics of the Subjects

A formal interview was conducted at the beginning of the field study with each of the five co-principals. The information collected during this initial interview included the co-principals educational background, years of experience, specific administrative training, why they chose to lead a charter schools, and their philosophy of education. The full sequence of questions can be found in Appendix E. These interviews took approximately one hour and one half to conduct and set the stage for future observations.

The results of the questions on educational background, years of experience, and administrative background showed several areas of similarity. Four of the five leaders attended Harvard. Four of the five leaders had no career plans to become school leaders. Only one from each school has a supervisor’s certificate. None of the five has a principal’s certificate. All of the five intentionally chose to work in an urban setting. All of the co-principals were original designers and founders of the schools. All of the co-principals were former teachers and all of them continue to teach as part of their current responsibility. Both offices had portraits and quotes of Martin Luther King Jr. One of the
differences is that the teachers at SCS are called by their first names by students, colleagues, and parents, as are the principals. The teachers at SCS are referred to by their last names by all stakeholders. The co-principals refer to one another as Ms. Terra and Ms. Alcove with their last names even when no students or staff are present.

Innovative Charter School and the Co-Leaders

The co-leaders, the self-selected name used by the co-principals of Innovative Charter School, are both females. They earn the same salary. Beth received her bachelor's degree in education from Trenton State College and taught for 33 years prior to becoming a co-leader at Innovative Charter School. Iris is completing her doctorate in education at Harvard University. She received her MA in special education at Radford, and her BA in Social Studies education. She taught for 29 years prior to becoming a co-leader. She has her supervisor's certificate.

Beth and Iris were the founding leaders of the school, which opened its doors in 1999 and currently enrolls 75 students in grades 4-8. There are 200 students on the waiting list. The curriculum develops workplace readiness skills and builds on students' natural curiosities. The school features a Kids in Business Program. The following is a description of the school from their annual report:

Intentionally small, deliberately sited in downtown, purposefully designed around a 6,000 square foot shared open space, and co-founded by two veteran elementary school teachers with 50 years of collective teaching experience, Innovative is a one-of-a-kind public school that could only be made possible through charter school legislation.... Dedicated to the well-being, learning, and growth of its 75 students, Innovative strives to provide the best education possible in an open
learning environment where high expectations for student conduct complement a school-wide emphasis on creative expression and open inquiry. Innovative is a place where student work is displayed prominently throughout the school, where standardized tests show that students make yearly academic gains, and where the academic accomplishments of its first graduating class of 15 eighth graders last year were rewarded with acceptances to 13 competitive high schools...

The following is the single quotation from their website:

In a real sense all life is interrelated. All persons are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the inter-related structure of reality. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

_Service Charter School and the Co-Coordinators_

Service Charter School has three co-principals. One of the co-Coordinators, the self-selected name used by the co-principals of Service Charter School, is male and the other two co-coordinators are female. Matt and Jen earn the same salary because they became co-principals in the same year. Sarah earns less because she became a coordinator two years after her colleagues. Matt completed his coursework for a doctorate in Society and Education from Columbia. He received his MA from Harvard in Teaching and Curriculum and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania in Psychology. Matt has his supervisor's certificate. He taught for 11 and 1/2 years after his work in a teaching neuro-psychology lab where he did a great deal of research on language. Jen
received her MA from Harvard University in Education with a major in Language and Literacy, and she received her Bachelors in English and journalism from Rutgers. She is certified in special education and received training in supervision of alternative education at Fordham University. She taught for six years prior to becoming a co-coordinator.

Sarah received her MA at Harvard in Science Education. She received her BA from Penn State in biology. She originally planned to be a research scientist. She taught for 1 1/2 years prior to becoming a co-coordinator. The three co-coordinators were founding members of the school, which opened its doors in 1998 and enrolls 275 students in a PreK-12 program. The program is experientially based and features a School Leaders Network, community-wide service learning projects, and service-based clubs. There are 230 students on the waiting list.

The school describes itself in its annual report:

The school's founders believe that a community composed of learners of all ages fosters a spirit of collaboration that is a necessary part of a successful educational experience. We believe that students thrive in environments where expectations are clear and consistent at all levels, and where students are known — not only by their peers, but by the entire school community. An emphasis on curriculum that places the student at the center of inquiry is the foundation for the school's four critical learning "cornerstones." These cornerstones are: rigorous academics, arts literacy, and personal and civic growth.

Roles and Responsibilities

Two of the guiding questions that directed the research were how the staff perceive the roles and responsibilities of each of the co-principals as well as whether
those staff perceptions were consistent with those of the leaders themselves. Data from
the interviews, focus groups, documents, and field observations were coded with Atlas/ti
according to the themes identified in Appendix E and F. The data were merged and
entered into a matrix in order to compare the perceptions of the leaders with the teachers,
researcher, and other co-principals. Tables 2 through 11 present the data in matrix form
on the perceptions of roles and responsibilities for each of the co-principals.

During the initial interviews the co-principals were asked about their perception
of their roles. The same question was asked of the teachers in both schools during the
focus groups. Each co-principal was asked in follow up interviews about their
perceptions of one another. The researcher found that the role descriptions given during
both the focus groups and the interviews fell into two distinct categories. Roles were
defined differently than responsibilities. Roles were defined as those behaviors that
define the behavior, attitude, and personality of the person such as motherly, Atilla the
Hun, authoritative. Responsibilities were defined as the actual tasks performed by each of
the co-principals. Because these descriptions were distinctly different from the
description of responsibilities the researcher coded these separately. These codes can be
found in Appendix C. Additionally, the researcher found that it was insufficient to limit
the comparison to the leaders perceptions and the staff perceptions. The perceptions of
the co-principals of one another as well as the references to roles and responsibilities
during field observation of the co-principals' daily routines are included in the coding. A
document analysis revealed that the authorship of particular types of documents added
additional perspectives on the roles and responsibilities. An additional column was added
to the matrix, which includes the authorship of various documents. This provides another
indication of the actual responsibilities of each of the co-principals. All of the signed documents for Service Charter School were signed from the Coordinators or were labeled as CO3. Innovative Charter School had numerous documents that were signed with the individual leaders names, with the exception of three documents that were signed by both co-leaders.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was:

How were roles defined and how did the staff perceive the roles of each of the co-principals? Was the staff's perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

The themes and codes that were identified for this question are displayed in Table 1. The leaders, teachers, and the researcher perceived roles and the value placed on the roles consistently, although the precise words used to define those roles differed. Tables two through six show a comparison of the perception of the teachers, principals, co-principals, and the researcher. For example, Iris saw her partner Beth as the one setting the standards. Consistent with this role, the teachers saw Beth as the father figure, the one they had to "get things done for". In terms of the perception of style, and personality, they all agreed that Beth was a different kind of thinker. The teachers said Beth was the leader they went to when they wanted to get some novel ideas. Iris, her co-principal shared that Beth was not able to think sequentially in a box. Beth herself shared that she never taught the same thing twice. Sarah was consistently seen by all observers to be the mother figure, the one who wanted everyone to be nurtured and happy. Sarah shared that she went from being Mother Theresa to Attila the Hun. This was comparable to the teachers' perception that she was a new mother. New mothers can be inconsistent in their behavior.
When they are confident they can be the nurturing Mother Theresa; when they are unsure, they can be Attila the Hun. Matt was consistently perceived as a philosopher who enjoyed discussing ideas at length. He was referred to as the Teddy Bear Socrates. This consistency was also apparent for Jen who was seen as the one "driving at something", making it happen.

The co-principals in both schools played numerous roles, in part because of their designation as charter school principals. Their role as social activists who are involved in groundbreaking educational reform was apparent for all five of the leaders. Their role of being community partners was also true for both schools. All of the co-principals believed that they couldn't do the job without one another to support them.

It was noteworthy that there was consistency in the teachers' perceptions of even the minute nuances of the roles of their principals. For example, Innovative Charter School teachers were aware of the many roles incorporated into seemingly simple chores. For example, they knew that the leader who would arrange the seating for a test was different than the leader who would monitor, review, or order the tests.

At Innovative Charter School it was clear to all of the teachers that Ms. Terra was the one 'in charge'. At Service Charter School no individual was identified as the one in charge. Despite their awareness of the roles they at times found the model confusing. This was of greatest concern in the area of student discipline at Service Charter School.
### Table 2

**Role Matrix: Perspectives on Iris’ role**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Perception of role/style</th>
<th>Other Principal perception of role/style</th>
<th>Observed Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iris Teacher perception of role/style</td>
<td>Warm</td>
<td>Inviting to newcomers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturer Understanding of time management.</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Accepting, supportive,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm easy Doesn't need to grandstand or receive recognition.</td>
<td>Takes the tough kids and the slow underachiever.</td>
<td>and non-judgmental with children who are struggling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion intimate knowledge of many kids.</td>
<td>Incredible patience</td>
<td>Greeter to parents,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturer, flexible &quot;More likely to respond with a question as opposed to an instant answer.&quot;</td>
<td>Great sense of humor.</td>
<td>students and guests who helps all feel welcome as part of the 'family.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiator &quot;Does something about the teacher's well being, happiness, concerns - she is analyzer kind of the personnel...the emotional...&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;She is no lightweight with creative ideas. She takes something and twists it and tweaks it.&quot;</td>
<td>Detail person Agreeable Listener Facilitator of conversation. Prompt and action oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listener &quot;Does something about the teacher's well being, happiness, concerns - she is analyzer kind of the personnel...the emotional...&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzer kind of the personnel...the emotional...&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listener Ms. Alcove would be the mother.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Alcove has definite deadlines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She wants a plan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She makes me think.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self perception of role/style</td>
<td>Other principal perception of role/style</td>
<td>Observed Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never taught anything the same way twice.</td>
<td>If you have a great idea - something new you want to try with your students. Projects that have no end, like sound hounds. The one in charge The leader Kids in Business Outreach, creating the partnerships. She is the face and voice of the school. She can only take one thing in her mind at a time. What she is looking at is where her attention goes. Image, presentation of the school, vision. The father. I make sure I get the thing done for Ms.Terra. Ms. Terra doesn't get how things should get done she thinks about why.</td>
<td>Beth sets the standard. This is not acceptable. She keeps us reaching for high standards She does the schmoozing networking stuff, she does outside and I do inside school. Beth does the personal phone calls and the funders and community meetings. She can't think sequentially in a box mostly follows it but being that a schedule is linear, she sometimes does not follow it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self perception</td>
<td>Teacher perception of role/style</td>
<td>Other principal perception of role/style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Ms. Terra thinks of the end. I need this piece of paper in front of all of them this second. That first emotional reaction that's what it would be. Not a good communicator circles around.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

*Role Matrix: Perspectives on Sarah’s role*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Perception of roles - Sarah</th>
<th>Teacher Perception of roles</th>
<th>Other principals' perception of roles</th>
<th>Observed roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kid sister.... &quot;I'm younger and newer.&quot;</td>
<td>I think she is friend to one friend to all</td>
<td>Agenda driver</td>
<td>Hesitant to have the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do teacher life. I am the closest to the teachers</td>
<td>&quot;Mom, comforter, she's more comforter than mother- empathizer</td>
<td>getting better</td>
<td>tough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am the negotiator</td>
<td>New Mom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I go from Mother</td>
<td>Trying to keep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa to Atilla the trying to communicate</td>
<td>everybody happy,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hun and Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa and Atilla the 3x Student relations</td>
<td>stuck in the middle.. swayed by both of our opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Perception</th>
<th>Teacher Perception</th>
<th>Other principals' perception of roles</th>
<th>Observed roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>of roles - Sarah</td>
<td>of roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't always take the adult role. When it comes to putting my foot down I used to hide behind Jen and Matt a lot. I am the waffler. I'm absolutely convinced by whomever I spoke with last I get caught up in it. I'm kind of the 'what about' person.</td>
<td>She is the affective and we are more about the ideas She helps us see how the teachers will receive it. The way people will receive information, more about the life of the teachers Empathetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

Role Matrix: Perspectives on Jen’s role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Perception of roles Jen</th>
<th>Teacher Perception of roles</th>
<th>Other principals' perception of roles</th>
<th>Observed roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm the one who says face this... says face this... &quot;The one driving at wrap our arms around route four or five right now.&quot; it.</td>
<td>Lets get it done</td>
<td>She's detail oriented</td>
<td>Above board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm more brass tacks I'm the overbearing (expulsive) one- I'm very demanding. But they know it's for the right reasons. I recap and drive towards a</td>
<td>She pulls you in a certain direction Cheer leader Jen in that enthusiasm that you talked about, sometimes she will try to put a square peg in a round hole and sometimes it doesn't matter how many people say, round hole, square peg.</td>
<td>said here's a project here's what we need to do.</td>
<td>Strong conviction Moves agenda Jen - historian/past perspective Moves to action - makes recommendations. Delegates to Matt &quot;Would you have that conversation (to Matt) since Sarah is uncomfortable?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Perception of roles Jen</td>
<td>Teacher Perception of roles</td>
<td>Other principals' perception of roles</td>
<td>Observed roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am in the immediate - the elephant in the room.</td>
<td>&quot;Idealism drives the idea and there is no changing directions. Meyers Briggs J tendency to want a decision and to just want to see the thing done without going through the process steps. She will say &quot;We are not backing away from this&quot;</td>
<td>Jen is the cheerleader sometimes, and sometimes the hard (expletive). She is more hard and fast and will say wait a second, why are we even having this conversation? She gets more upset.</td>
<td>Tell it like it is - risk taker, this is the world Social Activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Perception of roles – Matt</td>
<td>Teacher Perception of roles</td>
<td>Other principals’ perception of roles</td>
<td>Observed Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am the five-year plan man. Where we need to go. I am the fix it man. One time a student said to Jen - “You tell him what to do and he does it.” Mundane things. I am the systems person. I liked designing the systems when the school first started. I am interested in systems that make things efficient. Making a routine that supports the vision. The bureaucracy becomes invisible.</td>
<td>He knows the politics and the policies. Optimistic Matt disappears into his computer. He’s an analyzer Matt says this is the way it is with the staff – oh o.k. Matt says some thing and they believe him. Matt loves to talk in circles. Matt forces us to look at each issue. Matt is good at future outcomes. Matt is great around discipline. We do a good good cop bad cop [Roles] whoever is upset the other is usually the opposite.</td>
<td>Provocateur Thinker Analyzer Strategizer making it happen Philosopher Reflector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Perception of roles – Matt</td>
<td>Teacher Perception of roles</td>
<td>Other principals’ perception of roles</td>
<td>Observed Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable with six or seven balls in the air at the same time.</td>
<td>A loving teddy bear.</td>
<td>Matt wants to talk about it for 3 hours.</td>
<td>Matt's role is to be the relativist, not wishy-washy, but he will allow more wiggle room. He can see a situation and move that line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making roles - ‘why’ ‘what about’ not time keeper or decision driver.</td>
<td>Socrates</td>
<td>Matt would be saying, what's wrong with trying to elevate our standards?</td>
<td>He doesn't take things to heart as much. He is convinced that if he just talks about it long enough eventually he can convince someone. For me, he is the decision driver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm content to take a 20 minute conversation and make it a week long retreat. I talk too much.. it depends on the issue</td>
<td>Matt lets the other two people work out the problem and he kind of sits back and waits to see what is going to happen and when they have worked it out he either says yes I am giving my blessing or no I don't agree and then the whole thing begins again.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Efforts to Blur the Roles

The co-principals in both schools mentioned an effort to blur the roles rather than have a strict division of labor. The teachers at Service had more comments on this issue. There were two codes for this phenomenon. The first was blurred roles. The second code was elephant, referring to the notion, mentioned by Jen that going beyond the blurring of roles it had become essential for all of them to know every aspect of the operation in order to truly share decision making on most topics.

Jen: We're no longer in a strict model of lower middle and high responsibilities. We all attend all meetings - it didn't feel good when we were autonomous. We didn't divide up by grade level. We divided up by who would work best. A meshing of personality style eg. Matt loves to talk in circles so he talks to people who like to talk in circles. ...The roles are merging over time. You learn where your strengths are.... Be sure one of you isn't just seeing one side of the elephant. You have to cut the elephant across horizontally so you see all parts.

Matt: You have to be able to communicate almost everything even if at first you don't think its relevant it becomes relevant. We're thinking of a shared calendar look for 20 -30 key points - kind of a log... When Jen did lower and I did upper each part of the school got half the benefit... Before it was more a division of leadership rather than shared leadership.
Iris: I purposefully brought her in so they can see us as more of a collaborative she has to because its best for the school... The parental contact Beth used to do, but its becoming more shared.... More collaboration now than when we started. The roles are merging over time. You learn where your strengths are.

SCS teachers:

I find it kind of confusing, again I am a schoolwide teacher so I often have to think through step by step who is the appropriate person to go to, for a spur of the moment thing I go to whoever is available but sometimes I get a little confused. Especially this year, last year the roles were much more specific this year they are trying the everybody is equal model... This is a small organization and I think that the difficulty in saying co-coordinator just shows how muddy the whole thing is with three people just sort of amorphously handling all the details that fall on the administration. It is confusing not only to faculty and administrators, but it is confusing to students.... They are still trying to figure out what their roles are because the year before last year we had this mix everybody does everything and last year they tried everybody has a specific role and this year we are back to we are all doing things together.... They are taking on more projects and duties as a result all three of them are very stressed out to the max because there are no boundaries on what it is that they are doing.
Teachers at Innovative also mentioned the effort the principals made to know every aspect of the "elephant".

ICS Teachers: They both know what is going on in the whole school - very very important to the whole picture.

Clear Demarcation of Roles

Co-principals and teachers in both schools mentioned the importance of the clear demarcation of roles. This appears to be in direct contrast to the statement made by principals in both schools that they were attempting to blur the lines of responsibility. This is also in sharp contrast to the two flowcharts produced by SCS. In 1999 the flowchart located in the annual report contained a lengthy list of specific responsibilities and each of the co-principal's responsibilities were charted separately. The current flowchart, found in the teacher's handbook, charts the co-principals as one entity. Evidence of the desire for clearly defined roles:

Jen: The other advise is that you should have clearly demarcated roles based on each other's strengths.

ICS focus group: It's really important to define roles and responsibilities ahead of time. I think the personalities defined those roles.

This was evidenced by the teachers' awareness of the nuances of the responsibilities:

ICS Focus group: I know that Ms Alcove does a lot of grading she does all the report cards... Ms.Terra does more of the comment section of the grading on report cards. She writes them in.
SCS Teachers: One of the problems is there are just too many hats on one person. Take a few hats off and allow that person to do what he does really well, get some real help… I think the division of labor from their stand point would be beneficial to them in the area of discipline I think a little bit of a clearer mind I mean, but there you just need to know if x happens this is where you are going to go. I agree with you, I think the division of labor is a more important issue to me, this is a bias, than the hierarchical issue because I think with clear roles it would be clearer and also comes my next piece of advise, which is don't work out your stuff in front of your staff, like have the clear roles so that the staff knows, you know, and if you want to modify those roles or whatever, do it some other place and that would lead to some one in charge of all these areas and that would lead to because you know if there is someone who makes that final decision you don't need the hierarchy. I think the division of labor that the truancy/Slash discipline person who is not the traditional you are in trouble but someone who really provides support services, works with the social worker, gets to know families, kids feel like o.k. I'm in trouble I'm going to see this person and that he/she in a weird way is sort of my ally even though they may be mean as you said earlier and I say you know, umm I think our students would like that… but I think their lives could be a lot easier if they departmentalized and delegated a little bit.

Several teachers from Service Charter School went so far as to prefer not only a further demarcation of roles but a more hierarchical structure. This was coded as
'hierarchy'. A list of the data sources and codes for this phenomenon can be viewed in the matrix located in table 1.

From my experience in other schools I have to say they are more approachable because there are three of them but the pyramid of control is too flat. By that I mean there are 60 teachers and only three people above them thus, if you have any kind of problem you have to go to the co-coordinators. From my experience from teaching in other places you usually have teachers, departmental heads, deputy headmaster and a headmaster that leads to the point that not all the problems have to be handled by the top. So, in my experience, where I was like a departmental head, people would come to me to solve their problems without the headmaster even being bothered with it.

I have always been a believer in and would prefer a benevolent dictator. I think with a school as small as ours if there was one strong focused individual who could delegate by expertise to people below her or him, we would be better off.

If there was somebody kind of leading the charge and then delegating let's get a lower school specialist, or a reading/writing specialist or this sounds like a discipline problem let's bring it to our disciplinarian. Maybe three or four sub positions below that benevolent dictator, for lack of a better word. I think we would run more efficiently and I think there would be more grumbling and
gripping because right now we have three different voices that we can, not play against each other, but we can kind of go in based on what is comfortable to us.

If you were going to advise another group of people who were considering this model what advise would you give? Make a true hierarchy. If there is going to be shared power, share it within a hierarchy.

I am saying is just that you can have shared power but even within the shared power it has to be shared with a clear hierarchy so that as Jimbo pointed out before, not everything bubbles up to the top, cause not everything needs to bubble up to the top maybe it bubbles up to the department level or the middle level where there is a vice or co-principal situation and than there is somebody at the top and than above that somebody there's the board. its funny because its all counter to what in fact the idea of what a charter school is - to eliminate bureaucracy you know we give you 10% less because you will lessen the bureaucracy. Everybody thinks well that's great because a lot of those people weren't doing anything. Well, maybe a lot of those people were doing something, we need a few more of those people.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 was:

What role did gender play in the configuration of the roles?
Both women co-principals at Service Charter School mentioned that gender played a role in the willingness of the teachers to take direction. The male co-principal confirmed this. The teachers did not seem at all aware of this phenomenon. They cited on more than one occasion that they wanted someone to be in charge and said that currently no one was in a position of authority.

Jen:
I watched how people responded to me and Matt when we opened and I knew it was a gender thing. My job was to make them feel good, to give them approval. All Matt has to do is say good morning and the sky opens up. Their job is to make Matt feel good. I was hired help and he was G-d. I realized it right away - it's the first time I've ever seen that in my life. If woman is hard working she's a (explictive). If a man is hard working he's driven. I had to reframe this - it took two years to accept it and work with it.

Sarah:
Does that have anything to do with gender? We talk about the role gender plays. Sometimes we want Matt to get more upset in concert with us. There are times, one incident stands out in my mind. The teachers in the leadership team had written a biased survey and I went to them to ask them to make the questions more neutral. They wouldn't listen to me. Matt came in and used my exact words and they changed the survey, just like that. I'm not good at saying we have to do this right now. This is how it is, period.
Matt:

*Gender*? Oh Yeeeh. It's kind of distressing. If Jen or Sarah bring something serious they experience the teachers whining. When I come in it's oh, o.k. - I am like the daddy - it's a gender inequity. It gets in the way - when a woman acts like that she is a (exploitive). When a man does, there is no value placed on a man. Now I use it to benefit the school.

*Research Question 3*

Research Question 3 was:

What were possible configurations for areas of responsibility and how did the staff perceive the responsibilities of each of the co-principals? Was the staff’s perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

The different perspectives of the responsibilities of the leaders were entered into five responsibility matrix's that can be found in tables five through ten. A column was added to highlight the authorship of various documents. This column is labeled 'documents'. It was assumed that the authorship of a particular area related to being responsible for that area. For example, Beth was the author of the renewal application. This was consistent with the perspective that she was responsible for all documents related to state requirements.

While there was consistency in the perceptions, findings indicate that there was a stark contrast between the teachers’ notion of how responsibilities should be divided and the concept evolved by the co-principals. The teachers in both schools mentioned the importance of clarity and knowing who to go to for each task.
The desire for increased clarity of responsibilities was more prevalent at Service Charter School. Several teachers went so far as to want a "benevolent dictator". This was in direct contrast to the desire of the co-principals at both schools to further blur the responsibilities and involve each leader in every aspect of the school. Jen provided a metaphor for the concept by saying that rather than having each person touch a different part of the elephant and be completely unaware that in fact you had an elephant in the living room, she preferred an elephant that was divided horizontally in a way that allowed each of the leaders to intimately know every aspect of the elephant. Service Charter School teachers observed that the organizational flowchart had changed every year and they were consequently confused about how responsibilities were divided. The ambiguities of the responsibilities led them to recommend a clear division of labor with a hierarchical structure. This need was expressed most frequently in reference to the need for consistent and strong discipline.

Responsibilities were often interchanged based on the availability of one or the other principal. Despite this sharing of responsibilities teachers were remarkably consistent in their perceptions of how responsibilities were distributed.

