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How Does a Principal Use Intention and Strategy in the Enactment of Advocacy Leadership

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in the Enactment of Advocacy Leadership?

by

Lisa Grant

Dedication

To Cory

Acknowledgments

Learning is a journey and this doctoral journey has helped me grow in ways I never imagined. I could not have accomplished this goal without the support and encouragement of so many people.

Sincere thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Leonard Burrello for your support, guidance, and encouragement. You had confidence in my work when I did not and relentlessly kept me moving forward. Thank you to the remaining committee members, Dr. William Black, Dr. David Hoppey, and Dr. Jeannie Kleinhammer-Tramill for your encouragement and critique as well as your time and effort on my behalf. I am grateful to you all.

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Abstract

District and school leadership are essential to the success of our students and our schools. While extensive conceptual literature describes leadership characteristics, there are few empirical studies that address the daily reality of schools. In addition, additional research is needed describing how principals maneuver within the context of schools and school districts. This phenomenological study explored how one elementary school principal understands and enacts leadership and to what extent she employs intentional strategies to facilitate change. The purpose of the study was to offer a rich profile of one elementary school principal's practice to understand how a principal constructs meaning, deploys action, and employs strategies to affect change. The results reveal this principal uses vision, the intentional strategies of expectations, modeling, decision-making processes, reflection, authentic conversations, and stories to facilitate change within her school. In addition, she maintains a human resource focus establishing relationships and building capacity in others as leadership strategies. The principal did not employ the same intention or strategies in relationship to the district or community, however. Results further indicated the district is also acting as a barrier to the implementation of leadership for change. Results of this study have implications for practitioners and future research. Practitioners can employ similar strategies as well as gaining awareness of the importance employing intention and political skill with the district. The results also highlight the need for additional leadership research as well as research investigating the role of the district in support of schools.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As the principal of a diverse, low-income elementary school with a history and reputation for underachievement, I grappled daily with the issues of transforming a school. My ongoing leadership dilemma was how to function in the bureaucracy of a large urban school district while transforming the culture and beliefs about students in my elementary school to positively affect the culture of the school and adult and student learning. Coming from recent experiences in a Northwestern state in smaller districts that operated much differently, I often found myself tangled in the demands of district, and deficit views of many in and outside the school system about our students. School life was a continual struggle. I attempted to implement, in collaboration with our staff, the various programs assigned or advocated by the district, only to realize they did not achieve the sustainable change in practice, belief or student achievement I envisioned the school needed. I discussed my frustrations with other principals, only to find they were experiencing similar phenomena in their schools. So the question that emerged for me to consider in this research was: how do effective principals lead transformational change by creating conditions that meet the needs of diverse students and their teachers to achieve their full potential and to be prepared for their future. I knew my role as principal was critical, but managing the intensity of the daily work while creating the needed change was exhausting. As I began my doctoral studies in Educational Leadership, I searched for how to develop my leadership and how to engage the school in successful change.

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The literature clearly identifies the importance of school leadership to a school's success (Theoharis, 2009). While classroom teachers are critical to student learning, principals are also significant to school success. Of the factors schools control, principal leadership is second only to the teachers' influence in classrooms (May & Supovitz, 2010). Principal leadership has a measureable, indirect impact upon student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2004). Classroom teachers impact student learning through direct contact with students. While principals do not work directly with students in the same way as classroom teachers, they do impact student achievement. Research continues to disentangle how instructional leadership and other leadership dimensions influence student achievement and school effectiveness (May & Supovitz, 2010): it is critical that we understand how leaders impact student achievement and school success. As an individual principal, the weight of influencing the school's outcomes in a positive manner weighed heavy. I had a clear vision of what the school was capable of achieving, but I had less clarity regarding how to realize that vision. As I researched the literature on school based leadership, it confirmed the importance of the principal's role and deepened my understanding of what a school leader needed to address in order to achieve success. The literature indicates the importance of moving theory into practice (Fullan, 2010), and conceptualizing the role of the principal (Theoharis, 2009), but gives less direction about how to accomplish it. We know a principal is critical to a school's success, but we know less about how leadership for positive school change is accomplished. This was my personal dilemma and constant tension within my work as a building principal. If sustainable change is to be realized, the role of the principal must be re-conceptualized (Theoharis, 2009).

Previous conceptions of leadership (Rost, 1991) have framed an effective leader as being the individual in a position with a particular title that directs others. Effective leadership was

previously understood as good management. This conception was based upon the industrial perspective of school leadership (Rost, 1991) equating good management with good leadership.

Principals have been perceived as bureaucrats (Cuban, 1972), agents of the school board at the school site responsible for the school's management and curriculum and instruction. The role of principal as manager, however, is inadequate (Rost, 1991). To influence student learning, leadership beyond management is needed. The leader must intentionally and deliberately work to affect change (Anderson, 2009), to transform the school into an organization that justly and equitably serves the needs of every student. The work of leading change for improved student learning is messy and complex (Shields, 2004), but it is also critical to a school's success (Blasé & Kirby, 2000).

In the early 1990's Rost (1991) called for a post-industrial description of leadership as an adequate conception of leadership to affect change. The context of schools and reform has changed since the early 1990s and the post-industrial era. The concept of leadership has evolved and expanded in order to respond to the ever more complex demands of the educational context (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011). The educational reform movement, based upon a business model and high stakes accountability, requires skilled leadership able to maneuver accountability requirements and meet student needs. The roles and responsibilities of leaders are growing and leaders must possess the skill to promote authenticity and advocacy for an equitable system for every student in an effort to achieve gains in student achievement (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011). If principals are to have the impact known to be essential to a school's success, it is imperative that the role of the principal includes the facilitation of change in order to continually improve and create socially just, academically successful schools (Shields, 2010). Advocacy transformative leadership (Anderson, 2009), a political perspective of leadership founded in

transformational leadership that embodies social justice leadership and attempts to create socially

just schools through authenticity and advocacy, is needed. The leader works to empower others

in order to change conditions and structures that oppress some and fail to serve the needs of all

students (Foster, 1986). The leader does not simply manage others, but creates an environment

where power is shared and conditions are questioned and challenged through discourse, struggle

and risk-taking (Foster, 1986), thus creating transformation within the school.

One of the complexities of change results from the politics within the organization.

Schools are political organizations (Ball, 1987) and as such, the study of leadership and change

must include the study of micro-politics within schools. As I negotiated the complexities of

change in my own school, it was critically apparent that neglecting to understand and negotiate

the politics within both the district and school would result in quick failure of any initiative for

change. Each individual within the school community had needs and worked to satisfy their

needs while protecting their resources and power. This same tension operated between the

school and district as well. These interactions were dynamic and required constant attention and

negotiation on my part. I continually analyzed how to maneuver the dynamics among and

between individuals and groups in order to best serve our students' needs. I came to realize the

importance of both leaders and followers to a school's success. I also realized understanding the

micro-politics of reform is necessary in order to facilitate change (Anderson, 2009). In addition,

the use of power and influence was an integral part of action. There was no getting away from

the politics of the school. In fact, I needed to embrace the political context and use it to support

change that served students' needs.

Organizations are inherently political and change is inherently political (Malen, 1995).

Therefore, an effective leader must not only understand the politics of the organization, but must

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also understand how to maneuver within the micro-political context in order to successfully facilitate change.

The Research Problem

Principal leadership is crucial to a school's success as principals drive change in a school (Byrk, 2010). How a principal drives that change in the context of the individual district and school, however, is not apparent in the literature. A principal is essential to a school's success, but little is known about the daily behaviors and actions of effective principals (Blasé & Kirby, 2000) that lead to transformation. The literature consists predominantly of lists of characteristics possessed by principals or perceptions others have of leadership characteristics needed (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Rallis & Militello, 2010). The use of power and influence within the micro-political context is important, but not enough is known about how it happens effectively in schools. Both the study of leadership and the study of the micro-politics within leadership are important areas of study. While these areas of study are critical aspects of research, the leadership studies and leadership books do not give leaders a description of how to enact leadership (Rallis & Militello, 2010). This is an important, yet missing, aspect of leadership research. Principals need descriptions of the day-to-day enactment of leadership to inform what they can do to create change; "to set new goals and bring about some change of direction or some improvement in performance" (Rost, 1991, p. 87) that positively affects student learning.

This void in the literature is evidence of the gap between leadership theory and leadership practice. Leadership has been an extensive topic of study, but tends to be the most studied and least understood topic in the social sciences (Middlehurst, 2008). In the 1940s the study of educational administration, of leadership, was based on a positivist perspective and a technical rational approach (Riehl, Larson, Short & Reitzug, 2000). Leadership was perceived as

predictable and research was designed to be generalizable. The intent of research was to create laws and concepts that could be applied in multiple contexts. The realization that this perspective of leadership was not useful or applicable to practitioners became evident (Riehl, et al., 2000) during the 1970s. Leadership is not predictable or stable and thus, leaders needed more than theories or laws. Leadership continued, however, to be studied as an industrial concept (Rost, 1991). With the shift to the post-industrial context of the 1980s, leadership was transitioning, but leadership studies continued to focus on an industrial perspective (Rost, 1991). Thus, the gap between theory and practice continued and the theory failed to adequately inform practice. The reform era of the 1980s focused on the power of the leader over followers (Blasé & Blasé, 1996). In the 1990s the shift in reform began to focus on teacher leadership and teacher empowerment (Blasé & Blasé, 1996). The majority of the research continued, however, to list characteristics rather than descriptions of how empowerment was facilitated or the micro-politics involved in the transition of a leader's power over to power with teachers.

We are now in another, what Anderson (2009) coins "post-reform" era. The reform era has not produced the intended changes in student achievement. Leadership that transforms schools for children as well as righting the inequities within the larger system and society is needed if we are to serve students' needs and create more just schools. Anderson (2009) labels this Advocacy leadership. Shields (2011, 2012) terms it Transformative leadership.

Leadership is complex and unstable, and thus constructed through meaning making (Anderson, 2009). Leadership is socially constructed (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) and so, principals make sense of their worlds of work as it is constructed (Riehl, et al. 2000). Therefore, theoretical knowledge is insufficient to guide leader's action. What is needed is a connection

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between theory and action (Middlehurst, 2008). Practical research is needed that informs leaders of action to facilitate change.

It is critical that practitioners have the schema and the narrative describing how to implement leadership, but practitioners tend to gain little from the work of scholars and theorists (Hoyle, 1999). Theory and practice must inform each other (Fullan, 2010; Hoyle, 1999).   It is a complex challenge due to the complex nature of leadership (Shields, 2004). Each context is unique and leadership is dynamic, happening with the constant decisions, priorities, and competing interests being negotiated simultaneously (Middlehurst, 2008). Rich description of leadership will inform both theory and practice. In addition to the currently existing scholarship, practitioners need the stories of how to implement leadership for school transformation.

Leadership is political, yet micro-politics is not often used as an integral aspect in the study of individual leaders or schools (Brosky, 2009; Hoyle, 1999). The literature is lacking regarding how leaders effectively lead within a dynamic political context (Blasé & Kirby, 2000). There is a gap in the literature: the "what" has been studied and identified in the conceptual literature, but the "how" is less clear, although critical, to a leader's and a school's success. We know the principal is important to school success and to change, but know less about how leadership for change is enacted or about the micro-politics of change within a school. These are often neglected, yet critical components of leadership and change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to offer a profile of how a principal enacts leadership within the political context of the school and district by studying one elementary school principal's daily practice in order to understand how a principal constructs meaning and deploys action to facilitate change.

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Research Questions

Principal leadership is essential to a school's success, but there is limited research about how effective leadership is operationalized on a daily basis. There is a need to understand the daily enactment of leadership within a micro-political context to inform principals' practice and to build the practical knowledge base of leadership. Based upon the gap revealed in the literature review, the following research questions inform theory and practice: How does an elementary school principal understand and enact leadership on a day-to-day basis? To what extent does a school principal intentionally utilize political skill and tactics to facilitate change within a school?

Significance of the Study

There is a gap in the research between theory and practice describing how leaders effectively enact leadership in order to create change. In addition, there are missing elements within the current literature. Not only is there a theory-practitioner gap about how to intentionally lead for change, there is limited research about how school-based leaders effectively navigate and employ political strategies within a school and district. While these gaps exist, building the knowledge about leadership is important to sustainable change that changes the conditions of learning for students rather than simply achieving short-term improvements (Kozleski & Smith, 2009). An understanding and knowledge gap will continue to hinder change. Additional research is important to further development of leadership theory and practitioner knowledge.

The success of a principal is embedded within the day-to-day enactment of leadership (Rallis & Militello, 2010). Effective leaders are intentional and purposeful, employing a thoughtful, reflective theory of action. Less is known, however, about how this theory plays out

in the day-to-day life of a principal and a school. If the day-to-day practice of a principal is studied (Rallis & Militello, 2010), the understanding and analysis of leadership can inform practice.

The context of schooling and leadership as well as traditional ways of leading schools has changed (Anderson, 2009; Wasonga, 2009) and is ineffective for today's educational context and agenda. School leaders are mediators of people, structures and institutions, and ideas both within and without the school (Anderson, 2009). This mediation must occur in a current context of accountability, the economic context of the school district and community, and changing federal, state and local policies placed upon leaders, teachers, and students. Within this context, the leader must facilitate continual improvement that improves outcomes for students. These current policies tend to be punitive, making the job of creating and sustaining effective schools more challenging. There is extensive literature regarding transformative and other perspectives of leadership, but there is limited empirical literature about how leadership is operationalized (Shields, 2010). The leadership in education has tended to analyze and assess the importance of leadership, but has included much less about how that leadership is effectively enacted (Storey, 2004). Therefore, study of the leadership practices enacted to transform schools is needed (Wasonga, 2009).

In addition to the study of how leadership is enacted when effective, the study and understanding of the micro-politics of leadership and of schools is critical to the survival and success of school leaders (Lindle, 1999).   For leadership to be effective the leader must understand the politics of human interaction and behavior (Gunter, 2006) as part of understanding the aspects of power and conflict between individuals and groups of individuals (Storey, 2004). While there are few empirical studies about the operationalization of effective

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leadership, there are also few empirical studies about the micro-politics at play in schools (Anderson, 2009; Malen & Cochran, 2008; Theoharis, 2009). Leaders need real descriptions (Rallis & Militello, 2010) about how to effectively lead in order to impact student success and affect sustainable change that results in the transformation of schools.

There is no one method or quick fix for schools or school leadership. It is complex and dynamic context (Middlehurst, 2008). The complex and dynamic nature of leadership and change in schools necessitates extensive study in order to inform practice. This study intends to contribute to that needed knowledge.

Additionally, a study of thirty years of dissertations focused on leadership revealed that, while studied extensively and large in number, these studies contributed little to the leadership knowledge base (Hallinger, 2010). This study attempts to make a meaningful contribution by offering the practitioner a description of how leadership is enacted through a framework of advocacy leadership that includes the micro-politics of schools, thus helping to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Principal leadership is essential to a school's success, but there is limited research about how effective leadership is operationalized on a daily basis. There is a need to understand the daily enactment of leadership within a micro-political context to inform principals' practice and to build the practical knowledge base of leadership. Based upon the gap revealed in the literature review, the following research questions inform theory and practice: How does an elementary school principal understand and enact leadership on a day-to-day basis? To what extent does a school principal intentionally utilize political strategies and tactics to facilitate change within a school?

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design in analysis of one principal's enactment of leadership. The phenomenological framework facilitates the understanding of the phenomena through the words of the participant (Groenewald, 2004).

Data was collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with the principal. Semi-structured interviews allow for intentional and responsive questioning. In addition to the principal interviews, snowball sampling was used to identify other potential interview participants. While the study focused on the daily enactment of one principal's leadership, the additional participant interviews added insight into the principal's daily work. All interviews were audio recorded and field notes were collected during the interviews. The field note memoing process allows the interviewer to capture the body language, facial expression and other insights that are not captured in the voice recording (Cresswell, 2009). They facilitate the researcher's ability to collect full data about what is said and what is happening during the interview process, while allowing the researcher to gain the fullest possible description of what is said, seen and heard (Groenewald, 2004). Four types of notes were collected: observation notes, theoretical notes, methodological notes, and analytical notes (Groenewald, 2004). A researcher reflection journal was an additional piece of data. A researcher reflection journal allows the researcher to deepen understanding of the researcher's role, enhance the understanding of the participants, communicate with participants and help the researcher know him or her self (Janesick, 2011). In this study, the reflection journal enhanced the researcher's ability to understand the data, understand the participant, and understand her self as a researcher. This

provided an additional data set to make deeper meaning of the research and the research process (Janesick, 2011).

The data analysis process converts the collected data into understanding of the phenomena studied (Cresswell, 2009), in this case, the enactment of leadership by a school principal. The analytical process employed in this study was a spiral approach (Cresswell, 2009) of data management, reading and memoing, describing and clarifying, and representing and visualizing. In addition, horizontal and vertical analysis (Carspecken, 1996) was conducted in order to deeply and completely understand the data. Vertical analysis identifies foreground and background claims in the data. These claims are also categorized as either objective claims, subjective claims, or normative/evaluative claims (Carspecken, 1996). Horizontal analysis allows the researcher to create meaning objectively, subjectively, and normatively. The combination of the spiral analysis with the vertical and horizontal analysis allowed for the most complete and thorough analysis of the data and thus, the phenomena of this principal's leadership.

The research design did have limitations. Only one participant in one leadership context was deeply studied, so the ability to generalize the results to other contexts is limited. The findings were by the researcher's ability to build a trusting relationship with the participant and the researcher's ability to bracket self from the data.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, these definitions were used for the following terms:

- Advocacy Leadership: Transformative leadership: advocacy leadership is a politicized view of leadership (Anderson, 2009) through a social justice perspective and the realization that schools are political entities. It purposes to create just and equitable schools and a just and equitable society.

- Leadership: The definition of leadership has various conceptualizations (Bass, 2008; Foster, 1986), but for purposes here it is conceptualized as a moral endeavor (Sergiovanni, 2007) and occurs within the political context of the organization (Malen & Cochran, 2008). It is "the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons of certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers" (Burns, 1978, p. 425).

- Micro-politics: There is no agreement in the literature of a single definition (Malen & Cochran, 2008) of micro-politics. Micro-politics deals with the reality of life in schools and is concerned with how individuals or groups of individuals use power to influence other and to protect themselves (Mawhinney, 1999). It is the strategies these individuals or groups employ in an organization to influence others and to further their own interests (Hoyle, 1982). It involves the acquisition, development and use of power, both formally and informally (Blasé & Anderson, 1995), and resources to achieve desire outcomes (Hoyle, 1982). Micro-politics involves both conflict and cooperation (Blasé & Anderson, 1995) and involves how power operates in a school and how it influences the school and the school's outcomes (Anderson, 2009).

- Power: "The ability to get others to do what you want them to do, or the probability that one actor in a relationship will be able to carryout his or her will" (Hoy & Miskel, 1996, p. 171).

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- Social Justice Leadership: Social Justice Leadership is another difficult term to define with no single, agreed upon definition in the literature (Radd, 2008). Social justice leadership encompasses the advocacy, leading and focus of practice and vision on issues of race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation and other historically and currently marginalized populations (Theoharis, 2008).

- Transactional Leadership: Leadership based exchange relationships between leaders and followers (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). One thing is exchanged for another and the relationship between leaders and followers are based upon the transactions between the two parties (Burns, 1978).

- Transformational Leadership: Leadership oriented and focused on fundamental change (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). Leadership is "the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers." (Burns, 1978, p. 425). The transformational leader has the ability to get followers do more and do it better than they imagined possible (Bass, 1985) and raises the level of consciousness of both the leader and the follower (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). Individuals transcend their own interests for the interests of the team or organization, resulting in fundamental change (Bass, 2008). Leaders work toward intended goals that represent the collective interests, raising both leaders and followers to elevated levels of performance and common purpose (Burns, 1978).

- Transformative Leadership: Advocacy leadership with a purpose of equitable change intended to create just and inclusive learning environments (Shields,

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2012). Transformative leadership is based upon critical theory and is integrally

linked to issues of equity and social justice (Shields, 2011).