The co-principals were asked, during informal follow up interviews, how the responsibilities were designated. Sarah shared that education, interest, and experience had nothing to do with her current responsibilities. She shared that she had most of her experience in the high school but had taken on the middle school because "that was what was available, no one else had the time and that was what was needed."
Iris shared that tolerance for the tasks was the idea that rang most true for her. Matt shared that education was the least important since all three co-principals had a similar educational background. The word interest was the word that "jumped out" for him. He said that interest was important because it gave him a greater degree of tolerance for unpleasant tasks. He shared the example of designing systems for the school. Matt described a sequence to explain his current responsibilities. His vision and values for the school emerged while he was writing the charter application. These included the importance of professionalism for teachers. The responsibilities grew out of how to make these values real. Jen shared that the charter "chose me". She had a vision of a different kind of school and in order to make sure the school opened she assumed the role of co-principal.
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative written paper work, roundtable, policy, grants, &quot;I don't talk to the people; when I do it's a disaster&quot;. Ms.Terra does outside and I do inside of school...organized.</td>
<td>Administration clearly, anything having to do with money, paper reports, state,days off, contacts, college courses, purchasing of tests. Supply orders. Library Test of a student with a learning problem. To get the team in here, she has a rapport with the special ed.&quot;</td>
<td>Letter at the beginning of the yearbook. Reviews the lesson plans. She usually works with the special needs kids. Lining up kids for lunch Ms. Alcove overlooks things. Ms. Alcove deals with anything from the state. She is a master at it. She's brilliant.</td>
<td>Charter applicant Holocaust demonstration sight on web from NJDOE Staff meeting agendas: 2/20/02, 9/2002, 1/15/02, 2/9/02, 10/27/01 asks teachers to share renewal binders for the state, review lesson plans collect report cards; formal evaluations; reminder about report cards, alternative assessment.</td>
<td>To parent at a conference: &quot;Your daughter is not a leader.&quot; To teachers: &quot;I will take responsibility for ordering.&quot; Shared with researcher: &quot;I had an interview this morning it screwed everything up&quot; (her teaching classes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris - Self</td>
<td>Co-leader</td>
<td>Document reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Teacher Perception</td>
<td>Perception or authorship -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I mostly meet one-on-one with kids who are most needy. I also have special little art projects at my table with kids who are 'free.'&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It's black and white, if its administrative you just go to Ms. Alcove.&quot; A Personality like Ms. Alcove that, while she doesn't like administration, she sees that it must get done and she can marshal herself to get it done. A lot of grading she does all report cards, prep of language lessons.</td>
<td>We usually both do interviews but sometimes separately. She is excellent with the schedule. She is the principle writer for kids in business proposals.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent letters: 4/16/02, 1/21/02, 2/20/01 Spring greeting and reminders, applications being due for a high school, school rules about dress and gum, activities and projects, highlights; Upcoming events letter March 2002 report cards. Monitor the delivery of the curriculum Annual Report - 2001 2002, 2000-2001 oversee teachers determine which standards we address.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>individual special education students. Supporting troubled students with individualized attention, doing art projects for the Unity ornaments for the holiday tree. Correspondence</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8

*Responsibility Matrix: Perspectives on Beth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beth – Self perception of responsibility</th>
<th>Teacher perception of responsibility</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Document reference</th>
<th>Observed responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rough parents, I deal with all the crazy parents. &quot;Disciplinarian Not paper work. &quot;Research group and the language arts program - me and the kids&quot; We seek our natural level. I seek cleaning stove, watering plants.</td>
<td>She's in charge—it's Personal it. &quot;Disciplinarian definitely, parents. &quot;Tests…. from the administrative side - what the test is about, selecting the tests, who, how to approach, how we will sit down, who will be in the room to take the test -logistics all of that.</td>
<td>Personal phone calls and the funders and community meetings. Disciplinarian Beth did year book. Expert in dealing with student discipline and crazy parents.</td>
<td>Kids in Business art auction, and the invitations. Innovative</td>
<td>Student trip to sell items for Kids in Business. Beth walks around room correcting posture, chair Teaching Institute position. Teaching groups of students research and literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth - Self</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perception of responsibility</td>
<td>Teacher perception of responsibility</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Document reference</td>
<td>Observed responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodial duties because we don't have a full time custodian.</td>
<td>Helping that student after the testing, Ms. Terra is great. Kids in Business</td>
<td>Personal phone calls and the funders and projects.</td>
<td>Staff meeting 10/16/02- Beth</td>
<td>Collaborating with poet visitor on poetry for 8th grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching institute - it comes from the heart.</td>
<td>More of the comment section of the grading on report cards. She writes them in.</td>
<td>community meetings. Disciplinarian</td>
<td>Parent letter about Heifer Project International (helping feed hungry families).</td>
<td>Helping students prepare letters for high school application. Helping 8th graders prepare statements for year book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If someone is having trouble with a student they are more likely to share this with me.</td>
<td>Expert in dealing with student discipline and crazy parents.</td>
<td>Beth did year book. Parent letter - request to photograph students for yearbook. Kids in Business letter - September 2001, May 2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah- Self</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Co-leader Sarah</td>
<td>Document</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>reference to Observed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education.</td>
<td>If I was going</td>
<td>Sarah's role is</td>
<td>Middle School Sarah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch points with all the middle school teachers.</td>
<td>to be sick, you would call</td>
<td>newer - its still being</td>
<td>All other teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting the middle school going.</td>
<td>Sarah. integrated. Her scheduling.</td>
<td>niche is yet to be seen. signed as co-coordinators.</td>
<td>Writing Monday Memo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and lateness, I hate that part of the job!</td>
<td>Sarah is absence.</td>
<td>She took over the special ed.</td>
<td>Teaching a violin elective.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We split the CO3. school issue I do a lot of the lower and middle discipline. I start the Monday Mem and the agenda.</td>
<td>If it is a middle school issue I go to Sarah. Sarah does personnel. Sarah does absence.</td>
<td>from me.</td>
<td>Special Ed. Coordinator meeting on IEP process. Agenda for CO3, agenda mover.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah: Self</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Co-leader Sarah</td>
<td>Document</td>
<td>Observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>reference to</td>
<td>Observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am the point</td>
<td>Sarah would be</td>
<td>middle school</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Discipline - first grader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person for hiring. I</td>
<td>screen resumes and</td>
<td>do the initial</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinating a substitute teacher assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interviews. I kick it off.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

*Responsibility Matrix: Perspectives on Jen*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jen - Self</th>
<th>Co-leader</th>
<th>Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Teacher Perception</td>
<td>Perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Reference to Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the 2/3</td>
<td>To get the team in</td>
<td>Jen and I do a lot of the lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| and 4 classes and   | here she has a lot of the lower | signed as co-
| the Arts            | rapport with the and middle | coordinators. future facility |
| department -        | special ed.     | discipline.                  |
| visual, dance,      | Jen is Service, | Jen and I share original    |
| music and learning  | more this year. | annual report library.      |
| martial arts. and   |                 | which was Jen teaches       |
| community           |                 | written prior Karate.       |
| I do our relations. |                 | to the third Lower School   |
| extensive           | Elementary      | co- meeting.                |
| elective program.   | curriculum is Jen. | coordinator. Touch Points  |
| I am the            |                 | for a variety of teachers.  |
| community liaison,  |                 |                              |
| I'm not an outsider. |                 |                              |
### Table 11

**Responsibility Matrix: Perspectives on Matt**

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everything to do with the state - predominantly</td>
<td>Anything academic</td>
<td>Matt is our state</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Matt writing up a special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the oversight of grants and money.</td>
<td>I would always go to the person I consider (Matt).</td>
<td>Matt does upper discipline.</td>
<td>Meeting ed. report for agenda - the state.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development committee, tenure and observation, structured peer support, in the past I dealt with the high school issues - mostly do now. I am the webmaster - I designed and maintain the website. I haul heavy objects … It's the only part of my job that has a clear beginning and a clear end.</td>
<td>Matt is budget</td>
<td>He knows the 12/10/02.</td>
<td>All other senior</td>
<td>Teach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>if Matt is an upper school specialist,</td>
<td>politics and the policies.</td>
<td>documents portfolio.</td>
<td>signed as Matt teaches co- senior</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and he seems to be,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>coordinators philosophy.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>taught almost every subject at the high school level, its</td>
<td>fascinating to me, I have tremendous respect for him as a result.</td>
<td>Helping social worker with computer problem.</td>
<td>State reports.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

93
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matt - Self Perception</th>
<th>Teacher Perception</th>
<th>Co-leader</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I liked designing the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discipline-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>systems when the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>middle school</td>
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<tr>
<td>first started. Some of the</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>student and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>systems even get too</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>two high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complicated and I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need to simplify them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information should only</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be entered once - I</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>created an attendance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>data base - I am</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>interested in systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>that make things</td>
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<tr>
<td>efficient. Making a</td>
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<tr>
<td>routine that supports</td>
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<tr>
<td>the vision.</td>
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</table>
Research Question 4

Research Question 4 was:

How were decisions made and how did the staff perceive the decision making process of the co-principals?

Decision Making

One of the questions that guided this study concerned how decisions were made and how the staff perceptions of the decision making process of the co-principals. Decision making processes were observed during fourteen days, seven days in each of the schools. Observations of decision making were made of daily routines including teacher's meetings, co-leader meetings, and informal meetings with students or staff.

Decisions were coded according to the level of collaboration. The codes included independent, cooperative, compromise, collaborative, and synergistic decisions. The codes and their definitions can be found in Appendix E. A complete list of data sources for this question can be found in Table 1. Independent decisions were those that were made by one leader without consulting the others. Cooperative decisions were defined as those in which the second leader agreed to a decision made by the partner when asked for agreement. In some cases the cooperation could be seen as conciliatory behavior. A compromise agreement was defined as one in which the decision is an averaging, a meeting in the middle and neither leader's recommendation is the final decision. Collaboration is defined as a decision, which includes elements of each partner's ideas. The synergistic decision is defined as a win-win that represents a totally new idea that is a result of the discourse between the
two leaders and both/all agree is better than either of their original ideas. The five
decision - making codes were entered into Atlas/ti and then merged and entered into a
matrix. Tables 12 and 13 show the decision matrixes for the two schools. This
allowed the researcher to compare the decisions made at each of the schools.

The researcher found it was more difficult to collect data on decision making
at SCS because they only have one faculty meeting every two months. Additionally,
the co-principals don't have any regularly scheduled meetings for themselves. They
shared that they make most of their decisions while commuting together in the car.
The researcher was able to observe several short term, informal decision making
exchanges. In terms of the faculty meetings, the researcher was able to observe one of
these all day meetings.

In contrast Service Charter School has weekly two-hour meetings for the co-
principals and weekly meetings for each of the three faculty divisions of lower,
middle and upper school. The researcher was able to observe three of the co-principal
meetings, referred to as CO3 (Coordinators Cubed) meetings as well as two of the
faculty meetings. This made the process of analyzing and coding Service's decision
making process richer than at Innovative. Most of the decisions observed at
Innovative were either independent or cooperative.

Cooperative/conciliatory

Beth: We both analyze the situation and we each give ideas. Sometimes I'm
headstrong and I say no this won't work....Sometimes I put my foot down and
say this is the way. I do it more than her. I am very knowledgeable with kids -
she doesn't disagree with me.
Iris: There are times when we say different things and we have to talk about it later and I capitulate.

Iris: We had to move a child to another desk one morning because of problems. It turned out to be a three-way move. I made a suggestion, Beth agreed and it seems to have been a good thing.

Independent:

Iris: Iris purchased flowers and commented that she didn't discuss this with Beth but that Beth told her it was a great idea. Iris pointed out that in one instance she "took the liberty to give the tickets to the parent she selected."

When Beth arrived she commented that this was an excellent choice.

Iris: We usually watch a history movie at lunch but for some reason Beth wanted to watch this.

When the ICS teachers were shown a photographic prompt of their co-principals they perceived the decision making process as a more complex process than the researcher identified.

ICS Teachers:

Just like in the picture - Ms. W would have a vision in mind and Ms. H would be let's cut to the chase and ask questions to understand Ms. W's position on how to decide. And than what? Ms. Hall would help clarify what is the decision. A lot of the decision would be Ms. Hall helping Ms. W identify the question. One of the things Ms. W knows is this time I don't want to decide. In the clarification Ms. Hall is adding her own opinion - adding options,
including her own options. This is what the options are one of these is my option, than they make a decision.

SCS used a combination of all four categories. Many of their decisions were reached by a consensus process and were coded as synergistic because they clearly arrived at new solutions that went beyond any of the original individual suggestions. The weekly CO3 meeting, which they have referred to as the "Triumverate", provides two hours of time to discuss issues in great depth.

Collaborative:

Sarah was more likely to delay a decision until she had consulted with both Matt and Jen. During a controversial segment of a middle school meeting Sarah told the teachers that she would not give them an answer until she had picked the brains of Jen and Matt. She told the special ed. coordinator that she would put the changes on the IEP on her agenda with Matt and Jen.

Sarah: I write the morning memo on the weekend and than send to Jen and Matt - it used to be just me, but there's always little things in people's heads, that's why we sit down once a week.

Three synergistic decisions were reached during the co-principal CO3 (Co-Coordinators to the third power) meeting. These included a discussion about what to do about the teachers not reading the essential parts of the Monday Memo to the students. This was resolved synergistically when they came up with the decision to have all announcements on a separate page but still a part of the Monday Memo.

Conversation between Matt and Jen:

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Jen: I think we are all saying the same thing.

Matt: Instead of having to reorganize, we could have a separate page Jen: I think we are all saying the same thing.

Matt: Make it a separate page but not appear twice

Jen: Right, we don't need to put it 2x.

A second synergistic decision was about a concern over a teacher wanting to take students out to lunch as a reward. The students who were not rewarded were left at school. The solution reached was to have the reward occur after school, which eliminated the issue of some students being left at school.

A third synergistic decision involved a disciplinary action for a student who had sent an obscene e-mail using a teacher's e-mail account. The resolution took the two hours of the CO3 (Co-Coordinators to the third power) as well as several hours at the board meeting the same evening. A document was created through a consensus process that resulted in a list of eight consequences. One of the consequences was that the student must interview three family members about his actions and record responses to a specific question. The family members who were interviewed were required to sign the recorded responses. This is an elaborate consequence especially when considering that it is only one of seven consequences.
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<tr>
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<th>Compromise</th>
<th>Collaborative</th>
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Table 13
Decision Making Matrix: Service Charter School

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cooperative/ Independent</th>
<th>Conciliatory Matt asked the dates for that, in the parent future, meetings for photographs special not be education. scheduled as they had been that day.</th>
<th>Compromise Shared writing of the weekly morning memo - each e-mails ideas. Form created collaboratively for they had been Teacher input on IEP. During a controversial segment of a middle school meeting concerning consistent school wide policy on homework packets,</th>
<th>Collaborative Problem: Teachers not reading weekly memo announcements to students. Solution: have all announcements on a separate page but still a part of the Monday Memo. Problem: concern over a teacher wanting to take students out to lunch as a reward.</th>
<th>Synergistic</th>
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<td>SCS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperative/</td>
<td>Independent</td>
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<td>Collaborative</td>
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<td>SCS</td>
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<td>Sarah told the teachers that she would not give them an answer until she had &quot;picked the brains of Jen and Matt&quot;.</td>
<td>Solution: Have the reward occur after school, which eliminated the issue of some students being left at school. Problem: Serious student discipline issue. Solution: 8 unique consequences.</td>
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**Disadvantage of Collaboration: The Importance of Consistent Messages from All Leaders**

The teachers' perception of the decision making process included a frequent reference to their discomfort with the co-principals debating a position in front of them rather than presenting a single voice. When asked what advice they would give someone considering this model one of the teachers at Innovative Charter School remarked: Find someone the opposite of you that you can still get along with. Make sure you have time to talk about things before you present things to the school. The code for this phenomenon is 'clashing roles'.

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Teachers at both schools expressed the frustration of not hearing one voice:

Teachers at ICS:

Even how you spend the time during the day in school you have cleared it with one direction but the other doesn't agree with it, doesn't want it happening doesn't like it... What I find frustrating they don't have an agreed voice on you can go and ask them the same question and get 180 degree opposite answer. Although Ms. Alcove is more likely to say well what did Ms. Terra think/say?

If the question is very straight forward like, what are we going to do tomorrow at the staff meeting, than let's have an answer let's not have one say x and the other say y... let's have an answer you don't need a discussion every time...or you never get everything...done.

Only one of the teachers from ICS seemed to appreciate the differing opinions.

He came from a business background.

I am not worried about being in a meeting and hearing opposite meanings - for me its part of working, its not necessarily comfortable but it yields other results. You have more space for creation.

Teachers at SCS:

I have seen it happen more than once, it is not a single occasion that disagreeing about something not in a bad way but in the hallway obviously disagreeing about something... That is also because they don't seem to be clear they will also process stuff in the meeting in front of the staff. Which just shows again how confused everybody is about the model. If you are going to
do that and do it well you have to communicate everything before you get to
the meeting so you are not processing anything in front of the staff...my next
piece of advise, which is don't work out your stuff in front of your staff, like
have the clear roles so that the staff knows, you know, and if you want to
modify those roles or whatever, do it some other place.
My next piece of advise, which is don't work out your stuff in front of your
staff, like have the clear roles so that the staff knows, you know, and if you
want to modify those roles or whatever, do it some other place.
The importance of having one voice when dealing with the staff was mentioned at
both schools by the co-principals.

Jen:
It's important as co-leaders for us to have one voice. Although we can't totally
its important to all constituents.

Iris:
It's important as co-leaders for us to have one voice.

We would never change anything in front of a child. We might have told a kid
yes and she comes over and says no no no. But we don't debate in front of
them. I have pulled her to the side she will immediately support me and all the
teachers. Drawbacks? The one voice issue; more than one leader/boss/cook in
the kitchen. It's Hard for staff to figure that out. There are times when we say
different things and we have to talk about it later and I capitulate.
Disadvantage of Collaboration: Slow Process for Decision Making

The collaboration that included a consensus process that was sited as a strength was often the cause for a slower process and additional work and was occasionally referenced as a drawback of the model.

Jen:

...things are slower. You really have more work. You have to arrive at consensus so it takes longer. But the benefits far outweigh.

Innovative Charter School teacher:

There is a byproduct it can take 40 minutes to know what you are going to do next.

Advantages of Collaboration

The co-leaders mentioned the value of collaboration in their daily decision making and in some cases their ability to continue their role as a principal.

Jen:

We're smarter together than we are singly... When a decision is made you can rest with it in your heart because three of you have good brains and good hearts. You can sleep at night. I'm a big second guesser of myself. The second biggest benefit is that we all have different strengths.

Sarah:

The three of us make a good decision making body because we balance each other. One will go over the top and we bring them back... I always work better in partnership whether it be team teaching - I'm much more creative that way. Balance. I don't know how people do it themselves without going insane. It's a
reality check. It's a real opportunity better decisions are made when more brains are involved. Also sometimes you get caught in what you're doing it helps to lift your head up and ask someone else. I feel like it uses muscles of your brain better. It's a safety net. It added a layer of rationality to what is essentially an emotional job. It's like we're trapped in a bizarre marriage....I was so frustrated with a parent and I started to cry. Jen just took over.

Informal interview with Sarah:

We do a great good cop bad cop whoever is upset the other is usually the opposite.

Matt:

No one person can be all things to all people. It is clear that there are a variety of models of leadership - shared model offers most complete leader.... We've discovered, Jen and I, that we used to feel we had to answer everyone's questions immediately. Now we realize we don't have to talk too much without the opportunity to talk to each other. We say "I'll look into it." And then we talk to each other.

Iris:

Beth never had a self-esteem problem. We each bring a different perspective to the table because of our different experiences. I'll think a child has a self-esteem problem. She may think something entirely different because we each bring our own experience. It helps to be in touch with whatever your background so you can bring that to the table. It's not as important what the exact experience is, what's important is that you bring different
experiences... Need to bounce ideas - hiring for example, they meet me first. I call Beth in to meet them if its worth it- she totally trusts it... Misery loves company, if you fail, you fail together. Its not scary we're here till late at night - even physical safety is less risky. I don't have to shoulder it all. I would be scared to death I would worry about failure. We're here together. Obviously we bounce ideas off of each other.

Beth:

When Ms. Alcove is here my life is easy. The two of us together, some of it is unspoken. We never sit down and say you do this and I'll do that. She has strengths - when she's on the floor I don't have to worry that someone will do something. I try to give everybody a break I try to help the nurse. I couldn't do it by myself. We both analyze the situation and we each give ideas. We have incredible mutual respect. I can't say enough. Sometimes I can read her face.

Community/School wide Collaboration

When asked about the benefits of the co-principalship, the theme that was referenced most often was collaboration. This theme has been sub coded according to references to student, teacher, leader, or community collaboration. This was done to determine if there was consistency in the stated belief in the value of collaboration beyond the co-principalship relationship. The two schools' collaboration differed in several significant respects. Service Charter School provided many more opportunities for staff collaboration. Service Charter School held weekly teachers' meetings for each of three subdivisions of the school. These meetings provided an opportunity for teacher collaboration on pedagogical issues. Additionally, Service
Charter School has a teachers' lounge. Teachers congregate, speak freely, and share food. In contrast Innovative Charter School has daylong staff days in lieu of the weekly meetings. These occur approximately two days every two months. There is no faculty room. Iris shared that this was intentional because in her experience, a teacher's room was a place to complain about the kids. It should be noted that most of the classes at Innovative Charter School take place in one large shared space, which, though shared, provides each teacher with a specific assigned area. Despite these differences, in addition to an expressed philosophy of the importance of collaboration, there was evidence of collaboration as part of the teaching relationship, the teaching methods, and the parent, community, and board relationships for both schools.

The co-principals at Service Charter School made specific references to the collaboration with their board of trustees.

Interview with Jen: (about board)

Everyone was satisfied with the decision. We all worked on it. It took 2 hours to reach consensus. It's worth it. The results are better with shared leadership. I wish you could have seen the way it happened. Our board is amazing.

The teachers recognize the value of the collaboration.

Innovative Charter School teachers:

If we had another principal like I've known other principals it would just be Mussolini style this is the way its done whether its wrong or right this is the way its done. Here we have, although it's not always easy, we struggle, we fight there's flexibility things change we try something it doesn't work, it
works or than it breaks down for some reason, or its cancelled but it changes and its ever growing and changing and I like that dynamic.

They have an advantage they have one goal in mind and they have two people. But one without the other you would not have this school...They complement each other... It is the story of two women that had two stories and they put their stories together.

Service Charter School teachers: (Researcher questions in italics)

*What are the benefits?* I think it is much easier to make it less structured and in that way people are more approachable. From my experience in other schools people are much less approachable, if you have a problem the problem gets big before you eventually go to the person. So less structure leads to more approachability that's my experience. *Any other thoughts on that?* With this model you find different personalities so you get different bits of feedback with different approaches. *Would you be able to anticipate ahead of time which approach someone might take, typically?* I think people certainly have certain characteristics, or at least perceived characteristics. You might pick and choose who to talk to about certain questions. I was going to say that as well, like clearly it offers you more strengths than a single principal might be strong in one area but with the co there is a multitude of different strengths.

The documents reviewed for both schools reveal a frequent reference to the importance of collaboration.

Innovative Charter School Renewal Application:
A child at Innovative is respected as an individual and yet very much part of a
team. We stress the fact that parental cooperation with the school is essential.
Our school has an open door policy for parents so they can be completely
involved in the educational process. Last year the staff collaboratively
designed an interdisciplinary unit on Consumerism.

Service Charter School Charter Application:
In keeping with the mission of the school, all members of the school
community have an obligation and opportunity to be involved in the day-to-
day decisions of the school. We envision a model in which students of all age,
parents, and teachers have an opportunity to participate in the governance of
the school.

The renewal applications, a document required by the state to renew the
charter for four more years was analyzed as well as the original charter applications
for a frequency count of the words community, collaboration/collaborative,
achievement, share, partner/partnership and competitive. Table 13 shows the
percentages and compares the relative frequencies of both the schools and the words.
The frequency count revealed that Service Charter School's co-principals mentioned
the idea of community almost thirty percent more often than the co-principals at
Innovative Charter School in their annual report and charter application. Community
was mentioned two times more often than achievement at ICS and nine times more
often than achievement at SCS. The word community was mentioned six times more
often than the word competitive at ICS and about fifty times more often at SCS.
Additional Findings

Reasons for Becoming a Principal

The reasons why the co-principals chose or became leaders were coded as 'leader'. Four out of the five co-principals mentioned that they had not intended to become leaders of a school. Sarah shared that leadership was "never my path" and further:

I came to lead this school because I feel such a sense of responsibility to the school. When it became clear that they needed someone it would be hard to see someone else do it. It would be hard to be part of the founding team and be second hand on decision making. There are so many opportunities to walk away from our original vision. If the founders weren't there it would be easy to fall into that.

Jen said that the "charter chose me". She explained that she had never had any intention of being a principal of the school. She further explained that the intended director had quit months before the actual opening of the school and that the board had approached her and said that if she and Mark didn't lead the school that they would not be able to open. Iris explained that she never wanted to be a school leader, "I just wanted to teach...I just wanted to work with kids." Beth said that she always considered herself a leader. The single co-principal who had goals of being a school leader was Matt. He shared, "When we wrote the charter there was an original intention that I would be a co-leader but the board wanted someone with more experience."

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Co-Principalship

The advantages and disadvantages of the model were expressed by both the teachers and the co-principals and are represented in Table 14. The data entered in each
cell are a brief summary of what the researcher found for each respondent in the coded field notes. The main decision rule was: If it's in the notes and not internally contradicted, summarize it and enter a phrase reflecting the summary (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
| Role-Ordered Matrix: Advantages and Disadvantages of the Collaborative Model |
|---|---|---|
| **TEACHERS** | **ICS** | Flexibility  
"ever growing and changing"  
"They complement each other"  
"have more space for creation"  
"they don't have an agreed voice"  
"energy consuming"  
"it can take 40 minutes to know what you are going to do next"  |
| **SCS** | "people are more approachable"  
"different approaches"  
"multitude of different strengths" | Confusing  
Disagreeing in front of the staff  
Inconsistent discipline  
"endlessly process" |
| **CO-PRINCIPALS** | **ICS** | Beth  
"I couldn't do it by myself"  
"We both analyze the situation and we each give ideas"  
We have Different strengths | No drawbacks  |
| Iris | different perspective  
"bounce ideas"  
"bring different experiences"  
"don't have to shoulder it all" | "The one voice issue; more than one leader/boss/cook in the kitchen. It’s hard for staff to figure that out." |
| SCS | Jen | Better results  
"different strengths"  
"smarter together"  
"Things are slower. You really have more work. You have to arrive at consensus so it takes longer."  
Concerned with what would happen if one partner left. |
| Sarah | Balance  
Better decisions  
"safety net"  
"much more creative" | "We each have 14 million things to do and we have to drop it to consult with each other" |
| Matt | "most complete leader"  
Different approaches - discussion vs. brass tacks | "Things don't work as well as they need to when there isn't good information flow" |
The Importance of Trust

All of the co-principals and several teachers mentioned trust as a major component of building a collaborative model. Two of the co-principals specifically mentioned that if the leaders were not already in a trusting relationship when they began the co-principalship, it would be valuable to attend a workshop/retreat that builds trust.

Jen:

There's 100% trust between all three of us. Because of that we can say anything we want. We hold each other accountable.

Sarah:

Trust is big at the beginning

Matt:

You must have trust. Must have clear vision - that's what keeps it from becoming personal. Could be angry about the "thing" but not about the person. If there is a hint of the personal it has to be exorcised immediately.

Innovative Charter School Teachers:

The trust that they have for each other's learning styles, Trust is a really big piece... They have a long term and trusting relationship between the two of them... They can do that trust the decisions that the other would make even if it isn't the one you would make.

Collaboration Compared to Family/Marriage

In several instances in both schools the collaborative relationship was compared to a family or a marriage by one of the co-principals at Innovative and the two female co-

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principals at Service as well as several teachers. Frequent references were made in various documents to family, and older and younger students working together.

Examples:

Jen:

We find each other annoying sometimes and we don't always agree but we're like a family. It's just who we are.... What would happen if one of us left? I wouldn't want to hire any old body. It's like we're co-parents. If your husband left you wouldn't start interviewing for a new husband.

Video text: Jen:

Children of all ages are under the same roof and you also have a small school you have a sense that we are a family here.

Sarah:

It's like we're trapped in a bizarre marriage.

Iris:

What I wanted was a school that was a community/ family and there's no doubt in my mind that's what happened. I know their siblings, its very much like a family. We have jokes and hot chocolate and. Its better than I imagined... Learn how the other person learns and works to build on each other's strengths. Treat it as a marriage. Innovative Charter School is like a huge and very busy family because: we do stuff together around the kitchen table we have family jokes we have some crazy family members but they're still family, we're trying to respect each other and not bump into each other as we go through the day there's never enough sinks or toilets the students remind the adults about putting the pasta in on Thursday mornings and bringing the trash cans out for lunch we have discussions on top we're all familiar with. We have family routines and individual responsibilities, if
children misbehave, they are banished to their "rooms" until further notice. We're trying to live and learn together the best way we know how, kids grow up and leave, hopefully with a solid foundation... we stay in contact with kids after they leave...

Documents Annual Report - ICS Iris:

These "small families" provide that special attention and guidance that so many of our children need. [Referring to advisory groups at lunch.]

Service Charter School documents frequently mention community and also The collaborative importance of older and younger students but the word family is not specifically used in this context. Students mentioned this as well:

Excerpts from a 10th grade students Sophomore Service Charter School student exhibition:

This school has a strong sense of unity. It's like a family. I have learned that since I'm part of a family my actions have a lot more impact than I thought they did.

Authorship, Inspiration, Motivation and Vision

The codes of authorship, inspiration, and motivation, examined the sense of ownership of the vision as well as the original inspirations and motivations for starting a school. One co-principal in each of the schools mentioned that the visions for the schools, as stated in the charters, were something they had envisioned for many years, and had written prior proposals in the past that incorporated many of these concepts.

Beth:

I always visualize what I am going to do. I visualized this school a long time ago.

My original proposal was for a title one program.
Jen:

We thought we would ask the district for 12 of their worst kids and take them out of the district schools and we started the plan for that school in 1988. We (Jen and her husband) had meetings and than the charter school came along and we were more accepted because of our prior work.

These perceptions were confirmed by the perception of the other co-principals:

Iris:

My vision evolved after I met Beth.

These perceptions were also confirmed by the perception of the teachers at both schools.

SCS teachers:

Say Innovative Charter School and they will say Beth....When 'I' talks about why the school was started she says it was Ms. Terra's dream.

The difference is that at Innovative the original vision, as conceived by Beth was left largely intact after the collaboration.

My original proposal was exactly what I wanted with the Kids in Business program - the only thing I didn't envision in the original idea was the Teaching Institute.

The SCS vision, in contrast, incorporated the original proposal by Jen for an elementary service learning school with the vision of the two other co-leaders for an innovative and inquiry based high school. The teachers at SCS were aware that it was a shared vision.

Philosophically there is a belief that the system they have devised is the best system and they just have to work out the kinks.
Competition

The physical education programs of both schools featured a predominance of individual and cooperative sports. They offered karate and martial arts as well as dance rather than football or basketball. This was consistent with the stated beliefs about competition.

Jen: Our goal is to get the kids fit for life and to be well balanced. For the younger students the goal is to weave noncompetitive physical activity and learning together. I talk to so many people when we were creating the school who just had bad experiences and hated gym. That kind of compulsory participation is really artificial in life. Some people, like my husband, say it's good to toughen kids up and let them experience competition, loss. I say it's more important for them to learn how to solve problems and work with others, not against them. And can't we save our kids from the public humiliation of being the last one picked for teams in gym? There's plenty of time in life to feel the pain of defeat and rejection, why rush it?

Beth: He talked to me about a contest. I don't like contests because if you looked at my kids' machines, if we said o.k. your machine-wins, it sends the wrong message. How can we do what we do and have something like America First without competition? I asked myself, how can I take the integrity of what I believe in and we require teams with all the kids working together. That's the key, no winner, no loser.
Sarah: *Do you have a school philosophy on competition?* Yes, we avoid it at all costs. We only encourage students to compete against themselves. When it comes to PE we do a lot of cooperative games and for the sports where you can't avoid it we usually don't keep score.
CHAPTER V

Cross-Case Analysis, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter presents a cross-case analysis of the results of the research on the co-principalship in two urban charter schools. It also provides recommendations for future study and implications for practice. It was expected that as the study evolved, certain patterns and themes would emerge which could then be formulated into propositions. In qualitative research, conclusions are expressed as propositions. (Connell, 1998) Selected evidences from Chapter IV support propositions of this study. They are further supported by selected premises discussed in the review of the literature in Chapter II. The guiding research questions will help to frame the discussion of the results presented in Chapter IV as well as the analysis in Chapter V. This chapter will include a discussion of the following: benefits and challenges of the co-principalship, the varying perceptions of the roles and responsibilities including the impact of gender and implications for the success of the model, perceptions of the decision making processes and their implications for the success of the model, the impact of being a charter school on the co-principalship, as well as additional propositions that became evident as the research progressed. These propositions may be relevant to other schools or other reform efforts but they apply with some certainty only to these two specific charter schools. This analysis does not compare the effectiveness of the two schools. Rather, it summarizes and compares how two
different schools address a common set of issues involved in leading a school as co-principals.

*Key Findings*

1. The charter school leader, in general, when they are also founders of the school, and have self-selected for a leadership role, become principals with their values and beliefs as the dominant consideration for job placement rather than experience or education. They come to the position of co-principalship with unique qualities and values that impact the way the model is manifested.

2. The additional time provided for instructional issues, as cited in the literature as an advantage of the co-principalship, appears to be dependent on the amount of time dedicated to collaborative decision making and to updating one another on the details of shared responsibilities as well as whether there is a superintendent who assumes responsibility for many of the managerial decisions.

3. The adoption of a co-principalship may be more important for charter leaders than traditional school leaders due to the increased responsibilities of charter leaders as well as the explicit intent of charter schools to be innovative reform models.

4. The values of non-competition and collaboration required to successfully share a co-principalship also contribute to program design as exemplified by the non-competitive physical education program and the community service programs at both schools.
5. Regardless of the quality of the collaboration of the co-principalship, this will not automatically create a collaborative environment for teachers and students unless the co-principals consciously decide that the collaborative design be instituted school-wide.

6. Leaders following a more traditional path to the principalship may have a more difficult time participating in a co-principalship, and may have more difficulty sharing power than those who came to the position of leadership as a byproduct of creating and protecting a vision of a different kind of school meant to reform education.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was: How were roles defined and how did the staff perceive the roles of each of the co-principals? Was the staff's perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

Tables one through five highlight the consistency of the perceptions of the teachers, principals and researcher on how roles were defined. The principals' perceptions of their roles appear to be affected by the fact that the co-principals believed that they couldn't do the job without one another to support them and this led them to think of their roles in terms of their partnership rather than as individuals. Service Charter School principals thought of themselves as "the Triumverate" rather than as individuals. They signed almost all of their documents as CO3 (coordinators cubed). It was apparent that they all believed that one person could not do it all.

Despite the co-principals efforts to blur the lines of roles and responsibilities the teachers clearly recognized the individual roles of each co-principal. They also
recognized that inconsistent discipline was a byproduct of blurring the roles. This is consistent with the research by Connell (2000) that states that the drawback of the model was contradictory discipline, and confusion of roles and responsibilities. This was mostly because the co-principals did not always present a united front. Connell's study further states that certain characteristics were thought to be necessary for a successful co-principals arrangement including that it was believed that the co-principals should have the ability to present a united front. The model was also a concern for Innovative Charter School teachers because each of the co-principals assumed different roles as mentor teachers, roles that were based on their individual teaching styles, which in many cases were quite different from one another. This made it difficult for novice teachers to know how to approach their classes.

It was striking how often the leaders in both schools referred to the school as a family. The family could be viewed in two ways when considering the two schools. Innovative could be viewed as a traditional 'family' with the parents clearly in control and the children in a subordinate role. The principals, like the parents, shared a seamless communication and presented a united front to their children, the teachers. There was love and caring peppered with respect, each family member called all others Ms. or Mr. This is in contrast to the 'modern family' of Service Charter School. Here the parents and the children shared an open democratic system with each member having an equal voice. 'Family' meetings were held regularly in an effort to include everyone's opinion. There did not appear to be any hierarchy in this modern family.
Consistent with typical family communication, teachers in both schools sometimes went to both leaders about the same issue hoping to get a different response. Jameson (2002) called this phenomenon 'mom and pop'. This researcher coded this as 'playing both'. The co-principals spoke often of the need for constant communication to ensure consistency in their responses. Another role that was mentioned by Sarah was the good cop, bad cop. This, in contrast to the mom and pop playing both, was intentionally done to get specific results. One of the roles that was consistently perceived by all respondents in both schools was the nurturing mother figure. Teachers often based whom they would speak to about an issue with whom they were most comfortable. This was also found to be true in Connell's 2000 study. At other times teachers shared that they spoke with the person that had the style they liked the most.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was: What role did gender play in the configuration of the roles?

Gender played a role in the willingness of teachers to accept a directive but it did not play a role in the perception of who was in charge of the school. Both women co-principals at Service Charter School mentioned that gender played a role in the willingness of the teachers to take direction. The male co-principal confirmed this. They all agreed that the teachers would ignore the women and then hear the identical message from Matt and respond immediately. The teachers at Service Charter School did not seem at all aware of this phenomenon. Although they may have 'listened' to Matt this did not translate into a belief that there was an ultimate authority in the
school. They cited on more than one occasion that they wanted someone to be in charge and said that currently no one was in a position of authority. The perception of Jen being the one driving decisions is consistent with the research of Santin (1998) who found that in general, female principals score somewhat higher than male principals on measures of task oriented style.

The teachers at Innovative, in contrast, unanimously agreed that it was very clear that Beth was in charge. The identification of one of the principals as the one in charge was not dependent on gender, but appeared more dependent on the individual personalities of the leaders. The teachers at Innovative said Beth was the father of the school and Iris was the mother whereas at Service Charter School the two women were designated as experienced and new mothers but Matt was not seen by any of the teachers as the 'father'. They called their male co-principal a Teddy Bear Socrates. Despite the willingness of the teachers to listen more readily to Matt, the three co-principals did not attribute any additional authority or power to the male leader. This is consistent with the findings of Connell (2000) who stated that personality was more important than gender to one of the respondents. This is consistent with a second study that found that gender was not an issue on administrative decision making (Mertz & McNeely, 1997).

Consistent efforts were made to "blur" the roles and share every aspect of the administration. Gender appeared to have an impact on the teachers' willingness to respect the words of the male leader yet this did not lead to a perception of increased power or that he was "in charge". Being the one identified as the one in charge apparently has more to do with other qualities than with gender at these two schools.
Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was: What were possible configurations for areas of responsibility and how did the staff perceive the responsibilities of each of the co-principals? Was the staff's perception consistent with that of the leaders themselves?

Tables six through ten highlight the perceptions of the teachers, principals, and researcher as well as noting the responsibilities identified by authorship of particular documents. The full list of documents used to identify authorship can be found in Appendix C and D.

The teachers at Service Charter School expressed a need to return to a more hierarchical structure. They were particularly concerned that the discipline was inconsistent with too many people assuming that responsibility. This is mirrored in the doubts raised by Heifetz (2000) about our ability to overcome hierarchical tendencies. He asserts that when men and women don't know one another and form a new group they routinely establish a hierarchy of roles. They informally select and authorize one of their own members to chair the group. The level of tension diminishes dramatically as soon as an authority is selected. Two of the male teachers at Service Charter School hoped for an authority figure that could supervise the three co-principals. This notion was supported by the research of Connell (2000). Teachers in her study said that they needed a full time authority figure. Connell also found that the co-principals' approaches to discipline were often contradictory and that the staff was often confused by the roles and responsibilities of the co-principals. Some of the men in Connell's study also expressed a need for a final controlling vote and for "daddy to be the authority in the family". They, like the teachers from Service Charter
School, were also concerned about how students perceived 'authority' in the school. The teachers in Connell's study were clear about who was in charge in their school. This contradicts the intent of the co-principals in her study who state that it is important that neither leader be seen as having more influence. The fact that at Innovative Charter School teachers clearly recognized that Beth was in charge apparently influenced the absence of an expressed need for an authority figure. Service Charter School, on the other hand seems to have successfully accomplished what the co-principals in Connell's study were striving for, that no one person be recognized as the one in charge. Rather than appreciating this successful melding of responsibilities, decision making, and roles the teachers seemed to resent a lack of authority in their school. Jones (1998) considered the inevitable issues that emerge when the traditional organizational structure of top-down management is replaced with shared governance. She states that this move precipitates a debate over who has certain powers, who has certain responsibilities, and which roles are clearly delineated.

The inefficiency of blurring the roles was mentioned by several teachers at Service Charter School, particularly in reference to all of the co-principals attending each of the faculty meetings. Jameson (2002) mentions the inefficiency of two people attending to the same issue at the same time. Dass (1995) reports that a majority of teachers referred to memos that the co-principals circulated which indicated their preferred foci. No memo or other document designating responsibilities was given to the teachers in the past two years at either of the two schools in this study. Connell (2000) saw the blurring of roles as an advantage in some instances stating that "much
like the workings of a functional family, when one "parent" is occupied, the other fills in. The focus group at Innovative Charter School was very clear about who was in charge of each area but it was also clear that teachers made choices of whom to speak with based on a variety of other reasons including availability. They made choices about who to speak with based in large part on the co-principal's style. The teachers spoke to whoever was the one who could meet their needs of the moment. One of the teachers went to Iris because she "cuts to the chase". Another chose Iris if she wants a product that is more immediate and Beth if she wants an open-ended long-term project.

How responsibilities were actually designated appeared to have little to do with educational background, or specific training. Co-principals cited tolerance for the task, need, importance of the task based on their value system, and experience as the dominant motivations for designation of responsibilities. Dass (1995) points out that the principals in her study selected their roles based on expertise, previous experience in the field, and personal interest. The principals in her study had been principals prior to assuming the co-principalship and this may have played a role in the way they chose their responsibilities. Matt shared that his interest in a particular topic afforded him more tolerance for the task. The selection of responsibilities frequently came, in both schools, from the value or importance the individual co-principal placed on the particular responsibility. Lessard (1999) in her study of female leadership discusses the importance of values in shaping decision making. She specifically shares the influence of the values of care, courage, respect, vision, collaboration, excellence and intuition. Other factors for the selection of
responsibilities were shared by Jameson (2002) who states emphatically the importance of delineating responsibilities in a manner consistent with the strengths and interests of each co-principal. There were numerous instances in both school in this study where responsibilities were designated by tolerance and need rather than by a particular strength or interest. Sarah shared that all of her interest and experience had been in the high school area but that she became responsible for the middle school because that was where there was the need. The teachers at Service Charter School fantasized about how they would re-organize the school. They agreed that Sarah would be an excellent person to focus on instructional issues. Jameson (2002) estimated that when one principal was designated as responsible for instruction, 30% more of one principal's attention could be devoted exclusively to instruction than in a traditional principal model.

Proposition One

Co-principalships attract collaborative leaders. Therefore the kind of leader who is attracted to both the co-principalship and the charter school come to these positions with unique qualities and values that impact the way the model is manifested.

Traditional principals are hired based on education and experience to meet the needs of a nuts and bolts job description. Charter principals in general, when they are also founders, self-selected for a leadership role, become principals with their values as the dominant force rather than experience or education.
Research Question 4

Research question 4 was: How were decisions made and how did the staff perceive the decision making process of the co-principals?

The two schools in this study differed greatly on the question of decision making. Most of the decisions made by the leaders of Innovative Charter School were made outside of the school during their commute to work, which made it difficult for the researcher to observe the decision making process. Based on the limited number of decisions that were observed at Innovative Charter School it was clear that their process was dramatically different than the one employed at Service Charter School. The teachers at Innovative Charter School gave a deeper insight to the decision making process. Most of the decisions that the researcher observed initially appeared to be either conciliatory/cooperative with one principal appearing to succumb to the will of the other without any real input. The staff of Innovative Charter School identified a subtle decision making process that was not apparent to the researcher. When the staff observed the photographic prompt they described an unusual process that they agreed happened on a daily basis. Beth would have a clear vision and Iris would help her clarify that vision. They felt that Iris's contributions in the form of a sequence of clarifying and probing questions were subtly peppered into the conversation and that ultimately there was a collaborative decision but on its face it appeared that Beth was doing the deciding. Beth shared that she can read her face, making it less necessary to discuss each issue. Perhaps their decision making, while appearing less consensual, instead used a different technique of probing questions
rather than a continuous process of each party sharing ideas. This could be an example of a phenomenon described by Bennis (1997) in which he asserts that much of the communication of great groups is nonverbal.

Research done by Bennis (1997) indicates that groups make better choices than individuals. Service Charter School co-principals made a strong effort to use a consensus model for all complex decisions and based on the novel synergistic solutions it appears that consensus does yield impressive results. Bennis has also found that people who are engaged in groundbreaking collaborations have high regard for people who challenge and test their ideas. The consistency with which the co-principals encouraged alternative opinions from one another and their staff is in keeping with the comments of Bennis.

The researcher observed several complex synergistic decisions in which end results included unique solutions that integrated the views and perspectives of all three co-principals. The consensus process was particularly important in avoiding the "mom and pop syndrome" described by Jameson (2002) which occurred when staff went first to 'mom' and then went to 'dad' if the answer was not what they had hoped for. The effort to avoid this syndrome and present one voice to the staff also required that each complex decision be reached by consensus. One of the drawbacks mentioned by Service Charter School's teachers was the amount of time spent on elaborate consensus decisions.

The decision making process at the two schools is quite different and afforded the principals significantly different amounts of time to dedicate to instruction. A study by Mangrum (2000) revealed that many faculty and administrators believe most
decisions are made in informal meetings that occur at times other than in the formally convened and formally conducted business meetings. Perhaps the decision making process at Innovative was so subtle because it did not occur during formally scheduled meetings that it was not obvious to the researcher. At Innovative the leadership appeared to be seamless with the two leaders each spending less than 20% of their days on leadership issues and the rest of the day working directly with students. At Service Charter School the numbers are in reverse with the three co-principals spending about 20% of their days working directly with students and the rest of the day on administrative issues. The difference in the amount of time dedicated to instructional issues appeared to be a direct result of the additional time spent on consensus decisions and on duplicating responsibilities to be certain that all three principals had an understanding of every aspect of the program. At Innovative Charter School the principals appeared to be more willing to divide tasks between them. The principals of Innovative Charter School were committed to keeping roles and responsibilities interchangeable but they did not overlap responsibilities. For example, even though Beth typically handled tough parent issues, when Iris handled an issue Beth did not consult with her either before or after. At Service Charter School roles and responsibilities were interchangeable and were often determined by availability but they also tended to overlap more often. For example, at least two co-principals attended each of the three weekly faculty meetings. The larger size of Service Charter School did not appear to be the cause of the greater amount of time devoted to decision making. A third principal at Service Charter School compensated for the additional responsibilities due to size.
The Service Charter School teachers expressed concern that their principals are working too hard, that they fear they may burn out. They specifically mentioned receiving a school issue on e-mail that had been written at 2 AM and being concerned that their co-principals work too hard. It was clear from comments made by teachers and principals that the consensus model is extremely time consuming. The teachers expressed that at times the consensus model had reached a point of diminishing returns and that they would prefer separating the issues into those that do not require their input or a consensus model. This is referenced in the Service Charter School teacher handbook, that not all decisions will include teacher input. The principals expressed that the consensus process was "worth the time" and based on the novel synergistic solutions it appears that consensus does yield impressive results.

Merriwether (1999) showed that teachers' perceptions of the ideal and actual practices in, and overall consistent knowledge base about shared decision making are significantly different from the principals', indicating that they did not have the same mental models of how charter schools and mandated shared decision-making should be implemented. The perception of Service Charter School's teachers was certainly different than the leaders on the topic of decision making.

The fact that the staffs of both schools expressed concern about the inconsistent voice of the two leaders may indicate that the process of sharing ideas and joint decision making should occur more often which would exacerbate the already time consuming process.

There were several instances where the staffs of both schools shared their frustration with the lack of a single voice. They expressed discomfort about watching
their leaders debate issues in front of them. The co-principals appeared to be so comfortable engaging in a consensus process that they openly debated issues in hallways, meetings, and in front of teachers. To remedy this situation the teachers at Service Charter School proposed initiating a more hierarchical model, which would put one leader in charge of the three co-principals. They seemed to have a need for one person to be in charge and used the words "benevolent dictator" to describe their fantasy leader. In contrast, Dass (1995) reported that the parents and teachers were unanimous in their view that the co-principal team in her study was "perfect and flawless". They mentioned that the co-principals always appeared in public as a team and they communicated with one another extremely well. The blending of their functions did not cause confusion due to the 'smooth communication system' they had established. This was distinctly different from the perception of teachers in both Service and Innovative Charter School who frequently mentioned the disparate voices of their co-principals. The co-principals disagreeing in public appeared to have a profound affect on the way teachers' perceive the effectiveness and cohesiveness of the co-principalship.

Proposition Two

The advantage cited in studies by Dass (1995), Jameson (2002), and Chirichello (2003), that the co-principalship model provides the co-principals with more time to dedicate to instructional issues than the traditional principalship appears to be dependent on the amount of time dedicated to collaborative decision making and to updating one another on the details of shared responsibilities and may be a byproduct of the co-principals leading in a school system that has a superintendent
who handles many of the managerial decisions. When most responsibilities are shared this requires a lengthy process of the leaders keeping one another informed of all aspects of the operation. An inordinate amount of time is required when the co-principals use a consensus model for decision making. The increased time spent on administration must be made up somewhere and in the case of Service Charter School, it meant, less time spent on supporting the instructional process.

Additional Findings

The Impact of Charter Schools on Leadership

Because the job of the charter school principal presents so many aspects that are unique to the charter school, some of the findings of this study may not be relevant for principals considering this collaborative model in more traditional settings. For example, many of the responsibilities observed during the course of this study would not be required of principals in a non-charter setting. Sarason (1999) discusses the fact that charter leaders have to create new settings. Co-principals were observed planning meetings with the mayor to address facility issues. Facility acquisition is a frequent problem for charter school leaders because the founding principals are held responsible for finding an appropriate facility with no designated funding for capital improvements. Additionally, Hausman (2000) shares that principals in schools of choice spend significant amounts of time marketing the school’s program and services (Hausman, 2000). Innovative Charter School trained students to be tour guides and frequently had visitors speak with the co-principals about the program. Service Charter School had produced a promotional video to document their search for a facility of their own. Both schools did extensive
community outreach as well as developing extensive promotional materials including brochures. Both schools prepared and executed introductory recruitment meetings and orientations for prospective parents. Another uniquely charter school responsibility that fell on the shoulders of the co-principals was the additional accountability requirements including the annual report to the state and the renewal application. Sarason (1999) also points out that charter schools are expected to be innovative and unlike schools in the system from which it seeks freedom to be different. The personal stakes are high and so is the level of stress.

The two schools in this study demonstrate a pattern identified by Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997). They found that Charter school leaders often perceived themselves as having an "outlaw mentality," coming from outside the public school system or having a willingness to fight the status quo in public education. Many charter school leaders shared a sense of entrepreneurship in that they forged linkages with resources outside their district including professional networks. Individuals involved in the initial design and development of charter schools generally rejected hierarchical structures typical of the public school system and valued a more even distribution of power with the school community. (Wohlstetter and Griffin, 1997).

The five co-principals consistently demonstrated the "outlaw mentality" referencing their desire for creating a new model of education, alongside their desire to create a school that would give children the kind of education that they had wished for themselves as children. They consistently involved their students in efforts to positively impact the wider community. They also demonstrated entrepreneurship in terms of the numerous community partnerships each of the two schools forged.
Results of this study support prior research about the unique roles and responsibilities of charter school leaders as well as the prior experiences, education, and motivations that inspired them to become charter school principals. Todd, (2001) found that charter school principals do not have the same depth of educational experience as their colleagues in traditional and private schools. This was true for the two schools in this study in terms of the lack of prior administrative experience of four of the five co-principals. The prior research identified in the literature review in Chapter II highlight in every case the co-principalships of leaders who have come to this model after years of being administrators in traditional configurations including a vice principal. Wohlstetter and Griffin (1997) point out that inexperienced founders, regardless of their commitment, had more difficulty proceeding once their charters were approved because of their lack of know-how.

Charter school principals also come to the leadership role from a different starting place than principals in traditional settings. Todd (2001) reports that charter school leaders are former educators in regular public schools that found the traditional system too confining. He states that they open schools because they want the freedom to do things their own way. Jameson (2002) asserts that co-principals in his study believed that the co-principalship attracts collaborative leaders. The five co-principals in this study expressed that they found that the traditional system limited the kind of teaching they had wanted to do and their major motivation was to open a school that allowed them to teach in the ways they had originally intended. Several of the leaders expressed their desire to create a new model of education. In both of the schools in this study the founders became the co-principals. Their strong sense of purpose and
vision was seen in both schools as both a benefit and a challenge. Service Charter School teachers discussed how the principals were unwilling to look at a more traditional division of labor because they were so invested in their original vision. Innovative Charter School teachers discussed how difficult it was to share one large room with the founders and maintain a strong sense of their own teaching values.

Dressler (2001) reports that charter school leaders are "self selected" and may or may not emerge from traditional educational leadership programs and may not be adequately prepared to perform the tasks associated with being a principal. This study confirmed his propositions. All five of the leaders were self-selected founders of their schools and only one of the five had formal leadership certification prior to becoming one of the co-principals. Several co-principals expressed that they had never considered being a school principal. The majority of the principals in Dressler's study had assumed a leadership role prior to becoming the co-principal of the charter school. In this study, only one of the co-principals had assumed a leadership role prior to becoming a co-principal.

Chirichello (2003) found that for a co-principalship to be successful both leaders must have the same "core values and beliefs about education." Dressler (2001) states that charter leaders have a clear purpose for their schools. This clarity of vision was apparent at both Innovative and Service Charter Schools. Charter leaders can have a distinct advantage because when the co-principals are founders of the schools as well as authors of the charter they tend to hold a deeply compatible vision of the school.
Charter school principals serve as the superintendents of their mini-districts. In the co-principalships described in prior studies the superintendent represented a hierarchical leader who had two collaborative, non-hierarchical co-principals serving in a subordinate position.

**Proposition Three**

The adoption of a co-principalship may be more important for charter leaders than traditional school leaders. This is due to several factors. The first is the need for more support to make up for the increased responsibilities placed on the shoulders of the charter leaders, including creating a new setting, assuming the responsibilities more typically part of a superintendent's position, and the often adversarial climate between charter schools and district schools. The second reason is that charter schools are often explicitly designed to be innovative and the charter leaders' commitment to school reform and educational innovation can be supported by the co-principalship because reform and innovation can be enhanced by what Bennis (1997) cites as an advantage of shared leadership: the increased quality of the decisions and the increased willingness to take risks.

**The Impact of the Co-Principalship on Teacher and Student Collaboration**

According to the research of DuFour (1999) shared decision making and the collaborative culture of a learning community are best developed when principals lead through shared vision and collective commitment rather than rules and authority. The principals in both schools had a clear vision, which was shared regularly with their staff. The vision put forth in the charters was part of the teacher hiring process in both schools.
Wholstetter and Griffin (1997) found that, although in charter schools informal collaboration among teachers on matters of teaching and learning appeared to be common, there were few formal structures for collaboration. They further found that dialogue among teachers was not usually systematic, rather, it depended on individuals' taking initiative to visit with colleagues. This was confirmed for the researcher when Iris shared that "I don't really know when they collaborate." This was quite different than the formal, systematic, opportunities for collaboration at Service Charter School. The apparent value Service Charter School placed on collaboration was clearly reflected in the emphasis they placed on teacher and student collaboration. Teachers were given numerous opportunities to meet with one another to do collaborative planning, to examine student work, and to discuss school wide issues. Students were engaged in community service projects and frequently collaborated with one another on in-school projects. Innovative Charter School teachers, other than seven days over the summer to plan curriculum, had no common planning time, no regularly scheduled faculty meetings, and no teacher's room for meeting with one another. The students worked at individual desks for a large part of the day and met in small groups for their classes. They did engage in Kids in Business Projects and cooking projects as well as community service. The stark contrast between the collaboration of the teachers in the two schools illustrates that a principal's willingness to share the leadership role and their ability to be collaborative partners does not insure that collaboration will become a part of the entire school culture. Connell (2000) found that the modeled collaboration did influence the faculty by facilitating consensus decision making and developing leadership capacity among
the staff, reminiscent of the collaboration evidenced with Service Charter School's staff.

It is interesting to note that although the teachers did not consistently participate in a collaborative process at Innovative Charter School the frequency count displayed in table 13 revealed that both schools placed significant value on collaboration and community. Service Charter School's co-principals mentioned the word 'community' almost thirty percent more often than the co-principals at Innovative Charter School in their annual report and charter application. The word 'community' was mentioned two times more often than 'achievement' at ICS and nine times more often than 'achievement' at SCS. Wholstetter and Griffin (1997) found that the operators of charter schools that have realized autonomy are consumed by managerial decisions. Even though they wanted to have decentralized decision making processes, they found that a more centralized hierarchical structure of decision making worked best. While it is true that the leaders of Service Charter School are "consumed by managerial decisions" they have not done what Wholstetter and Griffin suggest. They have steadfastly continued to endorse consensus on most decisions. Wholstetter and Griffin also found that traditional public school teachers believe that they have more opportunities to make decisions than their counterparts in charter schools. Charter teachers often have little or no say in the decision making process, simply because charter schools are often founded on specific philosophies and the founders make most of the decisions. The teachers at Service Charter School expressed concern that they spent too much time involved in school wide decision making and many suggested that they would prefer being told what to do by someone
in authority. This is consistent with the Wohlstetter and Griffin's study (1997) that found that after three years of total inclusiveness, the participants felt that this process was slowing down their ability to make and implement decisions. They decided that everyone cannot manage every aspect of the schools, and agreed to institute top-down structures so the school could function more effectively.