Overview of the Research Study

This study examined the daily activity of an elementary school principal in order to

analyze how a principal enacts leadership for transformation within the micro-political context of

an elementary school. The next chapter provides a critical and expansive review of the literature

focused on advocacy leadership and micro-politics. Chapter Three presents a detailed outline of

the methodology employed in the study, explaining the theoretical framework, the participant

selection, data collection methods, data collection analysis, limitations, and potential biases and

ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents the findings and results of the study and Chapter

Five presents an analysis of these findings as well as a discussion of the conclusions and

implications for principals and for further research.

Summary

Leadership is essential to the success of our schools and our students. While there is

extensive literature about leadership, there is limited research about how to effectively enact

leadership. Schools are political entities and as such the understanding of the micro-politics

within a school are an essential component of effective leadership. Little has been studied

however, about the micro-politics of schools and the influence of leadership upon the micro-

politics and vice versa. This study of one principal explored the daily enactment of an

elementary school principals' leadership through the framework of advocacy leadership. The

study of principal leadership and micro-politics overlap and can enhance each other

(Mawhinney, 1999). The simultaneous study of the leadership of an individual principal

contributes to the practical knowledge base of leadership and micro-politics, leading do a deeper

understanding of how leadership is enacted in a school and the impact upon the school and its

students.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

The purpose of the literature review is two-fold. First, to critically examine the existing

literature regarding leadership in schools to determine what has been written and what is

currently known. Second, to investigate what is known about how leaders enact leadership to

facilitate change in schools. Leadership is critical to schools, second only to the teacher in

impact upon student achievement (May & Supovitz, 2010). Without effective leadership,

schools cannot be successful. Effective leadership creates the necessity for change and facilitates

the actualization of change (Theoharis, 2007). The review of literature provides a foundation for

this research.

To achieve these purposes, the development of leadership conceptions in the literature is

discussed. The leadership literature is reviewed, including a thorough description of

transformational and transformative, advocacy leadership as it contributes to the current body of

leadership knowledge.

Leadership

This literature review of leadership focuses on literature that describes the development

of leadership conception as it focuses on change in schools. Burns (1978) in his landmark book,

Leadership, first characterizes leadership literature into two major strands, transactional

leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership is leadership based upon

exchanges between the leaders and followers. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, is focused on a fundamental shift, or as Cuban (1990) discusses, second order change. Transformation is more complex, and is more difficult because it often requires changing the culture of schools. From transformational leadership, additional conceptions of leadership have been developed to expand the understanding of leadership needed in the complex context of schools. This review of the literature will focus on the leadership development from transactional to transformational to advocacy, transformative leadership.

Advocacy (Anderson, 2009) and transformative (Shields, 2010, 2012) leadership will be treated synonymously as their titles are different but their basic tenets are the same. Both are relevant to the research questions and encompass the necessary components of leadership missing in other leadership conceptualizations. Advocacy leadership, a form of social justice leadership, addresses issues of equity and politics as well as the moral component of leadership. This review traces the development of the leadership literature from the beginning of transformational leadership to the call today for leadership that advocates for transformative changes ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012). While there is extensive literature about leadership, there are few empirical leadership studies defining how leaders effectively enact leadership. Research that studies how advocacy leadership as enacted is needed to inform the work of both scholars and practitioners.

The leadership section begins with a brief description of transactional leadership, followed by a description of the transformational and transformative, advocacy leadership literature. The transformational leadership review includes a description of the leader, followers, the leader follower relationship, and power, all of which are important aspects of leadership. The advocacy and transformative leadership review includes a description of the development from

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transformational leadership, the basic tenets and the described actions of such leaders, and the notions of power and politics integral to leadership. The review explores how past literature informs the current understanding of leadership and identifies gaps in the literature needed to inform theory and practice.

Trends in the Research on Leadership

Historically, leadership has been defined as good management. Burns (1978) originally called for industrial leadership meaning leadership as a rational, management-oriented, quantitative, and hierarchical process (Rost, 1991). Good leaders were considered "great men and women with certain preferred traits who influence followers to do what the leaders wish in order to achieve group/organizational goals that reflect excellence defined as some kind of higher-order effectiveness" (Rost, 1991, p. 95). Until the late 1980s, because of how leadership was defined, leadership and management were considered synonymous and so literature merged and confused the two concepts (Foster, 1986; Rost, 1991). Scholars worked to separate and distinguish leadership and management, realizing the complexities of leadership are beyond simply managing others (Foster, 1986) and instead, involve the process of "transforming and empowering" (Foster, 1986, p. 188). Rost (1991), citing inadequacies in industrial leadership, called for a transition from industrial leadership to a post-industrial era. The leader does not simply manage systems but envisions the creation of a just and equitable organization through the empowerment of others and sharing of power (Foster, 1986). In the 1980s with the national focus on a Nation at Risk, reform leadership was promoted (Anderson, 2009). Currently, (Anderson, 2009) new demands on schools have created the need for a post reform leadership agenda and even more complex notions of leadership (Shields, 2012; Smyth, et. al, 2009). The leader acts as an advocate to transform and empower in order to create a just school and a just

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society, working both internally and externally to accomplish small and large-scale change.

During this leadership development, transactional leadership and transformational leadership

emerged as two major leadership strands (Burns, 1978), followed by transformative, advocacy

leadership. Table 1 (Anderson, 2009; Burns, 1978; Rost 1991; Shields, 2011) provides a

summary of each leadership conception.

Table 1

Comparison of Leadership Concepts

Leadership Characteristic	Transactional	Transformational	Advocacy-Transformative
Purpose	Maintain status quo Create/maintain equilibrium	Organizational improvement through cultural change	Undo inequity Create equity Improve society
Focus	Organization	Individual and school	Individual, school and society
Goals	Equilibrium Stability	Individual change School change School effectiveness	Disrupt status quo Individual change School change Societal change
Power & Politics	Ignored	Awareness	Intentional, moral use of power, politics Deployment of political skill

Transactional leadership.

Transactional leadership is leadership based upon exchanges between the leader and followers (Bass, 2008). Relationships tend to be based upon the exchanges of contingent items or resources (Burns, 1978). The overall aim and outcome of transactional leadership is maintenance of the status quo and stability within the organization (Blasé & Anderson, 1995).

Transactional leadership, while it may be effective in certain contexts, has limitations. It does not address the complexities of a school organization or culture of the school, nor does it explain the dynamics of the relationship between leaders and followers. It is inadequate, both theoretically and practically, to explain the intricacies of educational leadership.

Some scholars (Burns, 1978) view transactional leadership and transformational leadership as opposite end of the leadership spectrum: if an individual is a transformational leader they do not employ transactional leadership and vice versa. Others (Bass, 1985) view them on a continuum with building leaders employing both transactional and transformational leadership at various times. The reality from my individual experience is that there are points in time where exchanges are made, even within transformational or other types of leadership, in order to achieve a larger goal and to meet student needs. It is not necessary for the two to be mutually exclusive, nor is transactional leadership inappropriate at all times.

Transactional leadership is based upon exchanges between leaders and followers. The purpose of transactional leadership is maintenance of organizational equilibrium. While leaders employ transactional tactics at certain times, transactional leadership is inadequate to create and sustain change. Through increased study and description of leadership, transformational

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leadership was conceptualized during the 1980s (Rost, 1991) and began a movement that re-conceptualized leadership as a process of transformation.

In the following section, the transformational leadership literature is discussed. First, there is a description of the general concept of transformational leadership, followed by a description of the expansion of transformational leadership to transformative, advocacy leadership, including the basic tenets.

Transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership is a complex notion of leadership that understands leadership as more than exchanges and transactions and while complex, achieves deeper goals and accomplishments (Bass, 1985) than transactional leadership. The purpose of transformational leadership is real change (Rost, 1991) intended "to raise the consciousness of the leader and the follower" (Blasé, 1991, p. xiii). Transformational leadership is based upon relationships between leaders and followers, and these relationships consider motives and needs, engaging the leaders and the followers as individuals (Burns, 1978). There are four essential elements of transformational leadership (Rost, 1991). First, the relationships are based upon influence. Second, the relationships are multidirectional and involve both leaders and followers. Third, both leaders and followers engage with high levels of commitment to intend change. Finally, leaders and followers develop a common and then mutual purpose that engages the two together with the intent of change. In order for reform to occur, transformational leadership is required: it is a critical element of reform (Blasé & Kirby, 2000).

Change.

Change is essential to transformational leadership. Without the intent of change (Rost, 1991), leadership does not exist because the goal of leadership is to continually transform the

organization and leaders and followers to a better, more just state. The definition of transformational leadership has expanded since originally described by Burns (1978). Burns, in his definition of leadership, discussed change in the overall leadership description, but neglected to include change as part of his definition of leadership. Instead, he focused on the influencing of leaders and followers to satisfy motives (Burns, 1978). Rost (1991), in his post-industrial definition of leadership, adds intended change as an essential element of leadership. The intended change does not necessarily have to be achieved, but according to Rost (1991), without intention there is an absence of leadership. This intended change is focused on the best interest of students and is demonstrated by the actions of both leaders and followers (Rost, 1991; Shields, 2004). The essential question asked is, "Who benefits?" (Shields, 2004). The use of power is a multi-directional influence among leaders and followers (Rost, 1991) where power is shared and the leader empowers others. This also includes the exchange of roles: leaders sometimes act as followers and followers as leaders. The multidirectional relationships facilitate the formation of mutual purposes through the interactions among leaders and followers: these purposes become common and the result is the raising of consciousness of both the leaders and the followers (Bass, 1985). The followers elevate to leaders and the leaders to moral agents (Bass, 1985). Individuals are motivated to give their best effort, beyond original expectations or personal expectations (Bass, 1985) in order to serve the common purposes. This elevation and growth supports the production of change.

Transformational leadership is leadership for deep change within the organization. The role of both leaders and followers, and the interaction and relationship between the two, is integral to transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is dynamic and serves to raise the level of effectiveness and consciousness of both leaders and followers, raising the level

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of enrollment and commitments of all involved. Transformational leadership is intended change (Rost, 1991) based upon the mutual purposes of both leaders and followers. In order to fully understand transformational leadership, it is important to explore the literature describing the role of leaders, the role of followers and the relationship between the two.

Leaders.

Both leaders and followers are critical components of transformation, but transformational leaders are change agents that have the ability to raise their level of performance, and the performance of others to accomplish more than they originally think possible (Bass, 1985).   The leader influences the actions of others through relationships, personality, and beliefs put into action (Bass, 2008). Charisma is often present, but is inadequate to leadership (Bass, 1985). The leader begins with critical reflection and analysis that leads to action (Shields, 2010). The action, like the change, is intentional. It is not a hierarchical conception of the leader follower relationship, but rather one of distribution and empowerment.