Innovative Charter School demonstrates what Crawford and Forsyth (2000) report about the founders of the charter schools. They report that founders may subject teachers to the philosophies and specific intentions of the founders and that this may limit the ability of teachers to act as professionals in the charter school classroom. Consistent with the researcher's study, Innovative teachers had few opportunities for decision making even in their teaching because of the fact that they shared one large space with the co-principals (who were also the founders with a specific philosophy) and the only separate classroom space had a window as the exterior wall. This leads to the second proposition.

Proposition Four

The collaboration of the co-principalship will not automatically create a collaborative environment for teachers and students. The co-principal's commitment to teacher and student collaboration is vital if the model is to permeate the entire school community.

The four female co-principals expressed the idea of the school being a family or a community repeatedly. Connell (2000) found the metaphor of a functional family was also shared in her study. The metaphor of family was referred to more frequently at Innovative Charter School. The characteristics of a family were obvious at Innovative in the form of school rituals and traditions, support for students
applying to high school, care and interest given to students after they graduated, and the nurturing and care given to the children. In most families the parents make the decisions, the children are not part of a consensus process, and this was the case for the teachers at Innovative Charter School. There was obvious care given to the students, as a family would provide, but few opportunities for the teachers to work collaboratively during the school year.

Reasons for Becoming a Principal

Four out of the five co-principals mentioned that they had not intended to become leaders of a school. Sarah shared that leadership was "never my path" but came to the leadership role out of a sense of responsibility to defend the original vision of the school from being absorbed or changed. Jen said that the "charter chose me". Iris explained that she never wanted to be a school leader "I just wanted to teach....I just wanted to work with kids." Beth said that she always considered herself a leader. The single co-principal who had goals of being a school leader was Matt. It seems the purpose for becoming a leader for all of them was to create a community that could give kids a unique style of education that could ultimately change the educational system and make a difference in the world. The desire for leadership was more the lengthening of a leash or the chance to teach the way they want or the chance to expand ideas outside of one classroom to expand a culture. The impetus was not to have power or control. This is confirmed in large part by the research of Triant (2002) who found that most of the principals turned to charter schools out of frustration with the limitations they encountered in the traditional public school system, and they view their new sense of freedom and ability to create a school
environment as the best part of leading charter schools. Mestinsek (2000) found that charter principals perceive themselves as transformational leaders who scored higher on inspiration significantly more than did traditional elementary principals. Part of being a transformational leader is having your vision as paramount in the decisions that are made. This was certainly the case for the five co-principals in this study. Gild (2000) found that school type was the single most important variable in determining leadership practices and that charter principals tended toward a transformational approach.

Proposition Five

When a person has a career plan to lead a school and has pursued a more traditional path with educational courses in administration followed by a vice principalship their approach and motivation may be very different than when they come to leadership as a byproduct of creating and protecting a vision of a different kind of school. Those following a more traditional path to leadership may have a more difficult time participating in a co-principalship and may have more difficulty sharing power than those who came to the position with a different motivation.

Competition, Community and the Impact of Leader Values

Service Charter School and Innovative Charter School have individual and cooperative sports programs in lieu of a more typical public school physical education program consisting predominantly of competitive team sports. This cooperative approach to sports is consistent with the stated values of the co-principals on competition both during interviews and in the documents that were analyzed. Chirichello (2003) supports this finding he lists non-competitive and think about "we"
rather than the "me" as two of the six traits necessary to be a successful co-principal.

The word community was mentioned six times more often than the word competitive at Innovative Charter School and about fifty times more often at Service Charter School in the frequency count of the annual reports and charters found on Table 13. Staff members remarked that the co-principals at Innovative Charter School didn't seem to need to "grandstand" because they were driven by a vision of education rather than by their egos. Respondents interviewed by Chirichello (2003) shared that "small egos" were an important quality of co-principals. The ability to be a truly collaborative partner is dependent on the leaders' willingness to share the limelight rather than competing for it.

**Proposition Six**

The values of non-competition and collaboration required to successfully share a co-principalship also contribute to program design as exemplified by the non-competitive physical education program and the community service programs at both schools.

**Conclusion**

**Implications for Practice and the Growing Shortage of School Principals**

The integrative co-principalship offers school leaders a model that allows them to provide their schools with a diverse array of complementary skills to accomplish a job that is increasingly more complex and demanding. It allows leaders to take academic risks, reach quality decisions, and have a sounding board in an otherwise isolating profession. All five co-principals shared that they could not have done the job without their partners. They rely on one another to "bounce ideas" to
complement one another’s skills, to help them take risks, to carry the load when it becomes overwhelming, to make it so “they can sleep at night knowing they have made the best decision possible”.

The truly integrative co-principalship, one in which the two individuals interchange roles and share all aspects of leadership, is a much more complex model than the more common co-principalship that divides roles between, for example, management and instruction. The integrative model is not easy to adopt, it requires individuals who have either the kind of unspoken, seamless communication of Innovative’s leaders or the willingness to invest long hours in employing the consensus model of Service’s leaders. It is a model that can produce superior results because of the blending and sharing of a diverse set of skills and talents and the sophistication of solutions that are resolved collaboratively. However, it is not a model that should be adopted to save time because of the additional hours required to keep all apprised of most situations as well as the additional time required to reach consensus. It also requires the participation of leaders who are willing to consistently present one voice to their staff. To be successful in this unique partnership their reasons for seeking a leadership position will include a profound concern for quality education rather than seeking a position of power. When deciding to implement this partnership a district or charter school must carefully examine the qualities of the individuals because it requires a unique set of values and interpersonal skills as well as the right match of leaders to make the model successful.
Charter School Leaders and the Co-Principalship

Charter Schools offer a unique view of the co-principalship and its role in the principal shortage. In general, charter leaders are less experienced, have less leadership training, and are faced with more diverse responsibilities than the traditional principal (Hausman, 2000; Dressler, 2001; Tantillo, 2001). The co-principalship could supply the additional skill sets needed. The fact that charter schools don't have the additional layer of the superintendency compounds the lack of experience of the charter leader and exacerbates the expressed need for someone to be in charge. The dynamic tension between the Service Charter School teachers' desire for the traditional hierarchical model of leadership and the transformational approach to which the leaders aspired may have been a major cause of the pressure and stress placed on the leaders. Ironically, the stress itself may ultimately force these innovative leaders to abandon their commitment to their innovative model. The discomfort the Service Charter School staff felt with a lack of hierarchy would not have been an issue in a traditional school using the co-principalship. The superintendency would have created a hierarchy, with the co-principals as subordinates. The addition of the superintendent would have eliminated the need to know that someone was in charge. In addition, having a person who is ultimately in charge might decrease the amount of time spent on consensus decisions. If the co-principals were subordinate to a superintendent and they were not ultimately responsible, but could turn to a superior to make the final decision, they might not have felt the need to include one another in every detail to insure that they were making the 'right decision'. This might have given them the time to devote to
instructional programs, an advantage sited in studies on the co-principalship in the traditional school (Chirichello, 2003; Jameson, 2002; Connell, 2000).

The additional stress of explicitly designing an innovative model that reforms education (Wohlstetter and Griffin, 1997) is combined with the added pressures of the typically adversarial relationship with the local district schools as well as the high expectations of the parents who send their children to these schools of choice. When you add these stress factors to the increase in responsibilities due to the time required to market the school (Hausman, 2000) and to assume the managerial responsibilities usually assumed by the central office in a traditional system, co-principals in charter schools are often overwhelmed without the support of a co-principal.

The final factor that makes the charter co-principalship unique is the fact that these leaders are driven by their values and vision and come to their roles as leaders to protect a vision of a different kind of education. When they are also the founders of the school they are particularly invested in its success. They have an ideal sense of what the school could potentially be and work tirelessly to make this vision a reality. This places more of a burden on the shoulders of the charter school leaders.

The co-principalship may answer some of the demands placed on these leaders. For example, Bennis (1997) states that it is easier for co-leaders to take risks. Certainly designing a unique school with a new setting based on a vision of excellence will require some risk taking. The five leaders in this study felt better able to take risks because they could rely on one another to ‘bounce ideas’ and to help them consider other perspectives. Additionally, Bennis (1997) reminds us that decisions

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reached collaboratively tend to be better and richer. This gives the charter leader the partnership needed to design a new learning environment.

The additional diverse responsibilities placed on the shoulders of charter school leaders may be accomplished by having more than one person face the challenge. It is difficult to find one person who can offer the additional skill sets of marketing and public relations, managing of facility renovations, building the infrastructure of a new setting, developing renewal applications for the charter, while assuming the already exhaustive list of demands placed on the shoulders of the traditional principals. All this must be done without the assistance of a superintendent or the support of a central office. The co-principalship makes it possible for charter school leaders to possess the multitude of skills required to successfully lead a charter school.

*The Integrative Model and the Need for Constant Communication*

The integrative model in which principals share all responsibilities interchangeably appears to be a more demanding model than a co-principalship which simply divides task along clear and consistent lines. When tasks are divided in this way the leadership model resembles the traditional vice principal/principal relationship with the exception that one is not delegating to the other because of a hierarchy. The integrative model, because roles are interchangeable, requires that the co-principals be in constant communication. The need for constant communication is cumbersome and may detract from the benefits of shared leadership. In order to fully implement the integrative model co-principals must communicate to avoid the mom and pop syndrome identified by Jameson (2002). They must also communicate often

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enough to be certain that they present a united front, a consistent voice. They must inform one another of every aspect of the organization requiring them to see every part of the 'elephant' of the school. They must be able to spend countless hours reaching consensus to develop synergistic decisions that offer innovative solutions. This successful communication depends on trust, personal chemistry, small egos, shared values, and collaborative personalities (Jameson, 2002; Connell, 2000; Dass, 1995; Chirichello, 2003). The time that is spent on this complex communication is time that could be spent on instructional leadership. Balancing communication with other responsibilities must be established to insure that adequate time can be devoted to instruction.

*Impact on the Principal Shortage and the Manageability of the Principalship*

The integrative co-principalship model could positively affect shortages and retention of school leaders. The model may lose some of its advantages, however, if the co-principals share every aspect of leadership rather than incorporating some division of labor.

The co-principalship offers school leaders in both charter and traditional schools way of addressing the ever-expanding set of skills required to lead today's complex schools. There is a movement toward site based management and shared decision making and a subsequent need to develop participative management strategies and leadership skills which will instill a commitment to collaborative practice and encourage an atmosphere of trust among participants. This brings home the importance of hiring school leaders who are collaborative and are willing to share decision making.
Decision making is a principal's main responsibility (Santin, 1998). The addition of a co-principalship could result in better decisions because of the richness of the ideas brought to the table. By making risk-taking more feasible the possibility for innovation and reform are increased. The model may offer principals a sounding board in an often isolating profession as well as support with demanding and increasingly more involved parents. The narrowing of duties and perhaps narrowing of the responsibilities opens the principalship to more people.

The advantage cited in prior studies (Chirichello, 2003; Jameson, 2002; Connell, 2000) that more time can be devoted to instruction may be dependent on the specific way the co-principalship is implemented. If the co-principals agree to blur the lines of all roles and responsibilities than this may require an inordinate amount of time to insure that all partners are aware of every aspect of the operation. Consensus decision making, though productive, can also be cumbersome. Having both principals attend the same meetings to insure continuity is also inefficient.

It is important to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of completely blurring the roles and responsibilities to insure that the benefits of sharing leadership are not lost in the hours of time required to implement this model.

*The Co-Principals of Service and Innovative Charter School*

The co-principals at Innovative Charter School and Service Charter School were able to create dynamic schools that nurtured their students while providing them with a challenging curriculum, innovative instruction, and a wide array of opportunities. The long waiting lists substantiate their success. They were able to do this without prior experience as principals, with limited leadership training, with
limited training in collaboration and with more diverse responsibilities than the traditional principal. This is a testament to their professionalism and their commitment to quality education. Their willingness to share the leadership of their schools is confirmation that they were more interested in protecting their vision of a different kind of school than in the personal gain of power or financial compensation. Charter schools have served as laboratories for traditional schools to pilot new programs and strategies. Perhaps the integrative co-principalship in these two charter schools may prove to be a strategy that traditional principals consider as a means to addressing the increasing demands and complexities of their jobs. The opportunity to lead a school with a partner who shares your values and vision may offer the charter school leader the support they need to move forward against all odds.
Recommendations for Future Study

1. A study of the motivation for leadership for charter school principals.
2. A comparative study of the motivation for leadership for co-principals in both traditional and charter schools.
3. An analysis of the level of collaborative decision making in the faculty of a school lead by co-principals.
4. Parent and student perspectives on the co-principalship in charter schools.
5. A comparison of the integrative co-principalship in charter schools and traditional schools.
6. How does having the "outlaw mentality" impact the co-principal model?
7. A study of the influence of the founders' early school experiences on the development of a charter school design.
8. A study on competition vs. collaborative programs in schools using a co-principalship.
References


Shapiro, A. (1994, Nov. 4-6). *The role of supervisory decision-making as a social enterprise in facilitating organizational restructuring*. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision. NY, NY.


APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for Co-Principals

1. What is your educational background?

2. How many years of experience do you have in education?

3. What specific training have you had in school leadership?

4. Why did you choose to lead a charter school (rather than a traditional school)?

5. What was the first inkling you had in your life that might have told you that someday you would start a charter school?

6. To what extent has this school realized your original vision?

7. Which responsibilities are predominantly yours?

8. What roles do you assume?

9. Picture yourself doing your best thinking. What are the conditions under which you find yourself?

10. What are the benefits of using the co-principalship model?

11. What are the drawbacks of using this model?

12. How has this model affected your decision making?

13. What advice would you give to other contemplating this model?

14. What strategies are used to identify problems and what is the process used to address problems once identified?

15. Who participates in the decision making process and what roles does each assume?

16. What general roles do each of you assume in the leadership of your school?

17. What do you find challenging about this job?
APPENDIX B

Focus Group Questions

1. What are the benefits of using the co-principalship model?
2. What are the drawbacks of using this model?
3. What general roles does each of the co-principals assume?
4. What general responsibilities is each co-principal responsible for?
5. Examine this photograph. What do you see happening in this picture?
6. How do the co-principals make decisions?
7. How do the co-principals resolve problems in your school?
8. What advice would you give to other schools that are contemplating this model?
9. What are the benefits of using the co-principalship model?
10. What are the drawbacks of using this model?
11. What general roles does each of the co-principals assume?
12. What general responsibilities is each co-principal responsible for?
13. Examine this photograph. What do you see happening in this picture?
14. How do the co-principals make decisions?
15. How do the co-principals resolve problems in your school?
16. What advice would you give to other schools that are contemplating this model?
APPENDIX C

List of Documents for Service Charter School

Service Charter School Documents

2. Brochure
3. SCS Website
4. A Day in the Life of a Service Student
5. Discipline Report
6. Renewal Application 2001
7. September through December 2002 - CO3 Newsletter to Families
8. Upper School Progress Report
9. Music Philosophy
10. Orientation Packet for Parents
11. Upper School Meeting Agenda - 12/10/02
12. SCS Directory
13. Monday Memo to Teachers - 9/27/02, 10/04/02, 02/02, 11/15/02, 12/06/02, 11/25/02, 12/09/02
14. Apprentice Booklet
15. Middle School Electives Packet
16. Guidelines for communicating with teachers
17. After School Club Program Letter to Families
19. Frequently Asked Questions
20. Staff descriptions
21. Human Rights Survey

22. The Jersey Journal 11/27/10
APPENDIX D

List Of Documents For Innovative Charter School

Innovative Charter School Documents

3. Letter to Staff 12/14/02
5. Renewal Application 2002
6. Yearbook 2002
7. Memo to Parents 1/21/00
8. Letters to Parents - 11/14/02, 6/2/00, 4/30/00, 3/31/00, 12/4/00, 2/20/01, 6/02,
   1/21/02, 4/16/02, 11/11/02, 11/24/02,
9. Parent Invitation to Open House - 2/2/99
10. Request for Parent Volunteers, Volunteer Survey
11. Inventory of School-Family-Community Partnerships
12. Letter to New Students 5/16/00
13. Letter to New Parents 5/16/02
15. Newsletter – 4/01, 12/01
17. Homework Packet - 10/09/02
18. Information for Parents
19. Kids in Business Order Blank
20. Post 9/11 packet
21. Staff letter 2/9/02, 1/15/02, 4/30/02, 9/18/01, 9/27/01, 2/20/02, 1/26/02,
22. Lesson Planning Form
23. Innovative Website
24. Staff Meeting Agenda - 2/20/02, 10/16/02, 1/15/02
25. Minutes of Staff Meeting - 12/11/01, 1/15/02
27. Student report - 12/99
28. Student questionnaire 2/2/99
29. Flyer: Family Night - 4/19/02, Kids in Business 2/2, Open house 2/2/99
30. Dissemination Survey - 1/03
APPENDIX E
Definition of Codes

- Authorship - A perception of being responsible for an idea
- Benefits - benefits of the co-principalship
- Blurring - An effort to erase the distinction between roles and responsibilities
- Challenge - Challenges of the co-principalship
- Clashing roles - Occasions when two or more co-principals do not express the same position or perspective in front of staff
- Collaboration - General comments about collaborating
- Collaboration lead - Comments about the co-principals working collaboratively
- Collaboration student - Comments about students working collaboratively
- Collaborative decision - Decisions that are reached with elements of all perspectives included
- Collaboration teacher - Comments about teachers working collaboratively
- Community - General comments about the concept of community as well as the specific geographic community
- Community lead - Comments about conceptual community made by or in reference to the co-principals
- Community student - Comments about conceptual community made by or in reference to students
- Community teacher - Comments about conceptual community made by or in reference to the teachers
- Competition - Comments about competition at the school
- Compromise decision - Decisions that are reached by averaging two perspective
- Consensus - A process used to reach unilateral agreement
- Consistent values - References from dialogue and documents that are consistent with the expressed values of the co-principals
Cooperative decision - Decisions that are reached when one party agrees to the idea of the other, this can be conciliatory or agreeable.

Coprorlese - The co-principals perspective of one another's roles

Copresponsibilities - The co-principals perspective of one another's responsibilities

Democratic governance - Comments that reference a democratic model that includes staff in decision making

Civision of labor - Comments that reference how roles and responsibilities are divided as well as the importance of this concept

Elephant - Comments that reference that all of the co-principals must know all aspects of the school whether it is their responsibility or not. Derived from Jen's reference to the metaphor of several people being aware of one part of the elephant and losing the sense of the whole.

Facility impact - The impact of the charter funding and facility on roles, responsibilities, and school design

Family - Comments that reference the school or the people in the school as family

Founders - Comments that reference the impact of the co-principals being founders of the original school vision

Gender - Comments that refer to the role of gender in leadership

Hierarchy - Comments that reference a leadership hierarchy

Increased work - Comments that specifically reference an increased work load as a result of the model

Independent decision - Decisions that are reached by one individual without consulting anyone

Inspiration - The vision, ideas, concepts that inspired the leaders to start and lead the school

Leader - References by the co-principals to the role of the leader

Motivation - References to specific motivating factors that prompted the leaders to start and lead the school.
• Observed responsibilities - Responsibilities of the co-principals noted during field observation by the researcher
• Observedrole - Roles of the co-principals noted during field observation by the researcher
• Playingboth - Comments that show teachers manipulation by going to both leaders for same issue to attempt a different response
• Rebel/differentlearner - References to the co-principals rebellious personalities as well as their early experiences as learners with learning styles different from their peers
• Responsibilities - actual tasks performed by each of the co-principals
• Roles/voice/style - those behaviors that define the behavior, attitude, and personality of the person such as motherly, Atilla the Hun, authoritative
• Slowprocess - References to how the co-principalship can be time consuming
• Social activism - References to the co-principals social activism both before and after starting the school
• Socialactivismstudent References to projects that involve the students in social activism
• Sphresponsibilities - Beth's perception of her responsibilities
• Sphroles - Beth's perception of her role
• Sphireponsibilities - Iris' perception of her responsibilities
• Sphiroles - Iris' perception of her role
• Sjresponsibilities - Jen's perception of her responsibilities
• Spjroles - Jen's perception of her role
• Smresponsibilities Matt's perception of his responsibilities
• Smroles - Matt's perception of his role
• Smresponsibilities Sarah's perception of her responsibilities
• Sproles - Sarah's perception of her role
• Synergistic decision
• Tphresponsibilities - Teacher perception of Beth's responsibilities
• Tphroles - Teacher perception of Beth's role
• Tpiroles - Teacher perception of Iris' role
- Tpresponsibilities - Teacher perception of Iris' responsibilities
- Tpjresponsibilities - Teacher perception of Jen's responsibilities
- Tpmresponsibilities - Teacher perception of Matt's responsibilities
- Tpjroles - Teacher perception of Jen's role
- Tpmroles - Teacher perception of Matt's role
- Tpsresponsibilities - Teacher perception of Sarah's responsibilities
- Tpsroles - Teacher perception of Sarah's role
- Trust - References to the concept of trust in relation to the co-principals' relationship
# APPENDIX F

Codes for the Perception of Roles Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes for Roles</th>
<th>Definition for</th>
<th>Codes for Responsibilities</th>
<th>Definition of Codes for Responsibilities</th>
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<td>SPS responsibilities</td>
<td>Self perception of responsibilities Sarah</td>
</tr>
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<td>Teacher perception</td>
<td>Tp responsibilities</td>
<td>Teacher Perception of Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

Raw Data

Interview with Jen and conversation with Matt and Jen:

Jen, how did the meeting go with the mayor yesterday? It went very well (turns to Matt and Sarah) I didn’t tell you about it. They described plans for a new academy complex, and they lowered our percentage on the lease. There seemed to be a change in attitude from the district superintendent.

Before board meeting about possible suspension CO3 met with the student and his mom. Student confessed to authoring the e-mail. Board spent two hours discussing the issue in order to reach consensus. We are so proud, it was worth the time, the board continued our process, I’m a firm believer in collective thinking. I never thought we should suspend Matt and Sarah did. I thought that was too harsh (during the CO3 meeting the day before Matt seemed to be the only one who advocated a harsher punishment - he did mention it was his “knee jerk” reaction.) How did the decision move from rest of the year suspension to in school suspension until January 2nd with a chance for reinstatement and the list of 8 consequences.

J: When you see the kid standing there, this big (shows size with hands), it’s different when you see a real kid. Everyone was satisfied with the decision. We all worked on it. It took 2 hours to reach consensus. It worth it. The results are better with shared leadership. I wish you could have seen the way it happened. Our board is amazing. Matt, what did you think of the bd’s decision last night?

M: (shrugs shoulders, nods head) Its hard, we felt sorry for the kid.

Interview with Jen:

Educational background? Bachelors - Eng. And journalism from Rutgers. MA Harvard - Education -language and literacy, Certification in spec. ed. How many years did you spend in education? - 4 years Hudson school, 2 years in Jordan Leadership training? Alternative program for supervisors of alternative education at Fordham University. 16 credits - didn’t count in NJ (I am not certified as a supervisor) also, 2 weeks at the principal’s center at Harvard Why did you choose the charter model instead of the traditional? - charter chose me - (after they founded the school they hired a director prior to opening and she spent a year and Matt and said either you do it or we don’t open) I was a young parent who lived in town and had seen enough of education. I was reluctant to send my kid to school. I wanted to raise my child in a more natural community with diverse relationships. Babies aren’t born in litters. They shouldn’t be educated in them, the age demarcation is artificial it’s a problem. (referring to grades in school) I was also running a tutoring center and a play group. I noticed that when the same aged children played together they fought. Multiage was much better, its more like joining a family with ranges of experience. I was expecting my second child and I knew we would never make a lot of money, we couldn’t afford private school and I had qualms about compulsory education (meaning public school system). I started the Hudson County homeschoolers. I am still involved with the unschoolers network. That year the mayor and a senator organized a charter forum right here at Steven’s I went out of curiosity. I thought maybe its possible there are people out there who think the way I do and we could create a school that reflected community and could function as a community as opposed to an institution. We started ‘miles square families’ - people interested in charters. Many of them were interested for very selfish reasons. They had all sorts of ways, contracts etc. to keep diversity out - keep those people out. There were 2 factions.
One group became the Elysian Charter School and the other Service Charter School. A reporter wrote a column about us and he wrote - Children of the 60's raising children of the 90's - I loved that.

When did you get your first inklng that you would start a school?

My parents were 60's activists. I watched my parents fight for change. Their tactics were sometimes too aggressive. My mom says in the end her most successful and important accomplishment was "raising a daughter who could affect change" I felt so frustrated watching my parents and the others - there was so much talking about change. I can remember thinking (age 12) It would be simpler just to start a youth center instead of talking about toppling the current state. My first inklng that I could actually run a school came when my husband and I worked at the Hudson school. We were all these gifted kids of privilege. I felt pushed in by the schedule and the prescribed ways. We thought we would ask the district for 12 of their worst kids and take them out of the district schools and we started the (Hudson plan?) We made (1988) plans and had meetings and then the charter school came along and we were more accepted because of our prior work.

Does this match your original vision? In some ways it exceeds my vision. In some ways more. What they are capable of - a joy - their resilience, and desire to learn to be better and for things to be right in the world and for change and compassion, many little miracles. If the school closed tomorrow it would have still been worth it has changed lives. I didn't expect to love them so much. When I watch their concerts sometimes I look at all of them and forget that my son should be different. The level of collaboration has become more than I expected. I always thought of teachers as territorial. I ordered water coolers for each classroom - that was donated all my materials from my learning center and they just grabbed things - they didn't think about anyone else.

What are your major responsibilities? - Clearly - practical - I have the 2/3 and 4 classes program. - I am the community liaison - I'm not an outsider - the key thing - I'm one of their own. They know my family is sincere. They know we care about the community. We're not self serving. Matt and Sarah couldn't - Matt is our state contact. Sarah's role is newer - it's still being integrated. Her niche is yet to be seen. She took over the spec. ed. from me. I was the nurse, I was the social worker, little by little we have parceled out - people in the community say this is Jen's school. How do you combat that perception? I try to include them (Matt and Sarah) I bring Matt with me I make Matt go when I meet with the mayor, he didn't go to the last meeting. When I spoke with Steve he wanted me to go. I encouraged him to talk with Matt. I'll also go but its his role. He knows the politics and the policies.

What are your major roles? I'm the one who sees the elephant in the middle of the room better. Matt disappears into his computer. He's an analyzer. I'm more brass tacks. How do you know your styles this well? We worked with a consultant for 3 years. She gave us the Meyers Briggs and we gave it to the staff 1/2 of staff was one and the other half was another. Matt was the only one who was analytical. I was split down the middle. Sarah is the nicer one. Let's never make a decision and hope it works itself out. (about Sarah) There's 100% trust between all three of us. Because of that we can say anything we want. We hold each other accountable. I'm the overbearing (exhiliite) one- I'm very demanding. But they know it for the right reasons. We're smarter together than we are singly. We find each other annoying sometimes and we don't always agree but we're like a family. Its just who we are.

What are the benefits of this model? When a decision is made you can rest with it in you because three of you have good brains and good hearts. You can sleep at night. I'm a big second guesser of myself. Second biggest benefit - we all have different strengths. I watched how people responded to me and Matt when we opened and
I knew it was a gender thing. My job was to make them feel good, to give them approval. All Matt had to do is say good morning and the sky opens up. Their job is to make Matt feel good. I was hired help and he was G-d. I realized it right away - it's the first time I've ever seen that in my life. If a woman is hard working she's a b. If a man is hard working he's driven. I had to reframe this - it took two years of therapy to accept it and work with it. Now I use it to benefit the school. At times it makes sense for each of us to handle something. Eg. a pushy parent feels they can demand more and push me more - when Matt says this is the way it is with the staff - oh o.k. Matt says some thing and they believe him. We're no longer in a strict model of lower middle and high responsibilities. We all attend all meetings - it didn't feel good when we were autonomous. We didn't divide up by grade level. We divided up by who would work best. A meshing of What are the drawbacks of the model? What would happen if one of us left? I wouldn't Advise? Co-directors should go on an outward bound type experience together. If you are going to have a shared model you can't short cut that. Even with the staff. We tried an overnight retreat - it was a bonding experience. The next year we didn't do an overnight. We made it voluntary and by the time we got to the holiday party they didn't even know eachother's names. Matt and I didn't do an outward bound experience but it would be a quick way to build trust. The other advise is that you should have clearly demarated roles based on eachother's strengths. Be sure one of you isn't just seeing one side of the elephant. You have to cut the elephant across horizontally so you see all parts. We use the co3 meetings to identify problems. If some What are your decision roles? Matt forces us to look at each issue. I recap and drive tow decision. Sarah looks at how it will affect the community. I think best when I am with ot
School. A reporter wrote a column about us and he wrote - Children of the 60's raising children of the 90's - I loved that.

When did you get your first inkling that you would start a school?

My parents were 60's activists. I watched my parents fight for change.

Their tactics were sometimes too aggressive. My mom says in the end her most successful and important accomplishment was "raising a daughter who could affect change" I felt so frustrated watching my parents and the others - there was so much talking about change. I can remember thinking (age 12) It would be simpler just to start a youth center instead of talking about toppling the current state. My first inkling that I could actually run a school came when my husband and I worked at the Hudson school. We were all these gifted kids of privilege. I felt pushed in by the schedule and the prescribed ways. We thought we would ask the district for 12 of their worst kids and take them out of the district schools and we started the (Hudson plan?) We made (1988) plans and had meetings and then the charter school came along and we were more accepted because of our prior work.

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approval. All Matt has to do it say good morning and the sky opens up. Their job is to make Matt feel good. I was hired help and he was G-d. I realized it right away - it's the first time I've ever seen that in my life. If a woman is hard working she's a b. If a man is hard working he's driven. I had to reframe this - it took two years of therapy to accept it and work with it. Now I use it to benefit the school. At times it makes sense for each of us to handle something. Eg. a pushy parent feels they can demand more and push me more - when Matt says this is the way it is with the staff - oh o.k. Matt says some thing and they believe him. We're no longer in a strict model of lower middle and high responsibilities. We all attend all meetings - it didn't feel good when we were autonomous. We didn't divide up by grade level. We divided up by who would work best. A meshing of What are the drawbacks of the model? What would happen if one of us left? I would Advise? Co-directors should go on an outward bound type experience together. If you are going to have a shared model you can't short cut that. Even with the staff. We tried an overnight retreat - it was a bonding experience. The next year we didn't do an overnight. We made it voluntary and by the time we got to the holiday party they didn't even know each other's names. Matt and I didn't do an outward bound experience but it would be a quick way to build trust. The other advise is that you should have clearly demarcated roles based on each other's strengths. Be sure one of you isn't just seeing one side of the elephant. You have to cut the elephant across horizontally so you see all parts. We use the co3 meetings to identify problems. If so What are your decision roles? Matt forces us to look at each issue. I recap and drive decision. Sarah looks at how it will affect the community. I think best when I am wit
Interview with Sarah

What is your educational background? Other classes besides Bio..BA Penn State I was : Years in education? 11 and 1/2 years in education.
Leadership training? Principles Center at Harvard - starting a school is school leadership
Matt and Jen laid the groundwork and I watched them do things well and I watched them make mistakes. When I was a teacher I thought I would never do
some of those things and now I find myself doing those exact things.
Why did you decide to become a leader of the charter school? You can actually do thin,
coordinator for student affairs at the school in NY - I taught one less class. I
worked with kids but I guess you say I chose charter leadership because I
wouldn't have done other school leadership - I came to lead this school because I
feel such a sense of responsibility to the school. When it became clear that they
needed someone it would be hard to see someone else do it. It would be hard to be
part of the founding team and be second hand on decision-making. There are so
many opportunities to walk away from our original vision. If the founders weren't
there it would be easy to fall into that [founders becoming leaders as protectors of
their vision]
When did you get the first inkling that you would start a school? When I was teaching ii
of the administration. It was clear there was nothing I could do. When I was
thinking of leaving there Matt called and recruited me to a new school in the city.
It was a big school in small school's clothing. Matt and I started talking about a
charter high school. We went to the charter forum and met Jen. I was in the lady's
room and I met folks from blank and Jen and Debbby. It was so clear we
were all on the same page. After I met Jen and Debbby I dragged Matt over. He
didn't say anything. Jen thought he was my meek husband which is funny because
he was the one who was so excited about a k-12 school.
Is this close to your original vision? I had no clue in a lot of ways - it is close to the visi
have this year is very much in line. The interaction between the adults and the
children is in line. It is open and respectful communication. Academics and
scheduling is much more traditional than any of us had imagined. We had
pictures projects with kids taking off to do a service learning project - the truth is
people need schedules. Year one we did an inquiry project for 3 weeks and we
suspended all classes with projects around HIV and Y2K - it was hard to
implement. If you could start again would you change your vision or your
approach? There's so much to adjust/change from. We talk
about it so often. How much do you push people? Out of their comfort zone can
d they do a good job? (speaking about teacher's lack of experience with a new
model) Start again - In a perfect world I would get a massive grant and hire
everyone for one year before school opened so the teachers could adjust without
kids there. I might not start with a high school. Oh , the other thing in line with
our vision is special ed. program. If we did it over we would have hired teachers
earlier - it was also exciting and wonderful figuring things out with the kids there.
What are your major responsibilities? Special education - touch points with all the middle
teachers - getting the middle school going. Attendance and lateness, I hate that
part of the job, Matt is going to do it next year. We split the co3 I switch off with
Jen I do a lot of the lower and middle discipline. Matt does upper discipline. Jen
and I share more this year. I do teacher life. I am the closest to the teachers. (I was
a teacher last year) I sit down and say how's it going? In their life time in school
I've been a teacher too. I start the Monday Memo and the agenda. I always forget
things they add stuff. I am the point person for hiring. I screen resumes and do the
initial interviews. I kick it off.
What are your major roles? I am the negotiator with Matt and Jen and with the teachers
said you're in the unfortunate role of being the kid sister. I'm younger and newer.
Safety - teachers came to me first - I coordinate absences so they're used to coming to me. I go from Mother Theresa to Atilla the Hun and Mother Theresa and At set as a teacher. The board often goes for solutions that are soft. When do you do your best thinking? I think best with Matt and Jen in person. Over the other. One will go over the top and we bring them back. I always work better in partnership whether it be team teaching -I'm much more creative that way. Why more creative? I think it's just the way my brain works. I thought you said you think best together? If I get information and an opinion at the same time I can't form my own opinion. Jen wants to discuss everything the minute it happens. It's a frustration for Jen and me. First I process and establish my position. Then I collaborate and change. Trust is big at the beginning. Not anymore. I have no investment in being right. Once in awhile I need to be heard. Not accepted is part of process.

What are the benefits of the model? Balance. I don't know how people do it themselves insane. It's a reality check. It's a real opportunity - better decisions are made when your head up and ask someone else. I feel like it uses muscles of your brain better. It's a safety net.

What are the disadvantages of the model? Things take longer and get done because you and process it alone. Then I think together. Drawback of 3 is we each have 14 million things to do and we have to drop in to consult with each other. It can be frustrating.

Other advantages? Added a layer of rationality to what is essentially an emotional job. I cry. Jen just took over.

Advise? Never underestimate the value of a retreat. Do nothing but think and plan together. If its overnight you can really relax. You better do it (start school) with people you like because you spend so much time together.

How are your responsibilities decided? Experience, tolerance, education etc. A little of responsibilities and I realized I just couldn't do it (Jen kind of had a burn out period and gave me too much) I had a hard conversation with Jen. We changed things. We have more meetings - the triumvirate. I feel so much lighter. Matt was used to running high school alone. Matt is not a great communicator so it might be harder for him but its better for school. We've changed the model every year and I'm happiest this year.

What is your decision role? I am the waffler I'm absolutely convinced by whomever I sj with last I get caught up in it. Jen and Matt are more definite. I'm kind of the 'what about' person. Not as negative as the devil's advocate. I'm trying to think of an example. Sometimes I am definite with discipline I tend to be more definite. I deal with that more frequent.

Did you get an earlier childhood inkling that you would do something special and differ English. (laughter) I like to do things my own way. When I learned to ride a bike I just rode off alone and didn't come back until I'd learned to ride. That's interesting. You think best collaboratively yet you seem to need to be alone to learn. Stacy hesitated, processed, switched answers mid-sentence obviously processing while answering - not much wait time for thought compartmentalization.
Interview with Matt

Matt helps social worker with problem on accessing her e-mail account. Intermittently speaks about how hard the parent's funeral was. He talks about how he would feel being parent. Matt and Sarah discuss homework issue.

Interview with Matt:

Your educational background? UPenn in psychology, MA Harvard - teaching and curricular Columbia - society and education? - unfinished dissertation on charter school (includes supervisors certificate)

Your years of experience in education? 11 and 1/2 years but prior to teaching neuro psy. Your prior leadership experience? Cub scouts (laughs)... on the job training - vast major field. Why did you choose charter leadership? When we wrote the charter there was an origin desire for leadership. There were four of us and we never really said what we wanted out of it. Once the charter was approved I was committed to our school being successful and not starting a war over it. I figured eventually they'd hire me, I have to understand the concept. Gaping hole - too much for one set of shoulders. I was concerned about things right - what was clear in the other school was that the principal had a vision but was afraid to articulate it; people wanted to move school, what she wanted really was a small college prep. There was a leadership position in the NYC school. I was not that interested - more likely a dysfunctional setting the idea of creating something was intriguing the working with adult staff seemed interesting at the time. I couldn't do a charter in NY at the time. There was a slowing down of newer small schools out SCS was asked to back out after several months (prior to opening) The board was beginning to see perhaps a co-leader. At that time Jan was doing a lot. She gave her learning center resources - by default, the person we hired should have been doing those things. The former director approached me to

through I realized the idea of creating a science program from scratch was really exciting. I would be the science department. No one got in my way. Than I asked, why is X not happening? I wanted to be in the position where if its not happening its my fault. I was also disgruntled with the other school. With this school there was no road - no curriculum - others panic. I realized the time I have with my students can be as wonderful as possible in my classroom but it wasn't necessarily aligned with the culture of the school. I want to bring the pieces together. That discourse ultimately what was unfortunate was the leadership was unable to utilize that motivation towards a higher goal. Kids may have successful experiences with one teacher but what the school as a whole stands for... How close is this school to your vision? In pieces it has - one of the things that was a big fact that we are a k 12 school - students can explore values k-12. Up till now we could only see pieces because our upper school students have had a shorter experience with life and values of the school. The older students confronted a culture that have known each other do (diversity) The upper school kids might not have considered some of the paths (college) There is a frustration with what kids in the upper school can and can't do. They came to us prepared to rip through the GEPAC and that's it. How the kids talked to adults is not entirely respectful. They came from 2 middle schools - sat at desks. Here they sit around a table and they are asked to talk - they're not used to that level. Disrespect is really a byproduct of that they don't really know how to have a conversation. They are not used to sharing ideas. The 12th graders are better at respectful conversation. The service learning been powerful. We have engaged the wider community, but not so much our own parent community. They kind of expect us to do everything (sometimes they don't). What are your major responsibilities? Everything to do with the state - predominantly structured peer support, in the past I dealt with the high school issues - mostly do now. I am the webmaster - I design and maintain the website.
What are your major roles? I am the five year plan man. Where we need to go. I am the One time a student said to Jen - "You tell him what to do and he does it (fix things etc.) I haul heavy objects. I curse under my breath but I really like it. Usually I feel awk-
systems person. I liked designing the systems when the school first started. Some of the systems even get too complicated and I need to simplify them. Information should only be entered once - I created an attendance data base. I am interested in systems that make things efficient. Making a routine that supports the vision. The bureaucracy becomes invisible supporting the school and ideally critical to doing what you want to do. I am more comfortable with six or seven balls in the air at the same time. When it was just Jen and I Jen is really good for me. She's detail oriente things - 1. Here's a general place we all need to think how to get there. 2. we need feedback on our decision 3. here's the decision just do. To us what do was clear but they are not sure why to do it. They are even uncomfortable with the discussion. I'm more comfortable saying the work towards consensus. Jen was always more - here's what we need to do. When Jen did lower and I did upper each part of the school got half the benefit. Upper school might have said I feel hear - we needed the full faculty to share that feeling. Jen was great if someone came and said here's a project here's what we need to do. I always wanted a teacher run school. Some faculty would rather just vote. If we had started as a k-3 school Jen and I would have shared all of it. Before it was more a division of leadership rather than shared leadership. The nuts and bolts of 2 age groups required us to separate. Our goal is to move away from that - preserving the parts that make sense.

When do you do your best thinking? For me personally- time to just get sucked in - even disappears. It doesn't ever happen during the day - usually during evenings or vacations. For the school its - when the three of us address a problem and the nature of it allows us to be proactive responding. Designing systems? Best with initial opportunity for discussion than one of us takes a stab alone. 1. parameters - identify the key products and who is best suited 2. one of us takes a stab 3. here's what it looks like - we all look at it - is it doing what its supposed to do? Tweaking the nuts and bolts. Sometimes the 3rd step is a victim of time even though what are the benefits of the model? No one person can be all thing to all people. Clear other alternative is a self aware leader who allows him self to being the other perspective - not necessarily equals. You don't have an opportunity to say "I don't know".

What are the drawbacks of the model? Things don't work as well as they need to when t information flow. It could be a personality type - I lose myself in it rather than communicating about it. A short coming of mine. You have to be able to communicate almost everything even if at first you don't think its relevant it becomes relevant [horizontal elephant] We're thinking of a shared calendar look for 20 -30 key points - kind of a log. We've discovered, Jen and I that we used to feel we had to answer everyone's questions immediately. Now we realize we don't have to talk too much without the opportunity to talk to eachother. We say "I'll look into it." And than we talk to eachother.

Any advise for others? Really important at the beginning to clarify what each person wa of it. What is each person bringing may have different expertise. How do you work best? Put it all on the table. When writing the charter application we didn't even like eachother. You must have trust. Must have clear vision - that's what keeps it from becoming personal. Could be angry about the "thing" but not about the person. If there is a hint of the personal it has to be excorsied immediately.

Writing the charter the relationship was abstract - we had a role reversal - I did most of the writing I was detail focused. We didn't know each other. Sarah and I and Jen and Debby came together in a bathroom - our vision was aligned but we didn't know each other. As a co-leader you will have moments where things will not be working well and realize what you are doing in in service to another thing?
What are your decision making roles? 'why' 'what about' not time keeper or decision dr content to take a 20 minute conversation and make it a week long retreat. I talk too much - it depends on the issue.
Informal and Formal Interview and Observation with Iris:

How do you manage to have such well behaved students? I Meet with all fourth graders in December. Parents help in the kitchen.
(Ms. Alcove went to car to get books for the kids. Left a teacher in charge of monitoring the area. Beth out selling with Kids in Business) [No change in behavior of kids with neither one of them there]
Perfect attendance and honor roll - Iris purchased flowers - didn't discuss but Beth told her it was a great idea. Iris announced the students names on the microphone. Both co-leaders hold microphones during the announcements with Beth making comments like she's absent on the microphone. Brittany is destined for the research group Miss Alcove (referring to successful child making it to the honor class) Beth on mic: We need to get plants in water, clean up under your desks.
To student: Who is your principal? Child answered, Ms. Terra and Ms. Alcove. If you have a problem who do you go to? Student: The one who is available or one who is nearest.
(Iris office) Ms. Terra does outside and I do inside of school. Not when it comes to the

Formal Interview with Iris

4:30 after the students have left
What is your educational background? Harvard doctoral program in education. MA in : Radford, BA social studies education I work with kids that need the most help
How many years of experience do you have in education? 29 years in education
Describe your leadership training. Couple of administrative courses at Rutgers, they we What made you choose a charter rather than a traditional school? Charter because it's m be able to do what I thought was right for kids. I always thought it was important to be a family and a community. Teachers were always isolated (in other places) in their own classrooms. I was in the basement with the mildew when I was a spec. ed. teacher in another school. The teacher's lounge was a place to complain about first inkling? Not that long ago because I was a mess as a kid. I did play school a lot. Most of my life I didn't feel good about myself as a learner. I didn't have a place. The first time I felt comfortable with myself was when I started my Masters in Special Education. I had low self esteem I couldn't admit I didn't know- I thought kids would laugh at me, and they did. When I was in eighth grade my mom got a job at a boarding school so I could go there. It was just my mom and me. She was in charge of the discipline - in order to make friends there were 13 kids in the 8th grade. One day Do you think your painful background has made you a better educator? Beth never had a self esteem problem. We each bring a different perspective to the table because of our different experiences. I'll think a child has a self esteem problem She may think something entirely different because we each bring our own experience.
First inkling? When I met Beth. I had company. We met in a writing workshop in the 1990's - a three week workshop. Meeting her, talking to her, seeing her in her classroom, I really admired her and saw what she had made possible in her own classroom - she had her own little program that she had carved out. I trusted her judgment. I was at Harvard and I came down to work in her classroom as a volunteer. I knew if we opened a school it would succeed.
What was your original vision? It evolved after I met Beth. What wanted was a school that was a community/ family and there's no doubts in my mind that's what happened. I know their siblings, It's very much like a family.
We have jokes and hot chocolate and it's better than I imagined - tasks are divided If you were to think about how tasks are divided would it be by personality, experience, education, talent, tolerance, style? My first thought that struck me was toler coin.
Responsibilities? Administrative - written - its phenomenn (how much there is) I
do that Beth does the personal phone calls and the funders and community meetings. SI the schmoozing networking stuff - the small talk. I do the roundtable work policy
write the grants but I don't talk to the people when I do it's a disaster. The parental Bet
than when we started. The roles are merging over time. You learn where your strengths
think sequentially in a box I'll come to her and say you may want to have some thing ab
Roles? -Compassion nurturer, flexible, negotiator, listener, cheer leader, analyzer.
Where do you do your best thinking? best thinking - alone at the computer or with a pen
by myself [used to be editor of
Harvard review]. Beth need to talk to think. It must be difficult -
How do you think alone when B needs to think out loud. I let B
know when I need alone time.
Benefits? I don't have to shoulder it all. I would be scared to death I would worry
about failure. We're here together. Obviously - bounce ideas off of each other. Not
everything - I ordered the flowers I told her she said great idea. Need to bounce ideas -
Misery loves company, if you fail, you fail together. Its not scary we're here till
late at night - even physical safety is less risky.
Drawbacks? the one voice issue - more than one leaders/ boss/cook in the
kitchen,. Hard for staff to figure that out. There are times when we say different
things and we have to talk about it later and I capitulate. Unless its something big
and than we talk about it. I pick my battles. She has a different view of D
(student) but she's not there with him. We would never change anything in front
of a child. We might have told a kid yes and she comes over and says no no no.
But we don't debate in front of them. I have pulled her to the side she will
immediately support me and all the teachers. Later on I'll tell her what you think,
I trust her on this issue. There are 75 kids who are well behaved and its primarily becau
teacher would complain B wanted report card to reflect it. B wanted them to get a
zero. What if its late and perfect B's issue is responsibility. SS issue is they did the
work well even though late. We need to consider both perspectives. Let me think
about it. Let's try this - grade work and if its late note it and we will show to B in
a few week and we'll set up a standard eg. 2x late = Even when B is not there I
still consider her perspective. If its an issue teachers will suggest a morning
meeting before school starts. The initiative these.
So the sequence might look like this
1. first set pilot with one teacher
2. in one month ask teacher for data on how many late
3. go around individually and ask others what do you think - if not an issue no
problem. Or I'll grab them in library.
13. Learn how the other person learns and works to build on eachother's strengths.
Treat it as a marriage. Its not like that's not my responsibility so I'll see you on
Monday. I do most paperwork on Saturday - she'll say what can I do and she'll do
other chores. How do you get feedback? We pay attention to parent surveys. After we c
comments. I will ask staff to write a headline about the school and use that for a
discussion.
Challenges? - always hire one teacher who's a piece of s.. Who doesn't fit with
our environment. We should know by now. You can't change her - we didn't have a
choice there were no other applicants for that job. We have tried to hone in on a
teacher and told them more hands on - more open ended but they just don't know
how. We send them to workshops.
Interview with Beth

What is your educational background? Trenton State education major. I was not sure we created an education I wished I had. Some of these kids have 2 and 3 tutors. What we're giving them, what would they get if we weren't here? How many years of experience do you have in education? I came into Newark as a pooboots. Right then I knew the culture. I stayed in my room. I had a command of the behavior. I did the school newspaper. I didn't want to be there anyway. I wanted to be in a African American situation I knew I wanted an urban situation. What saw a little box of clay. If you finish your work you get to play with the clay. I didn't have any groups, I'm not stupid. Summerhill approach was ridiculous. Fourth grad kids having a fight. I knocked their heads together. I would never do that now. You do x you get y, it got better. I always had this wild sense of humor. If they studied times tables I would have the kid come up and print I hit him on the head with a hammer. Kid went home and told his father I really hit him over the head with a hammer. I tell them they will lose an ear and I will put it in a pickle jar. I have a wild sense of humor and they like it. Terms of endearment - very positive, I'm not good with the negative. I was hired after my first month for a fourth grade stayed 16 years. I was strict but fair. I spent 33 years there. I also worked at the school. There was a new principal. I had written a program, like an innovative program. I practically ran the entire school. You could hear a pin drop. If I had 10,000 kids it would still be quiet. I would never have had an open space I wouldn't have given a plug nickel. It's not my style. But we didn't have enough chairs. We had a teacher who wasn't good and I could see that (open space) and I thought, oh yeah, this is what we'll do. I could mentor them. Masters equivalency at Montclair. I have credits in philosophy for children. That course gave me the inspiration to come up with Innovative. If I stayed in public education I knew I would or baseball with 200 I had to rationalize how that was math. I don't want to rationalize I just want to do it. My original proposal was for a title one program. They didn't even respond. They didn't dignify it with a response. I said I need to leave things, I make things up. I gave my proposal to Mr. G. I called a friend and asked for a 3-4 hundred dollar donation. I had nothing. I started writing proposals, before the charter law.

How close is this school to your original vision? My original proposal was exactly what What is your formal leadership training? No formal leadership training. My best teacher assert yourself. I may be a woman, I may be young... Why did you choose Charter rather than traditional? I was reticent at first but I always was leader. When people at your lunch table didn't eat before I did what I was in 3rd or 4th grade. A little boy was unmercifully picked on, two cousins had married. He had really thick glasses. People would pick on him. I went home and asked my mom can I walk Johnny home? I knocked on his door and explained to his parents I wanted to walk him home (third grade). I walked him home on the African American side of street, it was safer. Then one day kids circled us on bikes. I decked one of them and they never messed with us again. In my search kids in business center for peace - Johnny was a driving force. Kids shouldn't have to...

What do you see as your major responsibilities? Not paper work. Iris deals with anything this neat way. I like history (making social causes) Driving force on black history month, incessant plays of white man beating the black man. I would say to myself, didn't anyone white help them? I am around a lot of different places. The kids know to act well. I usually don't sit down lining up kids for lunch Ms. Alcove over Everything we do is subtle. If someone is having trouble with a student they are more likely to share this with me. When Ms. Alcove is here my life is easy. She usually works with the special needs kids. I'm vigilant. I know everything - only 3 or 4 times in five years have both of us been out on the same day. When she's not
here there is more to watch, more to do. Ms. Alcove has less of a global sense than I do. She had her eye on a student but I went over to him. If I took away all of your teaching responsibilities what would be left? The part of me that's the creative part. In my regular school I had prep time to create a program. I don't have that time I should take time to go to the office. But I don't. You have to be careful, some of these kids could tear this building apart. We love what we do and we love the kids that's the essence, we teach on a high academic level. I deal with all the crazy parents.

What do you see as the major benefits of the co-principalship? The two of us together, cleaning stove, watering plants, she seeks paper work. That's relaxing to me. What do you see as the drawbacks of the model? No drawbacks. I really need another. What advise would you give to someone using this model? Seek your own natural level of yourself. Like she chose the parent I had tickets she picked who. She is excellent with the schedule and when the state came we made a schedule with all of our hard kids in groups, they were never without someone. One of the partnerships, why this works so well, between the two of us one has to be a writer. I'm creative, I came up with new programs. She is no lightweight with creative ideas. She takes something and twists it and tweaks it. She grouped the kids for the state. I couldn't even make the decision. With staff scheduling problem told what is your decision-making style? I initiate problem solving but it is mostly shared. Won't work. On Friday I knew what she was doing with the tests wouldn't work. There is a learning curve for all of us. Sometimes I put my foot down and say this is the way. I do it more than her. I am very knowledgeable with kids - she doesn't disagree with me. We have incredible mutual respect. I can't say enough. Sometimes I can read her face. I have learned that sometimes she keeps state things a secret. I'm good at, let's get things done. Certain things I need to know to make sure they get done but she might not like to share all of the little things, If I know I'm on it. She has other responsibilities- she is the principle writer for kids in business proposals.

What do you see as the challenges? Making sure my creative side is protected. The lack others a break. I spend time on custodial duties because we don't have a full time custodian. (Reflects) We look at the kids and how they're achieving on staff days. We d schedule, curriculum. Miss R is not being forceful enough about active reading. I told teachers to call the parents - It didn't work when she called. Iris reviews the lesson plans. But I am aware of what is happening. I create best when I'm talking. I am visual too. I hate writing. The teaching institute - it comes from the heart, Johnny. We usually both do interviews but sometimes separately.
Focus Group at Service

What are the benefits of using the co-principalship model? I think it is much easier to make it less structured and in that way people are more approachable. From my experience in teaching in other schools people are much less approachable, if you have problem the problem gets big before you eventually go to the person. So, less structure leads to more approachability that's my experience. Any other thoughts on that? With this model you find different personalities so you get different umm bits of feedback with different approaches. Would you be able to anticipate ahead of time which approach someone might take, typically? I think people certainly have certain characteristics, or at least perceived characteristics so you might pick and choose who to talk to about certain questions. I was going to say that as well, like clearly it offers you more strengths than single principal might be strong in one area but with the co there is like this multitude of different strengths. I feel more confident that somebody will be able to help you.