The literature identifies the leadership characteristics relevant to transformational leadership: relationships, developing and building others' skills and confidence, and change agency (Bass 2008, Shields, 2004). Relationships are an important aspect as both leaders and followers influence each other in a multi-directional and reciprocal fashion (Bass, 2008; Rost, 1991). Simultaneously, the leader influences followers and outcomes in a top down fashion and followers influence leaders and outcomes in a bottom up manner (Bass, 2008), creating fluidity between leader and follower. This influence is accomplished, at least in part, through the sharing of power that facilitates the development and empowerment of each individual within the organization. Change is accomplished with people, not over people, thus creating a mutual vision that elevates each individual and the organization.

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The second characteristic is promoting the growth and development of others. Through their relationships, interactions and modeling, the leaders facilitate the development of the skill, sense of efficacy and self worth of the followers, enabling them to accomplish beyond what is initially believed possible (Shields, 2004), empowering them to act in different ways, and changing the systems to better meet students' needs. The leader possesses a sense of efficacy and builds that same sense in followers (Bass, 2008). This is a key outcome of Sergiovanni's (2007) shared leadership and Spillane's (2005) description of distributive leadership. Transformational leaders are change agents, rejecting deficit perspectives (Shields, 2004) and focusing on assets that raise themselves and followers to higher levels of consciousness. They hold a critical stance and are reflective learners, emphasizing mutual interests in order to create change.

The characteristics of transformational leaders identified in the literature include strong relationships, ability to influence change, and critical reflection. To completely understand leaders, it is essential to understand followers. The next section describes the role of followers.

Followers.

Leadership does not exist without followers: followers are an essential component of transformational leadership because the relationship is reciprocal and multidirectional (Bass, 2008; Rost, 1991), so it is important to understand what the literature reveals about the role of followers. Followers are inseparable from leadership (Burns, 1978), but do not play the same role as the leader normally has more influence (Rost, 1991). Leaders and followers depend on each other in a dynamic relationship: leadership is not done to followers. Rather followers are active participants and do leadership with leaders (Rost, 1991). In addition, leaders and

followers often flow between the two roles in different circumstances and situations: leaders are also followers and followers are also leaders.

Bass (2008) identifies three types of followers: helpers, independents and rebels. Helpers are compliant and defer to the leader. Independents are less compliant and tend to distance themselves somewhat from the leader. Rebels divert from the leader and are the least compliant. In a reciprocal relationship, these three types of follower are limiting and transcend back to traditional notions of leadership being done to followers. Rost (1991), while maintaining the distinct differences between leaders and followers, views followers on a continuum of activity from highly active to minimally active, rather than compliant or non-compliant. Senge (1990) identifies follower reactions to include commitment; enrollment; compliance, genuine, formal or grudging; noncompliance and apathy. Those that are committed or enrolled desire the intended change and will work to accomplish it. Compliant followers believe in the vision: genuine followers will comply and go above and beyond in following the letter of the law. The formally compliant follower will work to make change happen, by doing what is asked, but nothing more. Those that are grudgingly compliant do not see the vision, but do not want to jeopardize their job, so will comply, but will also make it known that they are in disagreement. The noncompliant follower will not do what is asked while the apathetic follower demonstrates no interest or energy for change.

Followers are essential elements of transformational leadership, as leadership cannot exist without followers. While followers are critical, however, they do not play the same role as leaders. Both leaders and followers are essential, but as important is the relationship between the two.

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Leader-follower relationships.

Transformational leadership is built upon the relationship and interaction between leaders and followers: it is the relationships that make the leadership meaningful (Shields, 2004). The relationship between leaders and followers is a non-coercive (Rost, 1991) influence relationship. This influence relationship is often un-equal or at least, un-equal by position. Because it is an influence relationship, leaders and followers influence each other while also influencing the organization (Rost, 1991, van Kippenburg, et. al, 2004). Because leaders and followers do leadership together as active participants (Rost, 1991), they are interdependent (Spillane, 2005). The relationship between leader and follower is not the traditional notion of management, but rather a collaborative model. Followers and leaders together are "change agents" (Smyth, Angus, Down & McInerney, 2009, p. 60). Power is shared through collaboration and compromise between leader and follower. The leader's effectiveness is defined, at least in part, by the ability to motivate and influence followers as well as to collaborate and share. It is this collaboration and influence that mediates the self-concept, sense of efficacy and effectiveness of the followers (van Kippenburg, 2004), resulting in the capacity building of followers (Smyth, et. al, 2009). A leader's effectiveness, at least in art, derives from the leader's ability to facilitate the self-concept and skill development of followers, thus creating a sense of continuity and community in the organization and among leaders and followers (van Kippenburg, et. al, 2004).

The relationship of active participation requires both loose and tight coupling within the school (Sergiovanni, 2007). The leader sets the vision and the direction, but entrusts the followers with how it is accomplished through a shared, collaborative process. It is this sense of control and autonomy that develops followers' efficacy, motivation and commitment, resulting

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in loyalty and engagement to the school and the work. A collective view of leadership is created (Smyth, et. al, 2009).

This loose and tight coupling of shared action and the relationships of interaction create a mutual purpose that enables followers to clarify and act upon their own values and motivations (Burns, 1978). The mutual purpose is normally plural and the vision and mission are centered on the purposes of the leaders and followers (Rost, 1991). This mutual purpose leads to common purposes and vision in a cycle, again increasing motivation and loyalty and raising the level of consciousness of both leaders and followers. The common purpose results in changes that are real and intended, rather than simply the accomplishment of goals. While the purposes of leaders and followers may be common, the goals are not necessarily common (Rost, 1991). When both leaders and followers reflect the mutual purposes, the common good becomes apparent (Rost, 1991).

The leader follower relationship is integral to transformational leadership. One example of these relationships in action is distributed leadership practices.   Distributed leadership is a collective process and collective practice (Ryan & Rottman, 2007) designed to transform the school (Storey, 2004) through the interactions and interdependence of leaders and followers. It involves the leader's empowering others for the common purpose of the school (Sergiovanni, 2007).   Rather than an individual acting as the hero or authority figure, leadership responsibilities are shared throughout the school (Storey, 2004). Distributed leadership demonstrates leadership together versus over others (Spillane, 2005).

Leadership involves multiple leaders and "reciprocal interdependency" (Spillane, 2005, p. 146). Distributed leadership calls for followers to become leaders, as principals for example, share leadership with teachers. Both formal and informal leadership opportunities present,

allowing the opportunity for teachers to collaborate and take risks in a safe environment with the aim of improving teaching and learning (Danielson, 2007). Rather than being recipients of the leader's actions, both leader and follower are change agents, collaborating for change.

Zaccaro, Rittman and Marks (2001) studied the enactment of distributed leadership. Relationships are important in distributed leadership, but according to these authors, little is known about how leaders create and sustain effective teams.   Zaccaro et al. (2001) used the lens of functional leadership to explore how leadership and team processes influence each other. The results indicate that interdependency, coordination, and synchronization are required in an integration of individual and team action. Leaders use cognitive, motivational and affective influences to impact the team and facilitate change.

The common purpose and collective view serve the larger organization or school, not simply the individual. The common purposes, in turn, develop common commitment and mission that allows for the realization of change. Through leadership and influence, the leader moves followers from self-interest to collective interest (van Kippenburg et. al, 2004), thus raising the level of consciousness of all. This also creates better organizational results and the likelihood of achieving the intended change.

The relationship of leaders and followers is a critical element of transformational leadership. It is the influence of leaders upon followers and followers upon leaders in a dynamic relationship that develops a common purpose and the capacity to create change. This in turn elevates individuals and the group to new levels of effectiveness beyond initial expectations. This relationship between leaders and followers also has implication for power and the sharing of power.

Power.

The leader follower relationship is an influence relationship, and as such, power is an important consideration. In addition, power is important to change. Leaders and followers use the influence relationship through deployment of power resources to persuade others and to create change (Rost, 1991). Initial descriptions of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) described power as a negative aspect of leadership. Later descriptions, however, (Rost, 1991; Blasé, 1991) offer a deeper, more complex understanding of power, realizing that power permeates all human interactions (Burns, 1978) and thus is a critical leadership element (Blasé, 1991). Power involves both motives and resources and is a relationship versus a possession or an object (Burns, 1978). It is a relationship among and between individuals or groups of individuals that involves both intention and purpose. Those with power, such as leaders, use it relevant to their motives and to the motives of others (Burns, 1978). According to Burns (1978), motives and resources are critical to power. Those that possess power use it as a resource to fulfill their motives and the motives of power recipients (Burns, 1978). Power comes in various amounts and forms, but involves the use of resources to influence others.

The original notions of power as a negative aspect of leadership viewed power as something demonstrated over others. Power in this sense is coercive or authoritative (Blasé, 1991). As defined in transformational leadership, power is a necessary and integral resource. Blasé (1991) identified additional dimensions of power; power through others and power with others. Transformational leadership is based upon the non-coercive use of power, power with others to achieve common purposes. Power structures are redistributed (Smyth et al., 2009) and shared as part of the transformed relationship between leader and follower. Power is used

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collectively to release the potential of others (Foster, 1986) and to create change (Smyth et al., 2009). The influence relationship occurs as an individual or group of individuals has the resources to influence others.

Power, the relationship resource used to influence others, is another essential element of transformational leadership. The goal in transformational leadership is to use power with followers, rather than over or through others, in order to accomplish mutual purposes.

Moral component.

"Each administrative decision carries within it a restructuring of human life: that is why administration at its heart is the resolution of moral dilemmas" (Foster, 1986, p. 33). The literature claims transformational leadership as a moral activity (Anderson, 2009; Sergiovanni, 2007; Shields, 2010). Leadership is fundamentally moral. In addition to involving power, leadership involves raising self and others to higher levels of consciousness and as such, it is moral (Blasé, 1991; Burns, 1978). In addition, transformational leadership, an act of social justice, aims to correct injustices and create equity, and as such, is a moral imperative.