So let's say you have an issue, do you think to yourself who has the skills to solve this particular issue? Sometimes, sometimes, they are not always available. And also each of the co-coordinators have different areas, like Sarah is scheduling. You have been told that there are certain areas that they are responsible for? Yes. But when you really need urgent help you just talk to anybody. This might be my own bias but I actually don't work that way. I pretty much work specifically with one coordinator (Matt) and I go to great lengths to ensure that, even in a crisis situation. And I do as well, I work in two buildings so I actually can pick and choose because sometimes I am here and sometimes I am at the other building so I feel like I have a little more flexibility and contact time than people who are just here. I want to sort of revise what I am saying. Yeah, anything academic I would always go to the person I consider (Matt) but I wouldn't call him if I was going to be sick, you would call Sarah, right? I would for that because I am require by policy to also tell Matt. If by policy, where do you see this policy? Various places. There's a faculty handbook and there are memos that remind us to call this person like Matt is budget and Sarah is absence and Jen is service learning. On large issues I will go to Matt. If it's a program question or discipline issue I will still go to Matt I choose him as my main contact liaison but I cc on everything even if its not their background or interest I still cc the other two coordinators. Does anyone else do that? I don't know I am not as much as an emailer as you are I don't always, If it is a middle school issue I go to Sarah. If it is a larger issue that I feel would impact lower or middle I go to all of them, if it is a discipline issue that might effect the whole school. Is that a benefit to you guys? I liked the old model better. From my experience in other schools I have to say they are more approachable because there are three of them but the pyramid of control is too flat. By that I mean is there are 60 teachers and only three people above them, thus, if you have any kind of problem you have to go to the co-coordinators. For decisions and take some of the decisions away from the administration so like our last series of six weeks of meetings have been trying to facilitate letting go and us taking over. I hinted to before I come to teaching from a business background and I have always been a believer in and would prefer a benevolent dictator. This is a small organization and I think that the difficulty in saying co-coordinator just shows how muddy the whole thing is with three people just sort of amorphously handling all the details that fall on the administration the it is confusing not only to faculty and administrators but it is confusing to students. A student really isn't sure when one of the coordinators comes into the high school and says you need to be doing x y and z and their reaction is who the heck is this person telling me what to do. I can't entirely blame them. I'm not saying that my preference is the right way, it might not be, but I think with a school as small as ours if there was one strong focused individual who could delegate by expertise to people beside her or him, we would be better off. So, for instance, if Matt is an upper school specialist and he seems to be, I mean he has taught almost every subject at the high school level, fascinating to me, I have tremendous respect for him as a result. There should be someone who delegates upper school issues to him. If Sarah is, its been my experience
that she is an excellent student relations person when she was in the classroom the way she interacted with students was very productive and the way she interacted with famil 

is very productive. Jen is kind of this is your responsibility lets get it done. Maybe that's what she could run with. Kind of, you know, that's got some value. If there was somebody kind of leading the charge and then delegating lets get a lower school specialist, or a reading-writing specialist or this sounds like a discipline problem let's bring it to our disciplinarian. Maybe Three or four sub positions below that benevolent dictator, for lack of a better word. I think we would run more efficiently and I think the would be more grumbling and griping because right now we have three different voice that we can, not play against each other, but we can kind of go in based on what is familiar to us and that is one of the reasons why I go to the person that is my touchpoint coordinator, the person I meet with, I just feel like it Do you find that the touchpoint person is more of the person you talk to? Yes. Umm I think I agree with Tony, I thought last year's system felt, I was much more satisfied with that system. The coordinators but they had a specific area and they were divided by upper middle and lower and that kept it simple and you certainly knew who to go to. I feel like they are still trying to figure out what their roles are because the year before last year we had th mix everybody does everything and last year they tried everybody has a specific role at this year we are back to we are all doing things together. Personally I find it very confusing with somebody like Jen comes to the upper school meeting and she hasn't been there but she has a hazy background on some of the issues we are discussing and she wants to throw in an idea that has already been rejected by whole group and she makes herself look kind of silly because we all are going to handle this way and then she comes to the meetings on Tuesdays and like we don't really want to go there. That is all because they don't seem to be clear they will also process stuff in the meeting in front of the staff. This just shows again how confused everybody is about the model. If you are going to do that and do it well you have to communicate everything before you get to the meeting so you are not processing anything in front of the staff. When it comes to discipline I had one co-coordinator take over an issue that another co-coordinator discussed with the student and make a decision and it wasn't consistent with the previous issue, the punishment was much more severe so I thought that shouldn't happen. I had to disagree with you last year I don't think it worked so well. I'll tell you why. Last year for some Trenton meeting or whatever, all three coordinators were out of the building, the same time, which is something we do far too often I think, but at that time Matt sor of joked I would be principal for the day. I took it really pretty seriously and I made sure that I stopped in every classroom during the day and I had several faculty tell me that several, not one or two, sent me e-mails and said you know, that's the first time that someone in an assigned leadership role came and said how you doing is there anything can help you with? In a school this small there is no they could have it if they did things little bit differently in a school this small it's essential that every faculty member feel that they are backed up. That they are backed up on those little things, that there is some consistency that if I can't find so and so and so is not too far behind. Rather than, they're at an all day conference in Trenton. Also the idea of the quick trip in is important the teachers. I'll throw in that I believe one of the reasons it happens is that they see wh their roles are by taking on more projects and duties as a result all three of them are very stressed out to the max because there are no boundaries on what it is that they are doing. From my experience I stay here odd times the two that work at this building spend too much time here. Let me tell you how is that possible? They are each at the point of burn out. I think in South Africa I went to several educational conferences on leadership in schools and you reach a point, I would see the times Matt sends e-mails at least ten or fifteen or twenty times he sends e-mails at two in the morning. There is no way that a person who sends an e-mail at two in the morning can be ready for the next day of school. I'm trying to say that this is positive and its negative. It shows commitment and also shows that the commitment can be taken too far. Somedays I experience burn out from them, I'm not criticizing but I've been to that point myself previously, you don't
realize it, until one day you fall asleep at your desk or something silly happens to you. I think one of the reasons that happens is founders syndrome, because they are all three founders of the school and they are all three very emotionally invested in the success of the school and its what drives and what will eventually leads to burn out. There is also one other thing I agree with everything you said but I wanted to add that there is a philosophical issue, philosophically there is a belief that the system they have devised is the best system and they just have to work out the kinks. I disagree with that philosophically and I have been very frank with them if they ever read any of these quotes they will probably say, oh that's Tony. I see three people who's hearts are entire in the right place who's commitment is to be commended at a very high level but inexperience and ownership are cluesing obvious efficiencies so for example, recently educators for Social Responsibility was here and they did a whole bunch of meetings with our faculty members on discipline issues and they had a lot of good things to say. the most focused recommendation is that there needs to be a person maybe even a half time position like a to do a consistent and follow through job on discipline and truancy and this won't happen not because of budget, this won't happen I'm sure it won't happen not to be defeatist, because philosophically there is discomfort with the idea and I think times there is a clash between I don't want to say practical reality because at times I certainly be very idealistic there is a clash and the idealism of the founders and the reality of not only what they have created but who is attracted what kind of families and students we come here and as a public school, it's a federal law we can't say we are going to be particular sliver of rare air in education that will be all things to all students and I think its clouding how they do their job. We really need some consistency with the discipline. Do you see other drawbacks? The confusion from my experience, I think the discipline issue is the biggest one. From my experience there is a frustration that has been bubbling under for two years I have been here. I have discussed and have been frank with them I have talked to him several times. He is like at the point where he doesn't want to talk about it anymore. I think that the reality is that we are not solving these disciplinary problems they are just being put on ice. Consistently. I am sorry to say that when Social responsibility was here they talked to us, they listened to us but I am of the opinion that we didn't actually solve any problem it was just what do you call it, an opportunity for venting. We are going to move to the next question, I want to differentiate between roles and responsibilities. By responsibilities I mean scheduling, a role might be Mother Theresa. Let's do roles first. What would the roles be for each of them? My touch point coordinator, Matt is definitely the how do you feel let's talk this out and let's get to the nitty gritty until you have dealt with the pie in the sky. So the conversation is like st Tony, you feel that discipline is amorphous and inconsistent. When you say discipline, how do you feel about this, what do you want discipline to look like? Could you build a sculpture out of clay showing me what discipline looks like in an ideal world. I am hear feicous because I absolutely love this coordinator, we are very close friends but we shouldn't want to say butt heads, we clash on a regular basis. What would the role be? Socratic - that's it the role of Socrates. Does everyone agree with that? A loving teddy bear Socrates. How about Sarah? I think she is friend to one friend to all, I must say I found her to be very considerate when you don't feel well. How could we sum that up? Mom, comforter, she's more comforter than mother-empathizer, new mom. She is often unsure in that role sometimes she'll think I need to be tough disciplinarian mom and the shell'll say things, because I am close with all the founders she'll say things and then she'd say I want to talk to you about something that happened between me and L today sometimes I feel like I need to tell her to toe the company line so to speak. You don't have to say it like that your point is valid and sometimes in e-mails things are sent to the whole school. It's still really new to her, is this her first full year or her second? Jen? When I see her she is like the one driving at something which I like, I like someone who says we are all going to route four or five right now. I like that. She's a go getter, [remember her story about her parents just talking] a cheer leader she could be the experienced mom because she has mom qualities as well but at the same time I don't
think that she always follows through she is all excited about something and than something new comes and than she is all excited again. Everybody get in the barn, oor we don't have a barn. My experience with her in the upper school is that she pulls you a certain direction which I experience that positively. I must admit that, Because some people you use the word how do we feel, we get along well you will say he will want I philosophize about it and then we don't get, there's no plan, we stumble over our own feet, whereas when we point to something it's much easier to go there even if you may mistakes along the way you get there. I know I am too task driven, I have been told that million times in my life, too task driven, not enough people skills. But teaching, you ha to get somewhere teaching, o.k. you have to take the people with you but you have to j somewhere teaching. I would add on about Jen in that enthusiasm that you talked aboi sometimes she will try to put a square peg in a round hole and sometimes it doesn't ma how many people say, round hole, square peg. What would be a word to describe her? Stubborn ... its more than stubborn, it varies widely cause sometimes the entire opposit is true. If anyone sees it differently they are seen as resistant. Being resistant and than just the opposite if after attempting to get that square peg in the round hole she comes : says oh square peg round hole and suddenly everything you say is worth hanging on I could be wrong about this. She is so driven. I think there is a little bit of idealism mix in there with the driven and that's why the peg square round hole comes up cause idealism drives the idea and there is no changing directions. There's also in the Meyers Briggs that I tendency to want a decision and to just want to see the thing done without going through the process steps. How about responsibilities? Could you list for me? Fr my point of view: Matt does the money um h nh, Jen does the service learning, and community relations, Matt does the technology, Sarah does personnel, Sarah does absence, Matt does curriculum, high school, elementary curriculum is Jen. Sarah would be middle school curriculum. Matt also does grant writing, quite a bit. Let's say you ha a problem with a child who was really angry and it wasn't really a discipline issue who would you go to? In High school I would go to Matt, wait C maybe, I would go to C the social worker. If it's not a discipline issue I just go to the social worker. Let's say malnutrition, I would go to Sarah. If it were the lower school it would be Jen although see Matt over there I still feel the presence oh Matt is there they know Matt I would say. I wasn't here last year but I thought that the way they did it last year is the way they do it now. They set up their touch points that way so I work in the fourth grade and I do arts bridge class in a club that meets after school and if I ever had issues with a four grader I would go to Jen. Really angry parent you need someone to calm them down w would you go to? I would reluctantly go to Matt. I would go to Jen because she is my touch point coordinator. The buildings limit you sometimes I would probably go to I would instinctually go with Sarah. A really belligerent parent? My experience has been let's be honest about this, it's not a good idea to take a belligerent child to these people this building, a parent too it is not going to be treated in the way I would treat a belligerent person. Eventually the problem will come up again. I have had that happen numerous occasions. The kid is calmed down or the parent is calmed down and we are back with the same problem. The parent is just calmed down, the problem isn't solved. That's my experience. I would take them to Matt but it is just a calming down effect. Remember the two students, one was carrying bags in a cart two students, two sisters, t parent was in weekly talking to Matt the problem was never solved. Does anyone else see it this way, that there is no one to go to to solve long term problems? Yes, I agree w that and I'll also say that at times the philosophical, eduspeak is not effective in communicating an idea or a practicality about a student to a parent and that is often wh comes out of the mouth of the coordinator. And its like its not practical the part about parent they basically see it's a school run by white yuppies and that kind of speak just adds to that the kind of tendency, its just my own bias, but there comes a time, and I th it should come fairly soon when you have to say "I'm sorry you feel that way, but this just the way." often what our coordinators will try to bring the parent around to their point of view, it's not gonna happen. If you keep just extending and extending the
discussion it's like everybody is exhausted and so finally says o.k. I give up. They don't want to talk about it anymore. You just can't be all things to all people. I think Jen could say that more than the others. In the two or four world I have been working in this building I think Jen would I would be confident in her understanding I would go I'm not saying expect that to happen the first time a parent comes here I do think that we should always the first time. But parents that come week after week after week you need to say this is the way it is good bye. Look at the photograph and tell me what are they discussing? Looking at photo - This is a surprising photo, tell me why? Are we all looking at the same photo? Let me tell you something that goes with this because it clarifies something we see here. The first time I walked into this school I saw a picture right above the copier where everybody could see it of our co- coordinators sitting in a garbage pail. Umm, it was really surprising. When I come from you would never find anybody in the position of, of, in charge of anything that would be sitting in a garbage pail. I have pictures of myself like that even when I was in charge of my school, but it would not be displayed the teachers' room. So, what I am trying to say is a very relaxed mode being experience towards the coordinators. Let me throw this out, I was hired in the summer to help with scheduling and I saw this pose and I am not kidding, twenty meetings of that we had to facilitate what the schedule was supposed to do and so I would say, you know I Jen is disagreeing, Sarah is making a point and Matt is saying yet again, no one is getting what I am saying (referring to photo of 3) You are an oracle that's it! (referring to her description of the photo). Maybe I should say it again - You all agree with her? Yeah, that's a really good summary. I say this is a surprising picture, because Sarah is leading the conversation she is caught in a duel there and Matt is somewhat beaten down. Then is you know, the school newsletter, the main tool for communicating, is called cocubed and they don't understand that for most of our families, co-coordinator co-co would not get the joke and when they say did you read the co cubed to a parent who has six kids and two jobs did you read Co cubed what are you talking about I didn't get the notice. Jenny would she pay attention to the notice, it comes in a foreign language. It looks like happy stuff about school plays she throws it out and than they say, I don't understand, we're communicating with Ms. Smith, we're communicating with but we're not, if they were discussing that newsletter here it would be the same scenario - Jill is strongly disagreeing, Sarah is trying to keep everybody happy, trying to communicate, and Matt is just frustrated and feeling unheard. I can tell you what they are saying. Jill i saying this is our main means of communication with the community and getting the school publicity and we are not backing away from this because she would take the criticism of the name as this stinks don't do that. Sarah would be trying to clarify the issue and Matt would be saying, what's wrong with trying to elevate our standards, that's what it would be. One always needs to say this they are very committed but some of the thin they do under that commitment they are missing the point they talk themselves into utter frustration when they are trying to commit themselves. It is very good that you are committed, it is very good that you know where you are going. If you miss the aim you shouldn't blame there shouldn't be a blame game going on. You should just say you missed the point and go back and try it again but find another direction. But many time we find that if the co cubed doesn't get the message across they just throw out more co cubed in the same direction they should change the name to the like funny bunny so the people that are our customers, I'm not saying it should be the funny bunny but it shouldn't be something that our customers will like, oh it's a name I can understand. I see in the picture, Jill is disagreeing, frustrated about what we are saying, Sarah is still trying who I consider it a good thing because you should never give up and Matt is trying several times but not getting there. In terms of a practical thing like the co-cubed, I would say, I'm sorry, this is a personal bias. But, They endlessly process so when you are taking the single model principal and comparing to the co-principal This particular group of people endlessly process so it's never like on this day we get out of the corner. We never get the point where this is done so even after all of these hours when you finally produce a document where we say this is what this thing is going to be, we are all signing off on t
dotted line there was still another five hours of processing and then the thing was eventually published it was now out processed. Had school not started they would still processing the schedule. Any improvement in the quality because they spend so much time processing? Initially, than they go beyond that as an example the teacher's handbook. Before I started here I read it completely several times. And it's been changed a lot since then and in my humble opinion very little has been add that is use. It's doubled in size and people who come to the school now have much too much read to do. In previous schools the teacher's book should be thirty or forty pages maximum a bible of two hundred. There are so many rules even a person like me who likes to sit to the rules. The rules overlap so the processing is going on too long. I was just gonna say, in this picture I also see another element Matt let's the other two people work out a problem and he kind of sits back and waits to see what is going to happen and when they have worked out it he either says yes I am giving my blessing or No I don't agree and than the whole thing begins again. Their environment too, the fact that the table is covered and they haven't finished one thing before staring another the library cards haven't been put away or take a break or say let's have a bagel and say let's come back this. I know that we used to use the term and it has bad connotations for me, like senseless consensus - The only reason for me sometimes it is reached by the person who lasts the longest. Matt went to University of Pennsylvania and that's a Quaker school a quaker as well and he believes in it very strongly. I don't mean to disagree but I am not person for consensus I run out of patience I see that's a solution and than keep on going the teacher's meetings are extremely frustrating for me I don't know if it's visible but I usually sometimes in the meeting I just want to say o.k. we found an answer now let's move on. Once I made a terrible mistake I made the people vote on something. Matt w. furious. Everybody agreed that it was over and done with and there was nothing to be said and the decision would be perfect it was like a month or something and he was not upset about it he told me and he said that's not the way we do things he still wanted to talk about it. If he said to me Tony, I appreciate your opinion but I have made a decision and as your superior or supervisor I'd say I would do it the best I possibly can even if I don't agree with it. I'd rather do that than go through the consensus process come up with an agreement and than its reversed by the powers that be. Wait a second, so, some anecdotes for the first two or three years of the school and I'm including the planning you remember these days, year it was driven into us that this was a teacher run school: if you didn't take on a very hands on approach and come to meetings with multiple memos about curriculum about organization and discipline you were considered like a doing your job. For instance, we had this great teacher in the first year and he had to go through this process to get rehired but he didn't buy into that whole idea, he was like m job is planning this particular set of curriculum and he did that very well and he did to a certain degree do the other stuff but he didn't do it as much as was expected, eventually blew up in their face because there were so many decisions that were being made and he would struggle for twenty hours to reach consensus, everyone would go home exhausted feelings would be hurt, and then an entirely different decision would be made by the board and the coordinators. Eventually they said actually, this is not a teacher run school. They don't say that anymore. I can tell you, there was a meeting held to say there seems to be a conception that this is a teacher run school but that is a misconception but that after the bullet incident. Umm, another thing that happened recently, they asked teacher to come in for hours to reformat the report card after doing a half professional day a couple of us worked twelve hours they said we just decided not to revise the report card at all I guess what I am saying is they don't seem to be learning or processing through this stuff that doesn't happen. The only thing they learn from that mistake is that they learn that it will come back to bite them in terms of power, that they are very cognizant I do want to also add that in all three of them there is a valuable set of skills and a valuable set of qualities and the problem is not that their model sucks and they suck, the problem is their model is inefficient, and they haven't figured out how to we tap into w all three of us do well in a way that makes our lives less taxed, they are moving in that
direction but in the most inefficient way possible. I mean, don't think it's wrong to have a vision of what you want your school to be and I don't think you should just say that didn't work let's try something else but I do think you have to deal with what is actually going on in a day in many ways they do. I just want to say that when they envisioned their school they just wanted to do something so well and now it is the fifth year of the school and we have kids graduating classes and they realize that there are certain things that have to be done, people don't like them but if you want a school that works efficiently you've gotta have certain things. If you were going to advise another group of people were considering this model what advise would you give? Make a true hierarchy. If the idea is going to be shared power, share it within a hierarchy. There was something important and I asked Mark, where it was, I might have the numbers wrong but Matt's response was really, it's in there and I said I didn't see it and he said it's in appendix TT addendum six. I didn't want to bring it up but we probably should have maybe appendix c, maybe we have double the alphabet and six or seven addendums to this but its not an efficient book, it doesn't work no one will look through it. You know it's funny, if he really, what am saying is just that you can have shared power but even within the shared power it has to be shared with a clear hierarchy so that as Jimbo pointed out before, not everything bubbles up to the top, cause not everything needs to bubble up to the top maybe it bubbles up to the department level or the middle level where there is a vice or co-principal situation and then there is somebody at the top and than above that somebody there's the board. Would you think a more traditional model like a vice principal would actually work better? I would, especially since we are small. I think it would probably work better than it does in a large high school because the problem now is like, one of the problems is there are just too many hats on one person. Take a few hats off and allow a person to do what he does really well, get some real help and its funny because its all counter to what in fact the idea of what a charter school is to eliminate bureaucracy you know we give you 10% less because you will lesson the bureaucracy. Everybody thinks well that's great because a lot of those people weren't doing anything. Well, maybe a lot of those people were doing something, we need a few more of those people. It seems: there are two issues you have mentioned that they need more of a division of labor but you also mentioned that they need a hierarchy do they need a hierarchy and a division of labor? I think the division of labor from their stand point would be beneficial to them in the area of discipline I think a little bit of a clearer mind I mean, but there you just need to know if you happen this is where you are going to go. I agree with you I think the division of labor is a more important issue to me, this is a bias, than the hierarchical issue because I think with clear roles it would be clearer and also comes my next piece of advise, which is don't work out your stuff in front of your stuff, like have the clear roles so that the staff knows, you know, and if you want to modify those roles or whatever, do it some other place and that would lead to some one in charge of all these areas and that would lead to because you know if there is someone who makes that final decision you don't need the hierarchy. I think the division of labor that the truancy/slash discipline person who is not the traditional you are in trouble but someone who really provides support services, works with the social worker, gets to know families, kids feel like ok I'm in trouble I'm going to see this person and that he/she in a weird way is sort of my ally even though they may be mean as you said earlier and I say you know, unum I think our students would like that. I was watching Boston Public last night, the worst show on television, one of my guilty pleasures, and there is a student who is pregnant and it reminded me of how the first year of the school I got hit with something I absolutely didn't expect a student came up to me and she said I have to talk to you, I said oh yeah, I was kicking with my boyfriend a few weeks back I wasn't sure what she meant, and she said and then the condom broke and I was like wow, I didn't leave business to deal with that but I have to owe it to her, I can't walk away from this I think we need someone who is really strict, focused and consistent that the student actually trusts that. Honestly don't think any of our three co-coordinators will take that job, philosophically they won't go there I've seen a student swear, like a really swear to such a point at the I was sitting...
another room and I was would you just keep it down he was saying "excuse me", at that moment, personally, I would have said shut up and leave the building. There is no way you can excuse a kid legally you can't say that. The students know that one of them is stronger. They know that Matt is stronger than Sarah but they think it is less true of the upper school. In the upper school they love to see Matt. No one is really strict but I think in the upper school Sarah is stricter. Frankly, I think Jen should be discipline and trust in family relations, I think she would be excellent, I think that Sarah should be somehow curriculum, personnel, and I would argue that she should not be a full time administrator but should spend some time in the classroom, that's where her gift lies. I think Matt should be involved in grant writing, philosophy, anything to do with the charter. I think there should be somebody above them as the boss. In my description of taking Stacy out of the administrative role, I'm taking Jen out of the full time administrator's role, I'm making her essentially another teacher but her focus would be on discipline coupled with family relations social services, Matt would give up all the things he does as an administrator and focus on grant writing, philosophy and math curriculum. And then there would be someone to make those tough decisions when the person does finance, the accountants we pay a lot of money and they say there is a budget discrepancy someone makes a tough call about ok. here is where I want you to shift the money. I think, this is my opinion, I think there needs to be somebody who do that. Why would a person over them improve things? Decisions would be made much better if the nauseous process would be more systematic and then would be willing to say, I made a bad decision we need to correct it and they are afraid to do that here. In business the one thing that helped me in business was when you screwed up you could do one of two things you could do bury it, which would ultimately sink your ship, or you could go to everybody who could sink your ship and say I screwed up here and I'm changing it and here's what I'm doing. Than you are protected, and there is nobody willing to do that. From my experience, schools are not democracies, I have been teaching for about fifteen years now. They don't work as democracies because if everybody has a say you never get anywhere. That's not a democracy anyway. In my experience, consensus is a good thing up to a point someone needs to say even if you don't like it we're doing it this way and that never happens it causes resentment. I would prefer if I was told the school will be painting your room pink tomorrow and I will love it. We were told we would have to have our PIP then we were told they had to be in by 12 something we were told it was due in two weeks time. Last question - how would you describe a process for making decisions? Its really initiated I something the faculty is upset about that is my experience from two years of being here there is a discussion in my opinion ad nauseum many people have got to have input. Just the three of them? Sarah or Jen presents the case, if Sarah presents the case Jill and Sa would argue and than Mark would put in his input and then it would continue. Three is a really bad number often times umm its because of their, let's say different processing styles or leadership styles others times Mark is more patient hang back stance. Sarah at times is verbalizing a contrary view it was difficult to break through that. So I think that leads to difficulties in processing. Was it better with just two - I wasn't here with just two. For the first six months I was here they were officially just two - Stacy was still teaching a lot, I can't remember too much of that time so I wouldn't be able to comment I have seen it happen more than once, it is not a single occasion that disagreeing about something not in a bad way but in the hallway obviously disagreeing about something would be Mark would be saying you need to listen to me. This is obviously an important disagreement in public. I never did that in public, I never disagreed with my headmaster or anybody that I worked with in public. I would say I have a severe disagreement with you and immediately take it private. I think that the students even know that they walk right past it. How does that affect the staff? Very bad. For example this year there was an argument in the hallway and the students and they were raising their voice one of them figured out what happened. I feel this is where the person above them would come in when the never ending discussions are going on someone would come in and say ok, I
is what we are doing. Also a staff person initial reaction I am older and I have spent tin in the business world too, this is so inexperienced. So inexperienced. I can't wait until they mature and they can understand I want to go to them an mentor them it is really b when you want to talk to one of them and you disagree with them there was a student sitting about this far I couldn't even say we need to go somewhere one day after school was dark and we were still sitting here I would just like to say Tony is making my life difficult and I need to say that just to one person and I need to take you in my confiden and you never get that opportunity because there is always that financial piece and even with the facility eventually we went to the balcony and you know the reason I came to teach here was because I really liked the founders and I still do I will go often times speaking for the faculty you know how I feel about you but oh no not again where I do get frustrated is that I think they hear what I say but they have resolved that they are no going to respond to some things. At a certain point in time you say if this is the way the are most comfortable than this could be it for the long haul. And I think that just the with six years ago they wanted to do a radical rethinking of the way schools work just li a teacher in the classroom every day that you teach will tell people if you are not constantly examining your own practice, even if it worked, how can I rethink it than yo die and you burn out and I think they could burn out. They have great ideas, they do 8 a school now six years they need to be commended for that, but I think their lives could be a lot easier if they departmentalized and delegated a little bit. I think a discipline person would make a lot of difference.
Focus Group Innovative

Benefits? I think you have to pick and choose who to tell or ask, some things are easier. It depends on who you ask. That's true. Things that are financial vs time management vs new ideas you kind of, time off you want to take time off you go to one person. That has to do with the dynamics of the individual people as far as same thing with teachers you wouldn't ask them all to do the same thing. If you asked one - you can go to one and all the time its black and white if its administrative you just go to Ms. Alcove. Where it gets vague is when its about students - behavior or lack of progress that's when the decision comes into question or even how you spend the time during the day school you have cleared it with one direction but the other doesn't agree with it, doesn't want it happening doesn't like it. Truthfully it's not so much disagreement among two co-leaders, as it is I don't expect to have to get approval for everything I do I am experienced in education experienced enough the disagreement with that almost 100% of the time will come from Ms. Terra. She has no hesitation to come over in the middle of class at other times she would direct I haven't asked for permission. I come up with my lesson plans you can't be too outlandish when you are in the middle of the room. Yesterday I had them crawling under the table and it was lucky she wasn't looking. She was looking at different progress monitored by Ms. Alcove even though there is an outside evaluator. As far as alternate there has to be someone from in the school. It is very beneficial to have both, very helpful to have an outside view. What do you see as the drawbacks of the model? The time is a lot to learn I want to learn things from both you can always work more with Ms. Terra because geographically we work with the same kids. There are things that are frustrating with her. I have special activities ... I need more time I can't do it in 45 minutes. Its hard for me to plan its like an enrichment program. It's a mixture of reward on the other side I have a lot of freedom to go different ways to do what I do. That's why you try to get help in certain... What I find frustrating they don't have an agreed voice on you can go and ask them the same question and get 180 degree opposite answer. Although Ms. Alcove is more likely to say well what did Ms. Terra think/say. I guess I was just th when we were sitting in the staff meeting and they were saying different things about... what does that mean to me? Ms. Terra is clearly the one in charge in my view. She's in charge that's it. Its so apparent I think that comes from she is the disciplinarian definitely, she is the one working with the parents, definitely, this is the inner workings of the school. Ms. Alcove is because, what is a school? Parents and kids. I think its not fair different opinions are part of working. In a way I am not worried about being in a meeting and hearing opposite meanings, for me its part of working, its not necessarily comfortable but it yields other results. You have more space for creation. It is energy consuming. I guess I see that that's useful and I also come from an environment where people didn't agree with each other years ago either. It was usually in the realm of how we tackle this problem as opposed to this is what you are going to decree on how you are going to behave. If the question is very straightforward like what are we going to do tomorrow at the staff meeting then let's have an answer let's not have one say x and the other say y let's have an answer you don't need to have a discussion every time or you yourself. None of us can get anything done. She wants to get what she wants. That kind of discussion is very frustrating. What makes it a discussion? By asking questions to get to what she really wants. I'll happen we need to have a schedule for the day. Discussion have the top level students doing all sorts of projects kids in business, do a lot of enrichment and I believe the argument that she uses are these are the kinds of projects or results that are needed for this school to be successful to raise money to be showcased these things are important and we realize they are important and we also know that we have to get in regular science and social studies and we know we need to do it more than twice a week. More than once a week. So it's a constant struggle. How do we balance this out? Ms. Terra we don't get into the discussion we need to balance it we get into the discussion she wants this and we know we need to get this much in there. We don't talk about balancing we only have x amount of hours. One of the things I enjoy I appreciate
the flexibility of this school. If we had another principal like I've known other principals it would just be Mussolini style this is the way its done whether its wrong or right this is the way its done. Although it's not always easy, we struggle, we fight there's flexibility in yourself in that situation. They are both in your department. That is the core of their expertise. They look and see what she is doing. We go into things like physics, neither of them will take over. She'll contribute discipline to other people but they can both contribute curriculum and teaching styles to mine. Tell me how that relates to your earli

h ave a goal I am the only one working on it. I am just one person. If its social studies or language arts they're both working on it. Two brains, four hands. I have the same project and I put the same amount of time but it takes me twice as long. You feel like you have to do as much as the two of them. I have to, its very clearly stated, I have to. I enjoy pushed but sometimes I feel like I am not being pushed and I am.