As leadership for change, transformational leadership is a moral endeavor. It is intended for the purpose of raising the level of equity, effectiveness and consciousness of the leaders, followers and the school. Rost (1991) did not include a moral component to transformational leadership. With the exception of Rost, however, the literature includes the moral purpose of leadership as an essential and critical element.

When transformation is achieved, (Bass, 1985) both leaders' and followers' awareness of others is increased and individuals expand from a focus on self-interest to prioritizing the group or organization's needs and interests. Others are placed before self and aspirations, rather than

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simply goals, are the intent. While the empirical literature is limited, there are studies of the impact of transformational leadership.

Judge and Piccolo (2004) conducted a comprehensive, quantitative meta-analysis of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership. The results confirmed the validity of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership transcended short-term goals and resulted in a focus on higher order, intrinsic needs. Several dimensions of transformational leadership were identified included charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Judge & Picollo, 2004). The results confirm the validity of transformational leadership as well as adding evidence to how transformational leadership appears to generalize across different situations.

In a study outside of education, Bommer, Rich and Rubin (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of transformational leader behavior upon employees, specifically employee cynicism. The purpose of the study was to analyze whether the changes upon recipients described in the conceptual literature had the described positive effect upon actual recipients. The results indicate that transformational leadership resulted in higher employee satisfaction and positive employee outcomes. Transformational leadership reduced employee cynicism about the organization. Two important factors were brought to light in the discussion. First, transformational leadership must be enacted with ethics and integrity. Second, leaders must be cautious about converting cynics to followers without suppressing each individual's voice and while simultaneously maintaining the integrity of individuals and the organization (Brommer, Rich & Rubin, 2010).

Transformational leadership focuses on intentional change, but is limited to change within the organization. It focuses on the attitudes, norms, structures and behaviors within an

organization. The focus is on the organizational outcomes (Shields, 2012). It does not, however,

address the needed changes within the district or wider community that impact the school and

student learning. The concept of transformative advocacy leadership has been developed

(Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012) founded on the basic tenets of transformational leadership.

Transformative advocacy leadership expands upon transformational leadership to "view

leadership as a social practice aligned with democratic practices" (Shields, 2012, p. 20). It is

based upon critical theory and is concerned with individual growth and organizational change

and societal change.

Advocacy transformative leadership.

The advocacy and transformative leadership literature is founded upon Anderson's

(2009) and Shields' (2011, 2012) frameworks, building upon the work defining transformational

leadership and defining leadership within a political context both within and external to the

school building. The terms Advocacy and Transformative will be used interchangeably.

Anderson (2009) describes advocacy leadership while Shields (2011, 2012) terms the expansion

of transformational leadership transformative leadership. The basic characteristics of the two are

the same and will be used here synonymously.

Description and purpose.

Advocacy leaders are focused on the interests of others and on promoting policy

influence (Malen, 1995). The purpose of advocacy leadership is the facilitation of fundamental

change that disrupts the status quo in order to transcend the current way of thinking and way of

work in a school, organization, and broader community (Anderson, 2009). It is social justice

leadership from a political perspective, which advocates for children, and authenticity of action

and works toward a more just society. The purpose of social justice leadership is to close the gap

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of access, opportunity and achievement, intentionally transforming a school from a place that oppresses some to a model pursuing equity for all (Theoharis, 2009). The work of Rawls, Freire and Foster are foundational to transformative advocacy leadership. Rawls (1999), in a broad definition of justice applicable beyond education, described two foundational principles. First, each person has an equal right to liberty that is compatible with the liberty of others. Second, social and economic inequalities work to everyone's disadvantage and open access and opportunity work to every individual's advantage. An equitable education system, then, must grant each individual access and opportunity to the full system. Freire (1993) advocated that the role of education is to help the oppressed liberate themselves from the oppressors, thus liberating the oppressed and the oppressing. Power is restored to the oppressed and humanity to the oppressor. Theoharis (2008) defines social justice as those leaders that "keep at the center of their practice and vision issues of race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and other historically marginalizing factors in the United States " (p. 11). Social justice leadership requires continuous grappling with difficult challenge, advocating for every student, and reflecting upon practices and beliefs (Bogotch, 2000) in continuous deconstruction of unjust practices and reconstruction of equitable practices.

As social justice leaders, advocacy leaders view themselves (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012) as part of a larger societal struggle that advocate for children both in and out of the confines of the school building. Advocacy leaders' first loyalty is to children and to the creation of an equitable education and society for them. They are servant leaders (Sergiovanni, 2005) but realize that leadership is enacted in a complex political arena (Ball, 1987; Bass, 1985; Shields, 2012). They are managers of meaning within a political context (Anderson, 2009). In an effort to understand this change process, Theoharis (2007) studied seven individual leaders committed

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to issues of equity and social justice in their schools to identify the work of leaders that advocated for change. Based upon these leader's experiences, Theoharis (2009) indentified seven keys:

Key 1 Acquire broad, re-conceptualized consciousness, knowledge and skill

Key 2 Possess core leadership skills and traits

Key 3 Promote inclusion, access and opportunity for all students

Key 4 Improve core learning in both curriculum and teaching

Key 5 Create a climate of belonging

Key 6 Raise student achievement

Key 7 Sustain self as leader both personally and professionally

Theoharis' deep study of seven individuals begins to uncover how leaders affect change through a social justice lens. One finding, however, was that there is no checklist of tasks or activities to complete, nor did every principal approach their work in the same manner. The complexities of change were evident in his analysis of the seven principal's work.

Social justice and transformational leadership have, for the most part, neglected political aspects of leadership and change. While Theoharis (2009) does include descriptions of how principals enacted their leadership, he did not address the political aspects of the principals' work. Advocacy and transformative leadership explicitly address the complexities of leadership enacted within a political arena. It is critical to understand and maneuver these dynamics to affect sustainable change (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012).

Rost (1991) identified the need for change and the role of transformational leadership in the creation of intended, real change. His change focused, however, on the individual school. Anderson (2009) and Shields (2012) expand the need for authentic, intended change to larger,

system issues including the district, community, and society. While still responsible for change at the individual and school level, the leader also intends change at the system level in order to correct the underlying injustices within our system and society. In addition, the leader follower relationships are expanded beyond the schoolhouse to include external partners in recognition of the complexity and dynamic nature of change and of leadership in schools.

According to both Anderson (2009) and Shields (2012), current reform efforts are not based upon the research describing educational and student need. Instead, they are based upon the business, market model and aimed not at students but at economic, business and larger political concerns (Cuban, 2004). A deficit perspective permeates reform with a focus on outcomes rather than students. These efforts often cause more inequity. Advocacy leaders attempt to disrupt the inequities and maintain a focus on the good of children and the good of society (Anderson, 2009). The critical elements of advocacy leadership include authenticity, double consciousness, action, and power and politics.

Authenticity.

According to Anderson (2009), authenticity is essential to advocacy leadership and to real change. Authenticity is required in order to achieve social justice in our schools. Others (Sergiovanni, 2007) have identified authenticity as critical, but focus on the creation of authentic caring environments for students and staffs in schools. Starratt (2004) sees authenticity as a vocation, " the call to bring one's unique possibilities into realization. (p.80). Starratt goes on to identify elements of authenticity for the educational leader that include being "the author of one's life", being in reciprocal relationships, promoting authentic participation in society, and cultivating environments of authentic teaching and learning for teachers and students.

Anderson (2009) expands the importance and notion of authenticity beyond the creation of caring environments. Authenticity "requires building social trust as a way to leverage more equitable schools and communities and a more equitable society" (Anderson, 2009, p. 38). It is required in both relationships with others and intentionality if action and so affects individuals as well as the system. Teacher trust is another important factor of authenticity. Bryk and Schneider (2003), in a study of 400 elementary schools, demonstrated the role of the principal in creating trust and the necessity of trust in creating school improvement. Authentic trust helps build a school community where reform can be achieved.

Levels of authenticity include the individual, the organization, and society (Anderson, 2009). At the individual level, authenticity is living in alignment with one's beliefs. Authenticity at the organizational level involves those within the organization, and the organization as a whole viewing others as ends in themselves rather than as a means to other ends. The purpose of change is not specifically to increase productivity, but for the purpose of respecting other's right to be heard and to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Societal authenticity is "a state of affairs congruent with the shared political values of a society" (Anderson, 2009, p. 41). Authenticity is needed at all three levels to ensure the appropriate use of power and to prevent those with power from using it over these without power rather than with them. Authenticity is inseparable from advocacy leadership. In order to be authentic, a leader must also develop double consciousness.

Double consciousness.

Double consciousness allows the leader to live and act within the current reality, in an incongruent state, while consciously working toward equity on a larger scale. Double consciousness is the necessity of the oppressed to be able to see themselves through both their

own perspective and the perspective of the dominant group (Anderson, 2009; DuBois; 1903).

This ability to see the organization from multiple perspectives gives the individual insight about

the institution and create an advantage for them, while allowing them to make sense of the world

oppressing them or the students (Anderson, 2009). It first requires the leader to identify his or

her power and privilege (Shields, 2012). With awareness, the leader can act intentionally to

engage in more equitable practices both individually and as an organization. The advocacy

leader must be aware of their power and privilege, hold to their fundamental beliefs and act

authentically in congruence with them, but also must face seeming incongruence as a short term

strategy to achieve broader goals. As such, the leader uses privilege positively to affect change

(Shields, 2012) while growing as an individual. The leader must negotiate within the system

known to be inequitable in order to achieve equity for students. This requires a deep

understanding of self as a leader in order to remain strong against the cultural norms of the

dominant group, to prevent disengagement from the cause and the work and create change in the

inequitable structures and processes.

Double consciousness, while messy and complex, enables the leader to fight back against

injustices. It is an integral, intentional component of transformative leadership.

Actions.

The actions of an advocacy leader illustrate how moral purpose is put into action to create

positive change in schools and in the larger community. Advocacy leaders are compelled to

address inequities in order to create an equitable education and environment for every student

and to create congruence between theories of action and theories of use (Anderson, 2009).

Actions of advocacy leaders are described below. These are not intended to be an exhaustive

list, but rather to give a sense of how advocacy leaders tend to act (Anderson, 2009; Shields,

2012). The leader's actions begin with beliefs. Advocacy leaders believe in a high quality and equitable public education for all children. They reject the deficit model of blaming children and their families for lack of achievement and take responsibility (Shields, 2012) for students' lack of achievement and success. They are aware that not all others, nor the system, hold to these same beliefs and they are suspicious to identify authentic and inauthentic policies and action. They take action to deconstruct the deficit frameworks and create awareness in others in order to overcome deficit thinking (Shields, 2012) and reconstruct equitable processes.

The advocacy leader is aware and refuses to become trapped in the inauthentic policies and situations. They understand politics and see it as an unavoidable part of the work. At the same time, they attempt to get at "the core of inequity and injustice in the system" (Shields, 2009, p. 45) and intentionally negotiate and employ politics to affect positive change.

Advocacy leaders understand power and use it carefully, with others, versus over or through others (Malen, 1995; Smyth, et. al, 2009). While they are aware of the implicit power and privilege in school and district structures and their position of power (Shields, 2012), they work intentionally to examine and remove power that serves to benefit some over others, challenging the inequitable distributions of power (Shields, 2012) and employing power for positive change that serve the needs of individuals and the larger school community.

Advocacy leaders are reflective learners, reflecting upon and examining their own assumptions (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012) and creating more equitable practices in their own work as well as the work of the school. They attempt to create meaningful learning communities for adults (Anderson, 2009), creating space for adults to examine beliefs, practices and pedagogy (Shields, 2012). Conversations about issues are a regular part of the work (Ryan & Rottman, 2007; Shields, 2012) supporting positive change. Advocacy leaders are intolerant of injustice

and facilitate the development of the same intolerance in others and in the school's culture (Anderson, 2009). This necessitates moral courage (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011; Theoharis, 2009) and a clear moral purpose to their leadership (Shields, 2012).

Transformative leaders are capable of operating simultaneously on the individual, school and societal level (Anderson, 2009), recognizing and affecting the private and public good, the impact upon each individual and the impact upon the larger society (Shields, 2012; Smyth et. al, 2009). As such, they advance democracy both within and without the school walls (Shields, 2012). They are solution seekers, rooting out the underlying causes of situations rather than addressing the symptoms (Anderson, 2009; Smyth et. al, 2009), deconstructing and reconstructing beliefs and systems to serve all students (Shields, 2012; Smyth et. al, 2009). In all of these actions, advocacy leaders recognize the political component of leadership and schools (Anderson, 2009; Malen, 1995). The purpose of advocacy leadership is to affect deep and sustainable change in individuals, schools, and larger school communities.

Power and politics.

Power and politics are integral elements of advocacy leadership and school transformation. Power is addressed within transformational leadership, but elaborated on more thoroughly to include politics as part of transformative leadership. All organizations are inherently political, schools included, but the majority of leadership literature neglects to recognize the role of politics in school change. Advocacy leadership addresses the politics of leadership and change. The next section reviews the literature addressing micro-politics within leadership.

Politics is the use of power and influence by individuals or groups of individuals to gain or maintain resources (Anderson, 2009; Malen & Cochran, 2008). Bolman and Deal (2008)

describe politics as the realistic process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and divergent interests. As such, they are a part of the life of leadership and of a school (Bacharach, 1983). Power is "the ability to get others to do what you want them to do" (Hoy & Miskel, 1996, p. 171). It is the resources and ability to have influence over other individuals, groups of individuals or the organization (Mintzberg, 1984).

The use of politics and power are thus important to advocacy leadership (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011). Leaders' ability to affect change is at lease partially dependent upon the leader's ability to employ political skill. Ferris et. al (2007) define four dimensions of political skill. Each dimension is distinct in itself, but also interrelated with the other dimensions. The first is social astuteness: the ability to observe others and to know self in identity with others. An individual with social astuteness observes others and understands how one's own actions, behavior and interactions influence the actions and behaviors of others. A socially astute individual understands social contexts and possesses keen interpersonal skills.

The second political skill is interpersonal influence: the ability to influence others and to adapt one's own behavior to different contexts (Ferris et. al, 2007). This requires flexibility in order to achieve goals. The individual has the skills and ability to influence others to act in ways that achieve the desired outcomes.

The third dimension is networking ability: the ability to create and maintain diverse alliances with others and to build coalitions with groups of others (Ferris et. al, 2007). An individual with networking skills is adept at building and maintaining coalitions and networks. They position themselves in order to take advantage of opportunities. They possess skill in mediation, negotiation and conflict management.

Finally, the fourth political skill is apparent sincerity: one's possession of integrity, authenticity, and honesty (Ferris, et. al, 2007). An individual with apparent sincerity appears to be authentic, genuine, and honest. This is an essential skill, a foundational tenet of advocacy leadership, necessary to influence others. If an individual's intentions are not perceived as sincere, the ability to motivate and influence others will be thwarted.

Advocacy leaders possess astuteness, interpersonal skill, networking and sincerity and use them positively and authentically as a foundational component of their moral leadership. The advocacy leader employs political skill to facilitate change that positively impacts the students', school and community (Anderson, 2009; Blasé & Anderson, 1995).

The leadership micro-political matrix (Blase & Anderson, 1995) demonstrates the use and effect of leadership types and micro-politics. The matrix is demonstrated in figure 1. The horizontal axis shows the continuum between closed and open leadership. Open leadership is characterized by the sharing of power. Closed leadership is characterized by the opposite, an unwillingness to share power. The vertical axis illustrates the continuum of transactional and transformative leadership. Open transformative leadership characterizes advocacy leadership. The advocacy leader uses power and politics to expose inequities within the system and school, influencing others to action (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011; 2012). Transformative advocacy leadership is positioned in the upper right corner, characterized by open, transformative practices.

Advocacy leadership is intentional leadership from a political perspective aimed at creating equity for every student. It involves the distribution of leadership and includes the essential elements of authenticity, double consciousness, the leader follower relationship, and power and politics. Advocacy leadership is critical to the creation of equitable schools

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(Anderson, 2009). If there is not a shift in the enactment of leadership, schools and leaders will continue to legitimize the status quo (Anderson, 2009). "The need is urgent, the task is daunting, but the rewards are enormous" (Shields, 2012, p. 127).

transformative

adversarial leadership   empowering leadership

closed   **open**

authoritarian leadership   facilitative leadership
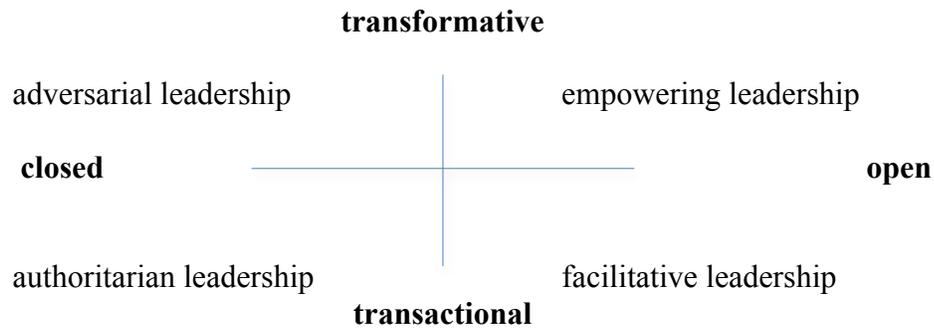
transactional

Figure 1

Micro-Political Leadership Matrix

The importance of leadership to school success is clear in the literature. The major strands of transactional, transformational, and transformative leadership have been reviewed here. Table X illustrates the basic characteristics and differences between these leadership concepts. Transformational leadership is leadership for school change in an attempt to influence student achievement (Burns, 1978; Shields, 2012). Transformative, advocacy leadership is leadership for school and societal change that impacts the holistic development of the individual child as well as the development of the school and larger community (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2012; Smyth, 2009).

Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the literature on leadership, including the major leadership strands of transactional, transformational and advocacy transformative. Leadership and change is entwined. Transformative advocacy leadership is a complex concept of leadership

necessary for the complexities of today's educational context. It is a newer concept of leadership (Shields, 2012) and will benefit from additional research studying its elements in the realities of a school leader's practice.

Theory and practice including how theory is enacted in practice are both important to the field of educational leadership knowledge. There is currently conceptual literature, but a gap exists between how the conceptual literature is applied in the daily reality of schools.

Leadership is complex and unstable, and thus constructed through meaning making (Anderson, 2009), social construction (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) and making sense of their world as it is constructed (Riehl, et al., 2000). Therefore, theoretical knowledge is insufficient to guide a leader's actions. What is needed is a two-way connection between theory and action (Middlehurst, 2008) where theory informs action and action informs theory.

This research offers a rich profile of one school principal's enactment of leadership within the context of the school and district through the study of her practice, building understanding of how a school leader constructs meaning and deploys action to facilitate change.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This phenomenological research was designed to study one principal's enactment of leadership within the political context of the schoolhouse. The design of phenomenological research is important as it determines, at least in part, the ability of the researcher to reveal the phenomena of study. At the same time, if the design is too tightly structured, the design potentially restrains the researcher from capturing the true experience of the participant and the phenomena (Hycner, 1985). The research design must be flexible enough to adjust based upon the data gathered throughout the study in order to fully understand the lived experience of those studied. This chapter describes the design of this phenomenological study. It was intentionally structured and yet designed to allow for adjustments that were deemed necessary during the research process. The following sections include a description of the research questions, the general research design, the context of the participant, schools and district, the data collection methods, the data analysis procedures, limitations, ethical considerations, the lens of the researcher, and credibility and trustworthiness.

Research Questions

The study was based upon two research questions. How does an elementary school principal understand and enact leadership on a day-to-day basis? To what extent does a school principal intentionally utilize political skill and tactics to facilitate change within a school?

Research Design

Qualitative research allows the researcher to conduct an interpretive analysis of an issue, context, individual(s), or phenomenon. It elicits tacit knowledge (Maxwell, 2005), in part because the studies are conducted in the real-life natural settings of the participants, enabling the researcher to capture the true lived-experience, and how participants make meaning of this experience (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Rather than only identifying outcomes, qualitative research focuses on process as well (Maxwell, 2005). The study and analysis of both process and outcome give a more complete picture of the situation or topic, in this study of leadership enactment.

To understand leadership, the studying of the outcomes of leadership is insufficient. The study of leadership, specifically in this study principal leadership, in the natural context allows the researcher to illustrate and analyze the complexities (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) that operate within a school and between leaders and followers.