What do you see as the responsibilities of each of the co-principals? Administration clk As far as the parents, Ms. Terra and Ms. Alcove too - she has a lot of communication obvious about what she's doing she doesn't have to grandstand. She talks to them a lot when we are not here. IEP they are both active in that. Who would you go to for study why I have couple of times when I needed immediate help - parental guidance - but in terms of getting a test of a student with a learning problem it is going to be Ms. Alcove, the team in here she has a rapport with the special ed. Ms. Terra will obviously help it and help with the homework and the parents getting on board. When you ask a student to be tested - as far as helping that student after the testing Ms. Terra is great but as far as getting the student tested that's Ms Alcove. Great idea, something new you want to try with your students? Ms. Terra, Ms. Alcove, you want to go to Ms. Alcove for everything back process of talking to her is easier. Ms. Terra has a vision and she leads with the tension of this vision every minute of the day. She cannot stand a child wasting time not doing the best he or she can do. She is not here every second with every child so she say something because what she sees she will go to sometimes she makes mistakes because she doesn't always have time. Is the origin of the vision clear to all? Yes - when Ms. Alc do it alone, we don't want to test that. That's not one of their goals. It is the story of two women that had two stories and they put their stories together. I think a lot of this is foot hard work and pushing the kids and pushing the parents and you are in an urban setting and I felt pushed in a good way. You have to take it as a really determined way of getting things done. Kids in Business is Ms. Terra, Ms. Terra does a lot of the outreach, creating partnerships, she is the face and voice of the school. Discovery Charter School or say Kids in Business they will say Beth Terra. If you talk to Trenton they will say Ms. Alcove cause she actually has the administrative certificate. What are the roles they play, you, where are you at? Alcove, how are you doing? The non-teacher, the emotional, who goes into it. I am very emotionally tied to all of us I think on Alcove has, you know she there she'll do it. What's very funny is I expressed it in different ways its interesting because I said I am not going to Ms. Alcove because it is too easy one morning I came in and Ms. Terra is not even looking at me I am going to change she was right on the target had made jokes but than one morning she comes in and right on target says that she will never say directly I understand or I am sorry - there is a lot of the chemistry between its difficult to me to think of the results I want. I usually just go to Ms Alcove because she listen to the whole questions and she will give me a fair response or she'll. With Ms. Ten have to think how will I ask the question and she reacts emotionally sometimes and than days later she'll come back with a response. Ms. Alcove would be the mother, Ms. would be the father. If there's a deadline - who would be more flexible? Get this done? Ms. Alcove by Friday, or get this done for Ms. Terra by Friday, I make sure I get the thing for Ms. Terra by Friday - I try not to do those things but if I come up short it will be eas just want you to get it done. I get a total lack of comprehension of how long something should take. Ms. Terra doesn't get how things should get done she thinks about why - Ms Alcove thinks of the process and Ms Terra thinks of the end. I need this piece of paper of all of them this second. That's what drives us a child can not understand can not have. We want to do X - Ms. Alcove I don't know if you really want do that. Out here, I am r
myself. That's Ms. Terra's way of telling Ms. Alcove I don't know if that's what you really want. That's a kind way, I've been less kind. Ms. Alcove, I was thinking we could do x because of y. I think for me, I can tell how she is feeling because of her body language this picture to me. Ms. Terra has a definite idea in mind. Ms. Terra has a definite idea, is having a problem with something it could be anything from not knowing schedule to the state on the phone and we have to come up with an answer, could be anything. Ms. Alcove went to Ms. Terra. By the way the state has called. Ms. Terra is on a mission-she wants all the kids in the research group. Ms. Terra is trying to make space for the question because all that's in her head is the research group and she is trying to put this aside and listen to Ms. Alcove. What she is trying to do is the research group she is trying to make space a listen to Ms. Terra. Can they change it. Can they move it to tomorrow. That first emotio reaction that's what it would be. Logic is not here, this is emotion. Can't you put this over there. This is more of a daily thing rather than a huge like state coming thing - more like Karate is here or Mr. Alcove is sick you have to go to the kitchen because I am all alone out here (even though there are 10 teachers) and they're not doing anything. This is a daily thing, I agree. But as far as - you see this everyday. Several times a day. This is right next to my table. Ms. Terra wants to have it happen and Ms. Alcove is the one if we do we can do this. Ms. Alcove says what are you proposing - she wants a plan. She does th what do you want to do. She'll do that. That would be the look she would give you - wh do you want to do? Often, I've noticed you try to give the background she'll stop you - well what do you want. She has a lot to do with getting things done - Ms. Terra has m or things that have no end, like sound hounds. Ms. Alcove has definite deadlines - she likes clear her plate - if I want something with an end - I go to Ms. Alcove, if I have an idea I don't need an end I will go to Ms. Terra. Decisions? Just like in the picture - Ms. Terra understand Ms. Terra's position on how to decide. And than what? Ms. Alcove would h clarify what is the decision. A lot of the decision would be Ms. Alcove helping Ms. Terra identify the question. One of the things Ms. Terra knows is this time I don't want to deci In the clarification Ms. Alcove is adding her own opinion - adding options, including he own options. This is what the options are one of these is my opinion, than they make a decision. Ms. Terra has a vision but not the means. As far as putting it into the means - Dakota, Ms. Terra would just way well he is your student. But that was really the solution. They would talk until they are frustrated and than one of them would say fine. Ms. Alcove would think about the student. Ms. Terra would say Ms. Alcove has a special place in h for N. They are really just following their true interest through the individual teachers, students. 

What advice would you give to someone considering the co-principalship for their scho difficult to think of how repeatable it is because it is a very unique story, I would tend to agree, They have a long term and trusting relationship between the two of them. If you just got two people off the street and said now you are going to be co-leaders of the school I think there would be a lot of ego, turf stuff going on, especially because perception is that administration is the dull boring, the glamour everyone wants to be in the spotlight. A personality like Ms. Alcove that, while she doesn't like administration, sees that it must get done and she can marshal herself to get it done. And doesn't have to be out there with funders is something that you really have to have our society doesn't exist much. On target, do you remember, I thought it was interesting. Last year we had a first class of 8th graders graduate. Ms. Alcove and Ms. Terra I think are equally attached maybe T even more attached to Ms. Alcove. But in this room, with all the parents of the 8th graders, all the 8th graders prepared speeches. Ms. Terra was in here and Ms. Alcove there (in hall) for the whole thing. That was the point when the kids were giving tribute to the school, to Ms. Terra and all the parents are all here, so it's a and it is very kids are so want the recognition, it's really important to define roles and responsibilities ahead of time I think the personalities defined those roles. I don't think they were designed. I kn
Middle School Meeting

Facilitated by Sarah

9 teachers - all women

No circle, sitting randomly at desks with Sarah sitting down and facing the group from there.

Participants appear to be comfortable even though they are not sitting in a circle there.

S: I guess I feel - when I was teaching it took me five years to figure out how to get kids to do homework. (showing empathy)

T: Creating a curriculum as we go, I'm already not sleeping. I can't do that.

Another teacher shares

S: What I'm hearing from you guys loud and clear is that it's not working.

Teachers discuss what they currently do and how some actually like the homework packet.

Sarah calls out names of teachers to acknowledge their desire to speak. I'm sorry, one at a time, (all talking at once)

Sarah summarizes - it sounds like the debate is more about what homework is rather than the packets themselves. Maybe the way to go is use the packet for overarching concepts at least half of the time. You could supplement with nightly homework.

Teacher: that would fulfill packet "requirement"?

S: I want to be clear - the packet requirement exists only if it is meaningful. I'm looking at the time and I realize we could talk about this for hours more without resolution. Just understand that you are doing great work in your classrooms - the real question is do we want to have schoolwide systems? Let me sit with this and I want to pick Matt and Jen's brains on this.
Informal field notes
Service Charter School

Matt writing up a special ed. report for the state
Sarah writing up a teacher observation
Jen with the mayor

Sarah and Matt discuss teacher coverage (both working on computers side by side)
S: I'm going to ask Jen
M: If you want to you could have them split it
S: I don't want to do anything I haven't heard back from F and D and J will you remember to check with those three at lunch
(Sarah talks to herself)
S: Matt did you hear me? I'm going
M: I thought you were just mumbling to yourself [later Sarah mentioned I was short with Matt because I hate that part of the job - next year he is going to do it - he doesn't know what a pain it is]
S: Repeats that she sent e-mails and repeats request
M: Where is JC's stuff?
S: In my e-mail
M: Would you send it to me?
While both of us are out of the building we need to talk to C about coverage
(referring to the fact that all three will be at the funeral for the parent)
S: Does anyone need to be in charge for one hour?
Field notes
Service Charter School

Arrived 8:30 - Jen is out with sick son - Secretary says - Sarah will be right there.

Sarah is working in the office they share - (On the wall - Cat mobile, MLK portrait, Pler head - We can do it slogan. Note on wall thanking Jen for "keeping my dreams alive" from one of the 2/3 teachers with a poem underneath, We shall overcome)

S: Cell phones are our life line with two buildings. I'm a creature of habit, I usually write this memo (Monday memo) with Jen and we're usually done before 8:00.

Phone: (Jen) - Thank you, few questions on Monday memo. What were you saying - so we're saying, we're doing a Yankee swap or a grab bag...that doesn't have to be decided. Assume its in My Documents, I didn't tell you about my conversation. She's having family crisis (referring to teacher who is discussed during co3). She is leaving mid-year my impression is she would be open to that. I'll try to track her down. One letter is Nov. 26th I'll continue to search your hard drive (talk about Jen's son being sick with a bad headache) How did your mom do this last year?

Teacher: Something for Monday memo before you...

To Jen: All right cool, I'll probably call you 15 more times

Teacher: Would you encourage students to come to the arts café? (noted during co3 meeting but not clear to me that it was actually in the memo as requested, mentioned at the lower school meeting after school)

(S on phone) - I don't have time but if this is an actual emergency? Hey B, what's going on? (parent of child with gluten allergy) Oh my gosh, ahhh mmmmmoooh.

It's strange, even our subs know, poor pumpkin. Sorry that happened. B: It's a known quantity, simplest solution, no sub should cover lunch for them. Small comfort b it's a year since diagnosis, I do feel confident about what she can and can't eat and sub just wasn't aware. I'll talk to susanna and nancy I don't blame you.

(Makes phone call) Hi D. that's all right is Matt there yet? I'll talk to Matt about disentangling J for the week. (to me- we messed up J I'm so sorry - can go along way with so many people - teacher sent sub to lunch room, lunch is a loaded time for teachers need a break, I don't blame them, they're tired but they send sub because he's the lowest man on the totem pole. Usually I write the morning memo on weekend and then send to there are primary responsibilities and Monday Memo is just mine.

Me: How did you end up with Monday Memo?

S: I don't know how it started. I was a teacher when we started. The year before last I was faculty coordinator. I did things that were part of teacher life. It's a teacher tool (referring to memo) Jen did it before than we had it right from the beginning. I use it too. It's a helpful reminder for me too.

(Matt calls back) - Are you in the middle of something? Did you want anything about intercession on this? (referring to nam) Due when? Anything else? Someone gave S a bag of pretzels and she's deathly allergic - she had to go to the hospital. Did Jen tell you? - had her appendix out. One more thing, call me back. J on intercession - can't let her know its taken care of. Can you talk to her. Do you want to send an e-mail? [Matt can't talk at first - calls back - still in a rush. Sarah seemed to forget she had a meeting with the Special Ed. coordinator - had told her she's see her in 15 minutes and 1/2 hour had passed at this point]

9:10

(Jen teaches 2/3 library and I teach 4's. We all teach senior portfolio. Matt teachers senior philosophy. I teach a violin elective. Jen teaches Karate and 2/3 library) I consistently use word we instead of I] To Beth: Do you have anything else for the Monday Memo?

Beth: I have Jen on the line (Sarah send MM by e-mail to entire staff and then checks e-mail) Says to me Jen: S: In a perfect world I could do paperwork before we met why do you go to classroom first does that work? I want to hear about your meeting.
Cell phone - I didn't check school voice mail. I'll check and call you back. (no messages calls back)

9:15 - Special Ed. Coordinator at the door: I was waiting for you to come back. ... Did you have a nice Thanksgiving? Did you cook? [teacher seemed respectful and not annoyed that Sarah was not there to meet with her.]

Phone: We are on the case and we'll let you know. (send e-mail about pretzels to teachers who are involved with the child to ask them to meet after lower school meeting to discuss what we can do to prevent this from happening again.

Phone: Are you alright? Nancy's not coming in I don't know what to do? I think Meekal needs to be in the room. This is what I need you to do. Just tell Matt how many kids it is? We will have to figure out what to do with his kids at lunch time. I'm not sure how they want to do it. They can call me if they have questions. Are lesson plans on their way over? I'll just deal with them later.

Teacher calls: (has a correction to Monday memo - suggests that A week should have been B week - arrives at door)

Teacher: It's B? Now we're all messed up. It's fine

I step outside - confidential conversation with a teacher

(In answer to my question - Mondays I usually work by myself but we often have things to bounce off of one another - better than the phone (meaning being in the same office working) I have mixed feelings on phone. I'm sort of a point person for the middle school. I have trouble with attention - I get pulled off task. I would call Jen in like with the pretzel thing - we would work on that together. Matt and I's more like parallel play [almost apologetically] I like to bounce ideas (meaning with Matt) Phone is harder for me. Matt is great around discipline. We do a great good cop bad cop [Roles] whoever is upset the other is usually the opposite. With Jen, we're usually more in the same place.

I'm always here on Mondays

(Special Ed. Coordinator returns)

S: I want to hear about your conversation with Karen

Sped. C: I blind copied her (cc) It was a good conversation. She was surprised at the meeting.

S: Zack's appendix burst, I just found out.

SC(coordinator): She likes face to face for IEP's its her style its fine with me.

S: Her big thing is modifying up. Advanced math and enrichment support.

SC: Wolf Pac meetings, she wants to know if we're talking about her kids

S: Who did you observe today

SC: She had two groups, testing is complete

S: Next big meeting is 19th?

SC: I have to set up community meeting for self eval. Of special ed. debt. (for parents?) (set date, Sarah wants to be there)

S: Pick a date that works for you and the team. I would make it 29th to give people a break. [tells her to set the date and then tells her the best date] (inference to making copies for the team) I'd rather give them too much information than not enough.

SC: But I hate all that confidential stuff being out there (referring to spec. ed. documents). I'm redoing the teacher input on IEP's give it to them one month before

S: Great

- I'll put that on my agenda for my meeting with Jen and Matt [unclear if actually on the agenda]

SC: I'm thankful you let me send that letter

S: We learned out lesson

SC: I want to send the letter to document it.

S: It was our mistake that it wasn't mailed to him That's it babe (to teacher)

S: (shares frustration) I'm just talking this through. It was a stupid mistake. I won't tell the party just got the ESPA scores - parents said you now I'm not happy with academics."

SC: Kids of privilege

S: Bottom line, its not fair to move a kid in the mid year. November, its stupid. Its like
the Jones's are moving so I will too. Stampede started cause one family moved to
W, not for any reason - she's a diva (meant to say Prima donna) That's my
gossip for you

CO3 Meeting at Jen's House
11:00
(Sarah's role is to develop the initial CO3 agenda and than e-mail to others. Have
discussed taking turns with formally facilitating)
J: Stace move us through (meaning the agenda)
S: Adventure center still needs tutoring. I wonder if there is a way to rearrange
J: Adventure center may grow. I saw wait list (S,J,S,J - looks at Matt, S, J, (Jen and Sar
in dialogue occasionally looking at Matt)
J: I think we look at how. I'd like to fold that discussion into the HS staffing.
M: With HS piece, I don't think we should /..this is what we are proposing in the new
contract...J, M, J, M
J: We could offer that in Arts Bridge
S,J,S,J
M: Is there some question about not hiring a floater sub?
(Issue - how much to pay a sub and whether to hire a floater sub and how to get subs
from district list)
SJSJS
J: I had a girl who wanted to know about floater.
S: I think we should watch Service sub rate
J: We do
M: We should get access to their list
J: I'm meeting with G - so its an opportunity to ask him - related to tutoring I
wanted to (I think he is the district superintendent)
M: That it totally helps
J: Related to this K gave a sheet (Jen shows the group a sheet that the teacher
KL gave to parents that showed parents how the child was doing with the skill of time
telling) I thought this was brilliant and an underutilized resource (meaning the parents) -
opportunity for a specific way for parents to help. Before we get a tutor, instead of
rushing to the rescue and being everything
S: I guess what I'm thinking about is [seems to be hesitant on several comments -
prefaces what I guess etc.]
(Issue - tutoring program and whether school should assume responsibility)
M: Is that something we should talk about at the lower school meeting?
J: Yes, there are parents who would like to help, do we need to give them a form. I cou
make it up and e-mail to you. We could get a hot list of who needs help. [realize they
should distinguish real need for tutoring and ask for parent help to deliver]
S: S was given a bag of pretzels
J: S knows what she can eat [seems less empathic than Sarah]
S: I have to get the teachers’ side.
J: Teachers shouldn't just relegate that duty should they? Without sounding skeptical
there could be more to it. We should still clear up our side of the street. SJSJS
M: I...go ahead
S:
M: I think in a situation where there's one teacher it can't be...
S: I'm not gonna do anything, at the meeting today. JSJ Next item, probably a million
mistakes can you guys just eyeball with me (silence as they read - Sarah edits her own
work out loud)
M: We're doing the Yankee Swap (gift giving technique)
J: I finally love Matt enough to do the Yankee Swap - he's been asking for years - should
we allow people to opt out so they won't be passive aggressive and so the recipient isn't
left out (passive aggressive by saying they will participate and than not purchasing a gift)
S: Is that an e-mail? (means would an e-mail resolve the issue) [Sarah's role in the meeting seems to be to be the proactive one - moving the agenda along]
M: At the meeting please let Maria know, JSJS secret winter prize is voluntary if you a coming you need to come with one gift - required admission
S: Mandated hugging
M: Who is J?
S: That's my next agenda item JSJS
J: I think people would rather come to hear you perform (rather than a guest or parent - meaning Sarah (on violin?)
M: A community event
S: It could potentially be a big money maker JSJS
J: This is what I would do, have him bring performance idea to next parents meeting JS.
S: Agendas, I didn't know what to put, Matt did you?... M,S,J,M, S, J, J, S
J: Fourth grade is awesome, they're making their own Calder Circus. JSJS
S: Matt
J: Anything about report cards, Matt you could pull reminder off Monday Memo... please [seems to give mark assignments] JSJS I haven't heard a peep.
S: I don't want to invite discussion at the meeting (meaning that she wants to inform them individually to avoid a problem)
J: An e-mail?
S: Send an e-mail
JL: Put a congratulations to K,3,4
S: poems could be our opening share (speaking about the lower school meeting agenda)
J: For arts café, I think arts teachers should talk about what they're sharing JSJS
I don't think kids know about arts café. That raises the issue...
M: We're gonna send a notice to parents (hour later secretary asks were you aware we sent notice to parents - Matt hesitates and says .yes)
J: Didn't we talk about daily....
S: Take events off of CO3 (they say Ko cubed) and read during morning meeting
{issue is concern that teachers are not reading CO3 newsletter and that students are not really aware of parts that refer to them directly}
{solution - separate the page that deals with students}
S: I also think its asking them to do more paperwork
J: How about if we ask them to do it once a week
M: How about if we organize it
J: NO, this is for students
M: Instead of having to reorganize, we could have a separate page [this is the solution they all ultimately agree to]
J: I think we are all saying the same thing.
M: Make it a separate page but not appear twice
J: Right, we don't need to put it 2x
M: Monday message has a separate pg.
S: Do you have time to check on Monday Memo?(refers to next week) I'll be done by si on Sunday night and than I can call you
J: It's o.k. let's just let them know they should read it that's their living document that works
S: That works, lunch?
S: Can you add that to upper school meeting? [It seems Matt is responsible for upper school agenda although in private conversation he shared that they are trying to blur the lines between the various responsibilities]
M: Are there other things... right, I'm asking, JMJM
S: I think we do next year
M: Still an unresolved thing with more time in lower school nice to turn around this yea (contract issue with fairness in daily schedules)
J: Take newsletter off the table - they didn't produce anything (referring to the fact that students didn't do the newsletter as they were encouraged)
J: When you give out a shared collaboration no one takes responsibility. [ironic statement from a collaborative leader]
S: But inquiry was shared collaboration and they were great
J: But that was known, I guess what I am saying is that when its something new... when you give out a shared collaboration it doesn't get done because no one takes responsibility [they help one another refine and clarify their thinking]
S: There are certain people if you give it to them they would make it happen
M: Do we just give it to someone or do we sit down with the team [CO3 seem to do too much - jill alluded to this with the tutor conversation]
{Issue - should students go to Mcdonalds for lunch as an incentive when some students are left behind?}
S: Sixth grade incentive program to go out to lunch
J and M: I thought we stopped that
SL: Do we say they can't do that anymore?
M: Purpose is not to raise funds to go out to lunch the purpose is to do good work (referring to the fact that they students did fundraisers to pay for their lunch out)
S: Question is do we let them do it at all? Is structured so that only the kids who earn it can go.
M: It seems that they should structure it so only when whole class does something they go
S: It should be something festive for all kids who are doing well. [kind of contradicts the idea that it should just be for whole class - but not really clear]
J: Than it should be after school than it wouldn't be so obvious who is not getting it [this is ultimately the decision they agree to]
S: Perfect
{solution - instead of lunch reward after school reward so children don't have to be left school}
S: This is what we said about the contract [Sarah moves them on agenda]
All: Review what was really said
J: I feel strongly we are a strong community we have been really good to her, its not ethical to break her contract. Its not a roll over this is someone who has years with us. for her to leave is more disruptive that's my feeling. I don't think she realizes that.
S: She told me how do I tell Jen - she knows you won't be open to it its not worth engaging a conversation.
M: But we do want to offer cause disruption is less even if 6 hour contract (could they tweak her contract to accommodate her or is the contract merely a ploy because she found another job)
J: Everything needs to be above board that would be far less disruptive to our community as a new job won't be nearly as understanding it's a disappointment to break the contract.
S: I hear you and agree sitting around this table but it would be tremendously difficult for me to have this conversation with her.
M: You don't need to have a discussion you could say here are conditions of new employment
J: Would you have that conversation (to Matt) since Sarah is uncomfortable?
S: It is easier to leave she has made Jen the bad guy.
J: She's worried about offending me JSJSJS
S: She said she know she's been a terrible employee this year.
M: She needs to get him at the end of the day
S: She knows I'm a softy that's why she talks to me.
M: It sounds like what's best for us... if what she said was a sincere offer she'll be in a position to blow us off a second time
J: I think it should be played out and you should be there
Field notes
Service Charter School

9:30 - 10:30: Observed Jen teaching two library classes.

Rotating seat chart - very fair for everyone to have an equal turn sitting on the two coaches. [Jen seems concerned with fairness and has created systems to insure this]. Ch raised an issue that monkeys are stupid because they eat fleas. Jen says to the child that humans eat snails. [fair treatment of animals]. Jen wants to complete her objective for the class by completing her brief lesson on their research projects. She asks them not to raise their hands anymore because its distracting and then moves along with her agenda despite numerous student questions.

Informal discussion with Jen and Sarah about how we are not preparing our students for the world of work. We are preparing them to create a better world - not just to continue the status quo. Sarah shared how hard it has been to create the learning environment in CO3 Meeting:
They sit in the same pattern as last week. Sarah at the head and Jen and Matt across from her:
S: The other thing
J: Maria could lay out the gees (karate)
S: O.K.
J: That should work
S: Lets do that last
J: You are a great agenda driver - you go girl (to Sarah)
M: Lets make an effort to never schedule school photos on a Monday.
J: So noted
S: 2 fold question on the student issue. We should move into the private room. (decide to allow me to sit in on the meeting after brief discussion about confidentiality decide not to use student's name) [seem to be beginning to open up and trust me]
(move into office while discussing fact that Jen won first place in karate championship over the weekend.)
S: So, the student, Jen and I talked a little this morning. [Sarah keeps them moving on agenda] spoke with M and she made me feel incredibly guilty (they give me background on the student issue - student has used another person's e-mail account and used Sarah's name to write (explosive) about a teacher and print it on classroom printer.)
J: Lets reconstruct a time line - I need it for me brain and the board definitely needs it. (Matt and Sarah give the details of the actions of the teachers, themselves and student. Jen types as they talk - Matt shares most of the information with occasional additions by Sarah) (all three attend all board meetings which are held twice a month) [they all want to be prepared on all issues]
J: Did he say why he did it? [Jen asks clarifying questions during the entire process]
M: He said it was a prank when asked....
I told him I appreciated his honesty - I asked him to think about it over night. I told him I would recommend expulsion to board if he was lying. He was crying and upset. I went through details w/ mom. That conversation ended with, he would come in the morning.
S: When you're done I have another piece of e-mail but wait till you're done [issue - possible suspension of student who hacked e-mail account and sent profanity to e-mail group and printer in classroom]. (Jen shares that in the past the board didn't support the CO3 decision to suspend a student who had brought a bullet to school. The teachers needed the support of CO3 and the board felt it was too extreme a punishment - they felt they had to at least suggest this to board to let teachers know they understood safety concern.