Maxwell (2005) describes eight goals, five intellectual and three practical, that highlight the strengths and the appropriateness of qualitative research methods. The five intellectual goals and three practical goals are listed below. The first five are the intellectual goals and the following three are the practical goals.

1.   Understanding the meaning of the events, situations, actions and experiences of the study participants.

2.   Understanding the context of the participants and the influence of the context upon their actions, reactions and decisions.

3.   Identifying unanticipated situations and influences, creating theories about what has happened.

4.   Understanding the process through which events and actions are occurring.

5.   Developing causal explanations. The understanding of processes and outcomes can lead to potential causal proposals.

6.   Creating findings and potential theories that inform practice.

7.   Conducting formative evaluations that support practitioners, building an understanding of the processes that lead to outcomes.

8.   Engaging in collaborative research with practitioners, involving them actively in the research process.

For the purposes of this study, these goals support the building of leadership theory and micro-politics and also inform practitioners in the enactment of leadership and the political skill needed to influence change. In addition, the study builds leadership knowledge and involves and informs practitioner's daily work. While the study of one principal cannot generalize to every leadership context, the results can inform practitioners and leadership knowledge. Context is important to every leader, but effective leaders are also learners and critical reflectors. A leader can learn from the findings of one principal and apply the learning to themselves, their context, and the school's needs. In addition, the results can support theoretical knowledge of leadership to inform the larger field of educational leadership. This research attempted to address questions of leadership and leadership skill as enacted in the daily complexities of a school's life, therefore, qualitative research methods were most appropriate to understand the phenomenon of intentional principal leadership and principal utilization of political skill.

Epistemology.

Within qualitative research there are a variety of research genres (Groenewald, 2004). This study used phenomenology because the study sought to explore the daily, lived experience

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of a school leader as she deploys leadership and facilitates transformation within a school. Phenomenology seeks to explore, describe and analyze the lived experience of an individual or individuals (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Phenomenology facilitates the description of how participants experience the phenomenon, in this case the leader; "how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 2002, p. 104). It was, therefore, the most meaningful qualitative genre to address the research questions.

>   ***Phenomenology.***

Phenomenological research describes the phenomena of study using evidence (Groenewald, 2004) gained through observation and interaction in the field. It attempts to understand "the social and psychological phenomena from the perspective of those in that phenomena" (Welman & Kruger, 1999, p. 189). In order to understand phenomenology, the background of phenomenological development is described next.

Edmund Husserl, "the fountainhead of phenomenology" (Vandenberg, 1997, p. 11), defines phenomenology as "the science of pure phenomena" (Eagleton, 1983, p. 55) that allows research to return to the concrete, lived experience of those studied in order to build a deep understanding of the processes and complexities of that phenomena (Groenewald, 2004).

While the German philosopher Edmund Husserl may be considered a foundational father of phenomenology (Eagleton, 1983), he was a student of Franz Brentano (Groenewald, 2004) and phenomenology began previous to Husserl and Brentano, with the work of Kant and Hegel (Eagleton, 1983). Heidegger, a student of Husserl, expanded the description of phenomenology by adding the concept of the "lived experience" and how one makes meaning of his or her world. More recent philosophers, such as Jean-Paul Satre, have continued to extend the school of

phenomenology (Groenewald, 2004). Today the qualitative genre of phenomenology attempts to capture the lived experience of participants as they are engaged or in the phenomena of study.

In this study, a qualitative, phenomenological approach provided an opportunity to deeply examine the meaning a principal makes in the day-to-day enactment of leadership intending to facilitate transformation. To portray the lived experience, the study design was thoughtful and intentional. It is challenging, and potentially damaging to the study, to tightly structure the methodology of a phenomenological study (Groenewald, 2004; Maxwell 2005) as it could restrain the researcher's ability to capture and see the true experience. If the structure is too tightly defined prior to the study there is the potential of unintentionally creating blinders to the true phenomenology and to discover actual lived experience of the participant(s) (Groenewald, 2004). A fluid methodology also allows for the fullest data collection, preventing the restriction of information that might potentially influence analysis (Maxwell, 2005), enabling the phenomena to determine the ongoing methodology rather than the methodology determining the phenomena (Hycner, 1999). At the same time, it is important to the credibility and trustworthiness of the study to describe the guiding principles and structure of the study (Groenewald, 2004). This study was intentionally designed to provide both structure and elasticity in order to capture the truest possible description of the participant's leadership. The participant, data collection and data analysis methods are explained next.

The Context

The following section describes the participant, schools, and district involved in the study. The process and rationale for choosing the participants is explained, followed by a description of the specific participant, schools and district in which the study is set.

Sample selection.

Participant selection is critical to the qualitative research methodology (Maxwell, 2005). The choice of research participants must align with the research questions (Maxwell, 2005). Therefore, random selection is not necessarily either appropriate or beneficial to the study (Hycner, 1985). In a phenomenological study, a narrow sampling strategy is normally employed because it is essential that the participant have experience with the phenomena under study (Cresswell, 2007; Groenewald, 2004). In addition, it is important the participant have the ability to articulate the experience in order to illuminate the phenomena (Hycner, 1985). In this study, the participant, an elementary school principal, was chosen particularly for her leadership experience and her ability and willingness to articulate and share her experience.

Ms. Denler.

The principal, Ms. Denler, has approximately eight years experience as an elementary school principal in a large urban school district in the Southeastern United States. Ms. Denler was principal at Jaguar Elementary School. Three years ago, she was appointed as principal of Fox Elementary School. She was appointed, at least in part, due to her demonstration of leadership effectiveness and success at Jaguar. The context of both schools is important to this study of leadership as leadership is enacted within the specific context of the school.

Her first school, Jaguar, is a Pre Kindergarten through fifth grade school serving approximately 550 students. The student body is approximately 54% White, 29% Black, and 17% Hispanic. Approximately 85% of the students qualify for the federal Free/Reduced Lunch program. The school serves Exceptional Education Students (ESE). In school years while Ms. Denler was principal, the school earned a school grade of "C" and then "B" as determined by the

state grading system. The school did not meet Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) status during these years.

The second school, Fox Elementary School, is a Pre Kindergarten through fifth grade school serving approximately 650 students. The student body is approximately 4% White, 90% Black, 4% Hispanic, and 2% Multi Racial/Other. Approximately 97% of students qualify for the federal Free/Reduced Lunch program. The school earned a state letter grade of "F" in the 2009-2010 school year and a "D" in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school year. The school has not earned AYP in any of these three years and is currently under state oversight. The state regional team visits the school weekly to work with the instructional coaches. There is a formal state walkthrough conducted twice during the school year: once during the first semester and a second early in the second semester.

Ms. Denler was selected to participate in this study because she possesses the leadership experience needed to study the phenomena (Hycner, 1985) of intentional leadership. Ms. Denler created positive change at Jaguar Elementary School. In approximately five years, she transformed Jaguar from a struggling school with underperforming staff and students and a high teacher turnover rate to a continually improving school with a school grade of "B" and improved student achievement, lower teacher turnover, and a healthy school climate. Her demonstrated ability to successfully transform a school led her to Fox Elementary School. She provided a meaningful and relevant context for the study of intentional leadership and the political skill needed to facilitate change because she has successful experience in creating change within a school. The district transferred her to her current position at least in part due to her ability to lead and facilitate change. Ms. Denler was a willing participant. To fully understand the phenomena

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and the context, it is important to understand the context of the district, as well as the individual and school.

The district.

The schools are part of a large urban school district in the Southeastern United States. The district is the twenty-first largest district in the United States and the seventh largest in the state. The district includes 126 schools and approximately 100,000 students. There are over 17,000 employees, including 8,000 teachers. The student demographics are approximately 62% White, 19% Black, 10% Hispanic, 4% Asian and 5% Multi-racial. Approximately 54% of district students qualify for the federal Free/Reduced lunch program, up from 48% in 2009-2010. In 2011-2012 the district earned a district grade of "C". This was the first "C" earned by the district: from the initial grading of districts in 2004, the district has earned a "B" each year. The district did not make AYP during the 2011-2012 school year. The district has had three superintendents in the last two years. The superintendent was fired due in large part to her contentious relationship with several board members. When she was hired as superintendent, she was the district's third choice and after the first candidate accepted a position in a different district, she was chosen in a four to three vote by the School Board. Her relationship with the three school board members that originally voted no to hire her did not strengthen during her tenure as superintendent and after approximately 18 months, she was fired. She was replaced with an interim superintendent who had worked in the district approximately ten years earlier as Deputy Superintendent. After about a month, he was named superintendent and the interim title was removed. He served the district for approximately one year. During his tenure he conducted an organization review and restructured the organizational chart, eliminating and revising several district office executive leadership and curriculum positions. The School Board recently

completed a superintendent search and hired a new superintendent: he took office at the end of September 2012 and is currently in the process of completing his own organizational analysis and revisions. Prior to the three recent superintendents, the district had one superintendent for 17 years. The superintendent changes have also created changes in support for schools. Fox Elementary School has had three different Area Superintendents in the last three years due to organizational changes as well as a retirement. The Area Superintendent evaluates principals and provides school level support.

Data Collection

The data collection process included five interviews with Ms. Denler and four additional interviews with administrators and instructional staff members that have worked directly with Ms. Denler. The data collection process is described below including a description of the interview and research reflection processes.

Interviews.

A phenomenological study "captures rich descriptions of the phenomena and the setting" (Kensit, 2000, p. 11). The interview creates an opportunity to understand the phenomena through the words of the participant (Groenewald, 2004). The rich description is ascertained, at least partially, in the interview process in order to understand the phenomena, leadership, and how Ms. Denler constructs meaning in her leadership. This study utilized a series of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow for intentional questions to deepen understanding and gain a vivid picture of the phenomena (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The semi-structured interview also allows the opportunity to probe and gain the deep and vivid understanding based upon the participant's response. It is a combination of both intentional questioning and

responsive questioning based upon the data gathered in the field. Semi-structured interviews were used to gain the fullest possible understanding of Ms. Denler's leadership.

Each interview determined the nature and structure of the next interview. The participant's descriptions helped to determine the next set of interview content and questions. This prevented the researcher from preconceived notions of the phenomena of intentional leadership, bracketing out her own experiences (Creswell, 2007), and also allowed the researcher and researched to illuminate the participants experience in a meaningful manner that revealed the complexities and impact of her leadership. The semi-structured interview process led to a deep, contextual description of her daily practice as a leader.