(spent fifteen minutes going over details of the student misbehavior - at one point Sarah mentions that she sent board the copy of the e-mails they said it was too inflammatory -
did you think so (asks Matt and Jen) Matt responds: no it was strong you said what happened. Jen asked Matt for techno help. Jen and Sarah talk on speaker phone to secretary.

M: It was Friday, I did an investigation of what sites students visited. Jen reads back minutes. Matt corrects some of the details. J: this is clear for board now, we need to do a recommendation. (Jen reminds me and others about the bullet situation w/ the board reaction last year. She tells of how one board member said he didn't believe it was a consequence. They wrote new discipline policy as a result but it still contains suspension as a consequence)

S: I'm nervous for tonight

J: What we did was to avoid what happened last year was to give them a preliminary of the events and tonight they'll get the facts (timeline they just created). We should speak to M again and

M: Opt on line requires a court order to release information

J: Should we call before the meeting tonight and ask him if he really said that. We could say mom... If we go the that meeting and we have to corner him its worse. So we have 2 recommendations One if he wrote e-mail and one if he didn't (to Matt - do you mean expulsion or suspension?)

M: I think its pretty egregious going to lengths to impersonate a staff member (via e-mail) with malicious intent that goes beyond a prank.

J: But maybe he didn't really understand what would result. E-mail is anonymous. The thing he printed out is poisonous to the community. If you are making a statement about impersonating...

M: He wasn't pretending to be someone else he just didn't want to get caught.

S: It's a lot of trouble to go to

J: I had something happen 2 years ago (tries to give them perspective) a second grader wrote a letter pretending it was me and asked for more parties - that was innocent but he...

S: Why send from Sarah?

M: His intention was that the person reading would for a brief moment be thinking its S and than realize it ultimately.

J: We can make two recommendations [driving agenda] one if he wrote e-mail one if he didn't - I hear you saying if he wrote e-mail we should expel him

M: That's just my knee jerk reaction. (begins to back off position)

J: what do you think (to Sarah)

S: I think its too harsh. (Jen expressed the day after board meeting that Matt and Sarah had a solution that was too harsh yet Sarah didn't express any harsh penalty) It would be like saying he doesn't have a right to a public education.

J: I think a long term suspension and counseling (this is one of the consequences set up by the board)

M: He could be suspended for the balance of this year. What's unclear is...

S: If we go to the board for a year suspension we'll have another bullet incident

J: We could ask board to do a month to month with counseling

S: H had a bad experience with counseling

J: If we recommend it do we have to pay for it? [concern for reality of finance]

S: His mom said that she wants to get him back in counseling.

M: You could require a child study team evaluation

J: Wasn't he evaluated?

S: He had a psychiatric for something else

Matt and Sarah analyze situation

J: That's one part, but 2 reasons - the rest of the class who knew he sent it. I hope he get it and the gravity of the situation. (realizes situation is grave yet proud that she and the board thought suspension long term too harsh - its not clear what Jen really recommend)

S: You should see how the class reacted to suspension. M said she had a near riot on her hands. (students upset - held a class meeting) is Stacey less strong because of her awareness of teacher/student/parent reaction?)
J: They need to know this is the way world works whether they like it or not (in the now reality)
M: This is different than the bullet - that kid had no visible malicious intent - this was sufficiently serious that the teacher questioned whether she should continue to work her
J: So that's the recommendation.
M: But it seems more serious, I don't know exactly, suspension through end of year.
J: So no possibility of reinstatement? (seems to help Matt think through his position)
S: That's too harsh
J: It's too unclear even though I recommended it. (willing to step back) Suspension through the end of February?
Is that o.k. with you Matt? I hate to be so harsh but there's no way as a parent we don't take it seriously until we take it seriously.
S: The amount of care he needs sometimes. His mom just shuts down (compassion for mom)
J: I'll think she'll do it (send him to counseling) if we are going to make it a condition we have to at least make it meaningful like having him see E (school counselor?)
Have E meet with M at least once.
M: We could have E report to the board. [builds on each other's ideas]
Secretary interrupts to tell Stacey to meet with a parent about a transferring student from H School
S: Matt why don't you meet with her you know the high school curriculum
M: You have to take on new responsibilities (to Sarah) you can meet with her [Matt mentioned they are trying to blur the past responsibilities that they only assumed for survival in the beginning]
S: To secretary - no one can meet right now
M: Why don't you give her a copy of the handbook that may answer a lot of her questions before we meet with her.
J: Matt why don't you just say hello
S: I only have five minutes let's finish
J: How can we finish agenda if you have only 5 minutes? Back to student issue, if we put in writing that we recommend counseling do we have to pay for it.
M: Only if we require it (I don't think this is true)
J: I think if we recommend we have to pay, I think it shouldn't be in writing [Jen finds a way to recommend verbally which is a win win that keeps the groups recommendation for counseling in tact while not having to deal with the financial issue]
S: We could give him a project related to harassment [another recommendation that is picked up by the board for a consequence]
(Matt meets with parent)
J: o.k. I'm going to open the agenda (on computer)
(Both stand by computer taking turns on the mouse)
I asked Jen why the teacher went to Matt about e-mail debacle. She said that for surviar when we started Matt had the upper school I had lower Sarah wasn't a coordinator. We were kind of parallel we have actually increased our collaboration - fold hands to show marriage
Video

Service Charter School

No Place called Home
Big World Little School
A Little Story about a Small School with a Big Dream
J: HCS is a small but powerful force in the community. Perhaps the one award that defines us best is our national designation as a model service learning school. That means our curriculum is designed around serving the community. We learn about and attack the problems of the city, New Jersey and the nation. Service learning is at the heart and center of everything we do.

M: The notion of service is powerful in that it connects the community to the classroom. As opposed to kids feeling Service Learning really engages the students in meaningful questions looking at the community and asks them and challenges them to find answers to those problems and to take an active role.
J: Through partnerships and through working with other schools by engaging in civil rights together and looking at what each various school can bring to that picture that is really the experience that has a lasting impact on a kid. We have added on to King day and make it a week long. The volunteer service fair - the idea behind it is asking residents of the community not to take King day off but as a day ON. Our HS students worked with 16 organizations in the city that depend on volunteer support and sat down with them to figure out areas that need help.
M: The service fair is a good example of how a project builds on itself. The upper school students did a whole community needs assessment looking at what are the issues in the community. As part of the first meeting they presented their findings to the community. Younger students watch their older peers wrestle with those questions and plan those activities and they see that at some point they will be stepping into that role and taking a leadership position.

J: To serve with Love is an after school service club. Empty Bowls supper raises awareness for the homeless shelter. They take home a bowl that the students made and it's a reminder that someone's bowl is always empty and the place of home in our lives.

J: I think have a school where we are a pre-K to 12 community is a special opportunity. Children of all ages are under the same roof and you also have a small school you have sense that we are a family here.
Follow up Questions for Iris

Innovative Charter School

Beth and I have a schedule for classes. I mostly follow mine -- I mostly meet one-on-one with kids who are most needy. I also have special little art projects at my table with kids who are "free." Beth has a schedule and mostly follows it but being that a schedule is linear, she sometimes does not follow it if she "gets on a roll" with something she is doing with her group. However she has really gotten better at it. The schedule also has been arranged to try to accommodate her non-linear thinking in that she is scheduled with her research group all morning three days a week. Lunch seems to be a natural break. That way if she takes them she won't keep them from other classes. As I said, it mostly works. Teachers do interrupt when they need to --- and we interrupt them when necessary. If it's something that can wait and is lengthy, we'll talk before or after school. Just as an example, Ms. G (nurse/health teacher) asked me about ordering some teaching videos when I was teaching on Friday. Are the teachers feeling a need to ask us more questions or talk with us more? Did this come out in their interviews with you? I am wondering because you seem to be concerned you mentioned this before. We also communicate via phone and mailboxes. I called C at home yesterday to tell her about an opportunity she might be interested in. I put a note with info about a workshop for Hoover in his mailbox Friday, asked him to look it over to see if he wanted to go. He did and registered himself. By the way, I wrote a letter to the staff this week. Remind me to give you a copy. E-mail me your address or fax # and I'll send it. Happy holidays. Iris

I think the "magic" you speak of is probably our small number of staff, our small number of students. What do administrators usually spend their time on:

Discipline: When we interview teachers, we tell them that they MUST conform to our rules of discipline so that the entire staff can be consistent. If they cannot conform, we frankly move to get rid of them. We rarely have had to deal with discipline problems although we have occasionally. We have no "principals office" for kids to go to. Beth doesn't take students all day sometimes so she monitors a lot.

State paperwork: I am almost always late turning this in. Sometimes I work on this in the office on weekday mornings until 10:30 and sometimes on Saturday. Ms. L does the daily attendance stuff and lunch money stuff.

DOE Meetings: I try to go to these but sometimes I can't.

Parents: We try to talk to parents and solve any problems immediately when parents come in or when they call. If we can't, they make an appointment. My interview with the families one-on-one in the spring/summer before they arrive in September cuts out a lot of this I think because I try to be very clear about the behavioral and academic expectations. Beth is an expert in dealing with student discipline and crazy parents.

Does this help? What else do administrators do? I'll tell you how we get it done.

I'll fax you the staff letter tomorrow. Iris

Oh, a decision we made: We had to move a child to another desk one morning because of problems. It turned out to be a three way move. I made a suggestion, Beth agreed and it seems to have been a good thing. Not exciting eh?
Innovative Charter School Website Text

Innovative Charter is one of more than 1,700 charter schools nationwide established to promote innovation in public education. Each school adopts its own educational philosophy. At Innovative Charter, the curriculum features basic skills mandated by the State Board of Education but the students learn how these skills apply to real life careers through the exploration of sewing, weaving, horticulture, mechanical engineering, architecture, multi-media technology, and other areas of specialty.

The progressive nature of Innovative Charter is a direct reflection of its co-founders and co-leaders, Beth Terra and Iris Alc. An educator for more than 30 years, Ms. Beth says she's never taught anything the same way twice. "I believe in the discovery method of teaching where kids use their own innate talents to understand the world around them. They learn by asking and pursuing their own questions," she says.

Opening its doors for the first time in 1999, the Innovative Charter School already has a waiting list. While the school itself is new to the Newark community, it's innovative, hands-on teaching style has long benefited local schools through KIDS-IN-BUSINESS®, which was started in 1987 to better prepare students for the workplace. Since then hundreds of children, K-12, have explored the working world, including making and selling products such as calendars, greeting cards and other handmade items. (Proceeds are donated to local charities.) Today KIDS-IN-BUSINESS® programs are also key components to Innovative Charter's curriculum. In addition, KIDS IN BUSINESS® continues to operate as an outreach program to other local schools and community centers.

Kids In Business part of a Jersey Cares Website - All year long, chilk bookmarks, note cards and gift bags. Proceeds from the business are donated to youth-selected City charities, and saved in an endowment. Each April, KIB sells some of the artwork at its Annual Art Auction. Volunteers will be helping the Innovative Charter School's Kids in B
Follow up Questions for Iris

Innovative Charter School

Beth and I have a schedule for classes. I mostly follow mine -- I mostly meet one-on-one with kids who are most needy. I also have little art projects at my table with kids who are "free." Beth has a schedule and mostly follows it but being that a schedule is linear, she sometimes does not follow it if she "gets on a roll" with something she's doing with her group. However she has really gotten better at it. Th schedule also has been arranged to try to accomodate her non linear in that she is scheduled with her researqch group all morning three c weeks. Lunch seems to be a natural break. That way if she takes her break from other classes. As I said, it mostly works. Teachers can interrupt when they need to --- and we interrupt them when necessary something that can wait and is lengthy, we'll talk before or after sch. Just as an example, Ms. G (nurse/health teacher) asked me about some teaching videos when I was teaching on Friday. Are the teachers need to ask us more questions or talk with us more? Did this come up in their interviews with you? I am wondering because you seem to be interested in. I put a note with info about a workshop for Hoover mailbox Friday, asked him to look it over to see if he wanted to go and register himself. By the way, I wrote a letter to the staff this v. Remind me to give you a copy. E-mail me your address or fax # an it. Happy holidays. Iris

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Goal and Objectives
Describe the broad academic goals of the charter school which will promote high achievement.

The Innovative Charter School does not intend to develop skills in isolation, but rather develop them through students' active participation in a mini-social community that involves entrepreneurship, community service, scientific and mathematical inquiry, speaking, reading and writing in both English and Spanish, and solving real world problems past and present.

Goal: Students will become productive Citizens and Workers
Students will take ownership of their learning and the school by attending daily community meetings and taking on leadership and teaching roles in the school.
Mission Statement-SCS

The mission of the SCS reflects our belief that a successful educational experience only take when attention is given to the development of the whole child— a break w traditional concept of schooling. We envision a community composed of learners ages that fosters a supportive interdependence, where individuals can grow in a nu compassionate environment that reflects the history and diversity of the larger Serv Community.

Students thrive when expectations are clear and consistent at all levels, and when t known personally, not only by their peers, but by the entire school community. In a pre-K – 12 school the values underlying a student’s education do not vary as the chi progresses. This makes the transition from elementary through high school more fl allowing each step to build more solidly on the preceding one.

Our school brings together students of all ages and abilities in a spirit of collabor inquiry and understanding that is driven by the unique talents and abilities of all of members. The value to young students of seeing older students achieve and enjoy learning cannot be overstated. This relationship provides younger students with a concrete lesson on the benefits of working hard and achieving goals. Older student sense of pride and accomplishment through their work as role models.

This positive reinforcement is consistent with our theme of service learning. Throu community service experience, problem identification, action, and evaluation, and through ongoing personal reflection, students becoming contributing members of the school community, the community of Service and beyond.

This orientation to action is modeled by the Service Charter School staff, who are dedicated professionals engaged in the process of continual observation, reflection, assessment. Through their participation in a school-based teacher-as-researcher pr teachers not only gain insight into the pursuit of understanding and the practice of teaching, but redefine their roles as educators, researchers, and policy makers. See through the lens of educational research, teaching becomes transformative for the i the school and the whole school system.

As a public institution, we welcome parents and community members as partners i education of Service Charter School students and encourage them to utilize the resources of the school as a site for their own lifelong learning.
Upper School Advisory Groups
Service Charter School

Advisory at the Service Charter School is a step above the general guidance model. Advisory classes meet at least two times each week. As students enter Service Charter School, they are placed in Advisory groups consisting of approximately 10 student members. A few exceptions to these students will remain as a cohesively group for four years. The same teacher remains with them for the duration. This allows for one member to follow closely the overall (i.e. emotional, academic, developmental) progress of a small group of students. When teachers enter advisory class, they take on a dual role, approximating that of a guidance staff. In addition to this role, an advisor also serves as a liaison between parent, teacher, and student. Twice yearly (fall, spring) the advisors meet or teleconferences with parents of their advisees to discuss academic progress, the development of the student's individualized plan. If there is an emotional/social concern, the advisor can be referred to support services staff.

Each advisory group has an individual appearance, shape and form, but each grade has common themes that are addressed in a variety of ways throughout the year. A fundamental goal of advisory is team-building which allows for positive peer influence and support. Group discussions might examine current events in relationship to the concerns. The advisory curriculum is purposely flexible to allow students to have a voice of expression for any issues that are impeding their progress in life. Important life issues that often escape a heavy academic curriculum are acknowledged and expressed in advisory.

During the advisory periods, students have access to their faculty advisor to discuss everything from academic issues to personal or social problems. The period is run as a planned discussion and/or activity. Topics addressed have included: team building, time management, college planning, substance abuse awareness, conflict resolution, sex education, community and trust building, and fun and games.

Approximately once every other week, each faculty member meets with his/her advisee on one-on-one basis for a "check-in." During the check-in, the student can discuss issues that he/she may not be comfortable discussing in a group setting. Our students have found this time greatly. During check-ins, students ask questions and discuss topics most important to their daily lives. For the faculty, advisory also serves an important function. Through advisory, teachers get to know their students on a very profound basis. Through this partnership, teachers are able to foster a tremendous of trust and a sense of community within the individual advisory groups. These relationships translate well across the daily schedule. It is important for advisors to remember that when sensitive information is exchanged during advisory, the advisor should take advantage of the expertise of the School Social Worker when a student appears to be in or at-risk for crisis.

Our developing student government, the Student Advisory Council, is an outgrowth of advisory. Each advisory selects two representatives to represent the advisory on the council. The Council meets once a week. At the mid-point and end of each trimester council conducts a town meeting to address school-wide issues. At the town meeti advisories will be informed of the results of that month's Student Incentive Plan.
Physical Education

The Jersey Journal

Jen: Our goal is to get the kids fit for life and to be well balanced. For the younger student the goal is to weave noncompetitive physical activity and learning together. I talk to so many people when we were creating the school who just had bad experiences and hated gym. That kind of compulsory participation is really artificial in life. Some people, like my husband, say it's good to toughen kids up and let them experience competition, loss, say it's more important for them to learn how to solve problems and work with others, no against them. And can't we save our kids from the public humiliation of being the last one picked for teams in gym? There's plenty of time in life to feel the pain of defeat and rejection, why rush it?
Music at Service Charter School

We believe music constitutes a fundamental component of basic education, whose primary purpose is to develop the affective domain, foster cultural literacy, and provide the opportunity to develop social, intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual potential necessary to perpetuate and improve our community. A productive community member must be able to gather, comprehend, analyze, and apply information in order to make relevant critical judgments in developing the product or performance. The purpose of music courses is to strengthen and build community; identify and develop the unique musical talents possessed by individual students; enhance the students' sense of personal worth and self-esteem; provide the opportunity for success; and bring enjoyment to learning through a heightened musical awareness, creating a desire to make music a lifelong learning process. By recognizing each student's unique potential, we will become effective partners in the educational process with students, parents, teachers, business, and the community.
The school's founders and faculty believe that a community composed of learners of all ages builds a spirit of collaboration that is a necessary part of a successful educational experience. Students at the Service Charter School identify community problems, design, implement, and evaluate action plans; and engage in ongoing personal reflection. Through these experiences, students become active, contributing members of the school community, the city of Service and beyond. The ideas that drive the SCS - learner-centered service learning in a multi-age community - allow us to create an academically intense environment in an inclusive setting. We are deeply committed to our vision of a school in which all members of the Service community feel welcome and are invested in the development of Service's youth. For the second consecutive year, Service Charter School was named for excellence in service learning by the Corporation for National Service. This Presidential Award recognizes outstanding school that combine academics with community service in a way that benefits students, teachers, civic responsibility, and strengthens communities.
The Service Charter School Culture

-excerpts from a 10th grade students Sophomore Exhibition distributed with other school literature

This school has a strong sense of unity. It’s like a family. I have learned that since I’m part of a family my actions have a lot more impact than I thought they did. This school is so small that you can really see the affects of your behavior and decisions you make. It is a powerful responsibility. You have to really think before you do anything because you are a significant part of the community and what you could do to alter it. It’s not a bad thing, though. Being in such a small school let’s you have a lot of power when it comes to affecting change, making important decision and making your ideas heard. In this school I feel important. Everyone feels important because everyone is. Every one is important to each other, the teachers, the people involved with SCS and the growth and success of the school. That’s what community is all about. Everyone is of equal importance because we are one. Another unique thing this school does is present problems that we have in today’s society and have us deal with them. We deal with real life whether we know it or not. The messages are sometimes hidden within certain projects or activities but they’re there. I’m sorry to say this, but the problems we have today are most likely going to still be there when we’re all adults. Because of this school we will have had dealt with them now. They’re getting our feet wet because soon it will be our turn to try to make the world a better place.
A Day in the Life of the Service Charter School

From early morning until late afternoon, students and teachers envelop themselves in an educational process that cannot be confined to the time between bells, or compartmentalized into rigid subject headings, or segregated by age or grade. It is an experience that builds connections between areas of knowledge, between students and teachers, between the school and the family and between those communities and the world beyond. In a biology seminar, students are learning about the ecosystem by working with professors at Steven's Institute of Technology who are conducting a research project in the Hudson River. Today, the students have formed a committee that will organize a town forum for researchers, others in the school system, and people in the community to discuss the ecological implications of the project.
E-mail exchange with Iris

Would you give me a metaphor for Innovative Charter School?
Iris: ICS is like a huge and
very busy family because:
we do stuff together around the kitchen table
we have family jokes
we have some crazy family members but they're still family,
we're trying to respect each other and not bump into each other as we
through the day
there's never enough sinks or toilets
the students remind the adults about putting the pasta in on Thursday
mornings and bringing the trash cans out for lunch
we have discussions on topics we're all familiar with
we have family routines and individual responsibilities,
if children misbehave, they are banished to their "rooms" until further
notice.
We're trying to live and learn together the best way we know how,
kids grow up and leave, hopefully with a solid foundation...
we stay in contact with kids after they leave...

Beth shared that ICS is like a tinkering think tank because you can ac
and think with things.

I went to the DOE training on curriculum.
Informal Field Notes

Innovative Charter School

Staff Days

7 teachers with Beth and Iris sitting around big table:
T=teacher B=Beth I=Iris

B: Is there another time you could give the pre-test?
T: I have a suggestion, would you have a problem doing it at 4:00?
B: The only problem is that's too much motion for me. If I had a preference I would do it at 4:15.
T: How about (suggests another option)
B: Too much happening, there are a whole bunch of parents
T: But we have classes
B: Kids that don't finish
I: That's just try it - see what I'm saying, there has to be some kind of consequence for coming in late. I will try to monitor the kids that come in late.
Irene returns to table
Group laughter about a situation without a timer
I: What did you just decide? Will someone be mailing a schedule? Let's review for a minute all of our decisions. We're going to purchase folders, we're going to purchase these, we're going to implement a schedule of which days work on which days
B: Kids that don't finish
I: I'm doing it... We're going to purchase two containers for every desk, a system so that every kid has same desk, a recycling period every Friday morning, teachers put all tests in folders for every Friday morning, pupils will have a due date. Mr. T will talk to, I'm doing all this from memory, anything else we've decided on?
B: Yeah, tests have to be to secretary
I: When does she need those things?
B: No, no the secretary
I: Yes, everyone runs off their own, I take care of Spanish, I give it to secretary.
B: But the secretary will only run off three
I: That's between us and the secretary
B: No, that's a group issue, do you follow what I am saying
I: I will take responsibility for setting up these,
T: I like the smaller folders.
I: I will take responsibility for ordering. Anything else? Any more words of wisdom? When I do my story at the end of the day I will remind them.
B: We're all in this together.
I: What time is it? I don't want you to keel over from hunger, will you make it?
(Meeting continues after lunch)
I: Do you think I can do this in ten minutes
B: Yeah
Irene goes to finish up the grant
Teacher presents list of students o.k'd for field trips
B: We all decide who won't go
T: This is just my list of who could go
B: Be careful, she acts out differently on a trip. I wouldn't
T: I was not all together sanguine about putting her on. (passes list to other teachers to cross off names)

Meeting resumes 40 minutes after agreed upon time
I: (to staff) Did you do your headlines on the survey?
B: Why don't you do it right now?
I: We can't we have too much to do, I'd like to skip to number four on the agenda and
back to the interdisciplinary units another time.
Descriptive reviews - Each teacher shares examples of the work of the four designated students. A protocol is followed to share objectively what they see. Irene facilitates asking probing questions and recording on the easel. Barbara left for this one hour discussion.
1. Taking these observations what are the applications for teaching and learning? Teachers share ideas.
1. It sounds like you are saying that he needs a tactile and visual approach.
informal interview with Beth

I always visualize what I am going to do. I visualized this school a long time ago. I figured out how to do the engineering project. I met Dean Camin a long time ago and I showed him my Lego idea. He talked to me about a contest. I don't like contests because you looked at my kids' machines, if we said o.k., your machine wins, it sends the wrong message. How can we do what we do and have something like America First without competition? I asked myself, how can I take the integrity of what I believe in and we require teams with all the kids working together. That's the key, no winner, no loser. They have to figure out how to work together to solve a problem. How are you working with someone? I won't tolerate certain things. You can add a kid to a team who maybe a good thinker or a good writer and they work as a team. These are the behaviors I was if you don't behave you can be replaced. Your team will not be disqualified but you will be because of your behavior.
Follow up interview - Jen

Teacher run school - what was envisioned and how it was interpreted were completely different. We wanted teachers to be involved on every level from policy making to answering phones. We wanted them to see that we are all in this together. We tried to get them involved in the process, we wanted teachers at the table when we discussed thing with the board. They didn't want to go to board meetings so we created the Teacher Leadership Committee (TLC) with the hope that teachers would really be involved. Instead it became a real negative. It is more like a grievance committee, a place you go gripe about the administration. A couple of people were really unhappy in the first year and they created a really negative teachers' survey with questions like Do you feel like you have the resources you need to teach all of your students, or do you feel like your job is ever done?

Sarah's role: It is not totally defined and she is sometimes stuck in the middle between Matt and me and she is swayed by both of our opinions. But she is the affective and we are more about the ideas. We move too fast sometimes and she helps us see how the teachers will receive it. She is more about the way people will receive information, not about the life of the teachers.
Interview with Beth

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Informal Interview with Sarah

How do you see the roles of Matt and Jen?
How we truly are and how we are seen by the staff are not the same thing. The kind of leader I am striving to be and the kind of leader the staff wants me to be are not at all the same. As far as the roles we have with one another, Jen is the cheerleader sometimes, sometimes the hard ass. She is more hard and fast and will say wait a second, why are we even having this conversation? She gets whipped up (upset) more often like she will, come at 9:00 and say can you believe this is happening. She doesn't do it as much as the first year. Matt's role is to be the relativist, not wishy-washy, but he will allow more wiggle room. He can see a situation and move that line. He doesn't take things to heart much. He is convinced that if he just talks about it long enough eventually he can convince someone. For me, not for Jen, he is the decision driver. Jen and I take little things to heart. Matt gets more upset if someone doesn't buy into the philosophy. We upset from the little things. He doesn't take things personally the way we do. Does the have anything to do with gender? We talk about the role gender plays. Sometimes we want Matt to get more upset in concert with us. There are times, one incident stands out in my mind. The teachers in the leadership team had written a biased survey and I went them to ask them to make the questions more neutral. They wouldn't listen to me. Matt came in and used my exact words and they changed the survey, just like that. I'm not good at saying we have to do this right now. This is how it is, period.

If you were to choose the reason for your responsibilities from experience, education, interest, talent, value, which would be the reason you are responsible for the middle school and special education? Definitely not education or interest or experience have most of my experience in the high school. The middle school is what was available No one else had the time and that was what was needed. My favorite quote is the one that my wall about the greatest changes are made by people... the most important piece to is the way teaching happens in the classroom. I would spend two days a week in the classrooms observing. To me this is what matters, everything else should grow from it! I don't get to spend enough time doing what I love with instruction.