The format of the interviews included main questions and potential probes. Initially, questions were designed to build the relationship between my and Ms. Denler. The deeper trust I was able to build, the more Ms. Denler revealed her leadership.

Five interviews were conducted with Ms. Denler. Snowball sampling (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) was used to determine additional interview participants. From the interviews with Principal Denler, additional interview participants were identified that added insight and depth into the enactment of leadership because of their roles and interactions with Ms. Denler. A list of the additional interviews is included in Table 2. Five additional interviews were conducted through the snowball sampling.

Table 2

Snowball Sampling Interviews

Mr. Ginlear: Assistant Principal	Jaguar Elementary School (current Principal, Bulldog Elementary School)	Face to face interview with follow-up member check
Mr. Vulpes: Assistant Principal	Fox Elementary School	Face to face interview with follow-up member check
Mrs. Follwere: Response to Intervention Data Coach	Formerly Jaguar Elementary School staff member and currently Fox Elementary School	Face to face interview with follow-up member check
Mrs. Swift: Fourth Grade Teacher	Fox Elementary School	Face to face interview with follow-up member check

Each interview was audio recorded. In addition, I took notes during the interview to capture body language, facial expression and other insights that were not reflected in the voice recording. Immediately following each interview I created field notes with a summary of the interview, including perceptions, insights, and patterns from that particular interview session. This process of memoing (Groenewald, 2004) or field notes allowed me as the researcher to reflect upon what was happening by recording what was seen and heard at the interview: capturing a detailed, nonjudgmental description of what was just observed and heard in the interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This process was descriptive rather than reflective summarizing what happened and who was involved (Groenewald, 2004). The field notes were coded into four categories (Groenewald, 2004): observational notes, theoretical notes, methodological notes and analytical notes. A description of each category is listed below:

Observational Notes: Notes to identify what happened as observed in the interview of observation.

Theoretical Notes: Notes to gain meaning of the experience as the researcher reflects and transcribes the data.

Methodological Notes: Notes to remind cue or instruct regarding the study process.

Analytical Notes: Notes that apply to analysis of the data and experience.

The researcher reflective journal was maintained in addition to the field notes. The reflective journal included personal reflection on the research process and the content itself. The purpose and content of the reflection journal are described in more detail in the next section.

As mentioned previously, each interview was audio recorded. Pseudonyms were used to protect the privacy and confidentiality of each participant. Each interview recording and each interview field note was noted with the date, time and participant information. Audio recording, with procedures to guarantee accuracy of the acquired data, increases the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Easton, McComish & Greenberg, 2000). Equipment failure can jeopardize the data. An audio recording was used to accurately and completely capture the interview data. To avoid potential data loss due to equipment failure, a back up recorder was also present in each interview session. In addition, all equipment was double checked for proper functioning prior to each interview session. The recordings of each interview were professionally transcribed.

Prior to interviewing the main participant and any additional interview participants, informed consent was gained. An informed consent was signed before the initial interview and a description of the research purpose and process was discussed with each participant. The copy of the consent form was given to each participant and I maintained the original copies. To protect the privacy of each participant, pseudonyms were used for individuals as well as for the schools and district involved.

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The researcher submitted and gained approval from the University and school district Instructional Review Board (IRB) for the research study. No interviews or other research within the school or school district began until IRB approval was received. All district and university processes and procedures were followed.

Researcher reflection.

Throughout the study, I maintained a researcher reflection journal. Janesick (2011) identifies four purposes of the researcher reflection journal: to deepen the researchers understanding of the role and of the research itself; to enhance the researcher's understanding of participants; to communicate with participants and to support the researcher knowing him or herself as a researcher. In this study, the reflection journal served three of these four purposes. It helped me more deeply understand the research conducted and the data gathered, supported the deeper understanding of the participants, especially Ms. Denler, and acted as a tool that enabled me to understand myself as a researcher. The reflection journal also acted as an additional data set providing me an opportunity to reflect deeply and make meaning of the research itself and the research process and as a way of getting feedback about myself (Janesick, 2011).

Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to convert the data gathered, through interpretation, into an understanding of the phenomena studied. The process involves breaking the information into parts, being careful and conscious not to lose site of the larger phenomena (Groenewald, 2004). The overall process includes preparing and organizing the data, creating themes from the data, and representing the data (Creswell, 2009). It is a non-linear approach described by Creswell (2009) as a spiral. Creswell's spiral process was employed as the data analysis framework in conjunction with interpretation using Carspecken's (1996) horizontal and vertical analysis. The

process was "custom-built, revised, and choreographed" (Creswell, 2009, p. 150) in order to achieve the deepest, most thorough analysis possible within the data. Each framework, and how it was applied to the data gathered, is described in the following section.

The data analysis spiral includes specific procedures (Creswell, 2009) and is described separately, but the steps are interrelated and occur simultaneously. The steps (see figure 2) include data management; read and memo; describe, classify and interpret; and represent and visualize. Data management is the organization of the text. The reading and memoing step involves the reading and rereading of the text in an attempt to "hear" what was said. Notes are made about what the researcher is hearing, seeing and feeling during each reading. In the describe, classify and interpret stage, initial categories or codes are identified and then combined into themes that lead to interpretation of the data. The researcher makes sense of the data at this point in the analysis. Finally, what was found is represented, often both visually and in text.

Each step applied to this phenomenological study and with the vertical and horizontal analysis framework of Carspecken (1996), is described in additional detail below:

Data management.

The interview, along with any other observation or document data, was organized so as to allow the analysis process to begin. The interviews were transcribed and field notes typed and organized. Summary memos were then written. In addition, I reflected and then described my own experience within this phenomenon. This is part of bracketing and making explicit, both for myself and the reader, my researcher position and perspective within the phenomenon of study. This was part of the reflexive process that is critical to phenomenological research (Creswell, 2007).

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Procedures		Description/Example
Represent Visualize		Graph Chart
Describe Classify		Categorize Compare
Read, Memo		Reflect Note
Manage		Organize Data
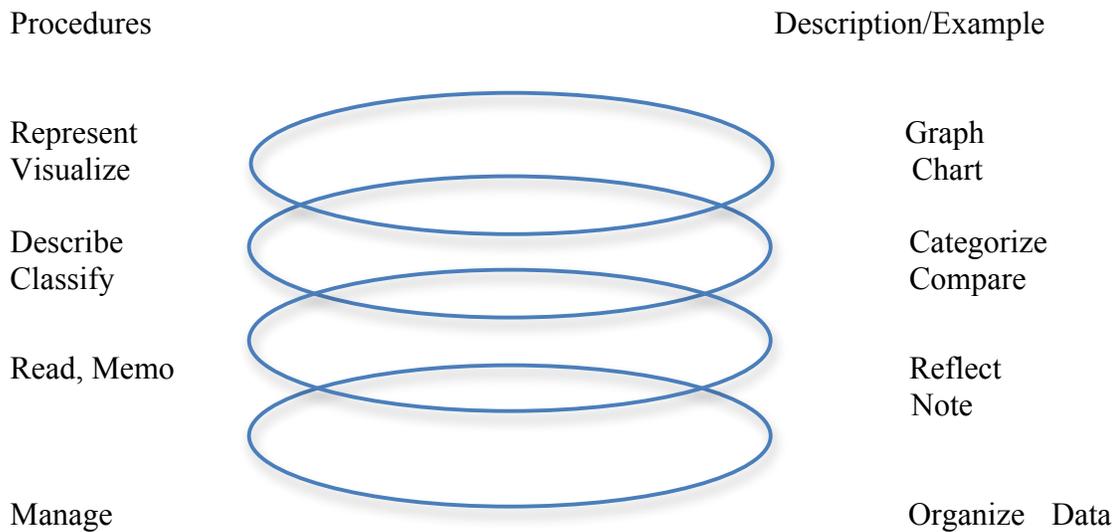
Figure 2

Data Analysis Spiral Procedures

Read and memo.

The transcripts were read and reread initially to allow me to define a sense of the overall

phenomenon. I then summarized each interview transcript with the purpose of creating an

analytic memo (Saldana, 2009). The memoing process helped me generate an overall

understanding of each interview and the total data set.

Describe and classify.

During this portion of the phenomenological analysis cycle initial coding was done,

developing a list of significant statements from the interviews and about the participants

experience in the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). This was part of the horizontal analysis of the

data (Carspecken, 1996). These initially identified statements were then grouped into themes or

"meaning units" (Creswell, 2007, p. 159). Next, as part of the interpretation, I wrote descriptions

of "what" happened and "how" it happened from the transcripts and other data. These are called

"textural descriptions" and "structural descriptions" respectively (Creswell, 2007). Within this phase the vertical analysis process also began (Carspecken, 1996). The three ontological categories, Objective, Subjective and Normative-Evaluative (Carspecken, 1996), were used as the framework for this portion of the interpretation. This process is described later in this section.

Represent and visualize.

Finally, a composite description of the data was written, describing the "essence" of the phenomenon discovered in the research investigation (Creswell, 2007). This description included both extensive descriptive text and visuals to create the most complete picture possible, enabling the reader to thoroughly and deeply understand the phenomena.

Vertical analysis.

Vertical analysis extracts foreground claims and background claims (Carspecken, 1996). Foreground claims are immediately and explicitly recognized in the text. Background claims are remotely and intuitively referenced (Carspecken, 1996). The process for vertical analysis includes analyzing a section of interview text and identifying foreground and background claims. Then, the foreground and background categories are further identified as potentially either objective claims, subjective claims, or normative-evaluative claims. The transcript analysis was then shared and reviewed by Ms. Denler. The process supported accurate analysis and interpretation of the data collected and also helped structure future interview questions. The vertical analysis process was done in conjunction with horizontal analysis to gain the deeper, full picture of the phenomena.

Horizontal analysis.

Horizontal analysis includes the ontological categories (Carspecken, 1996) of objectivity,

subjectivity, and normative-evaluative (Carspecken, 1996). These categories allow one to

generate meaning objectively, subjectively, and normatively. Objectivity is related to statements

made about the world, what is and what happened. It includes multiple access points

(Carspecken, 1996) as different people and perspectives articulate a reality based upon their

"truths". Subjectivity requires privileged access and is a declaration about "your", "her", "his",

or "my" world (Carspecken, 2009). It includes the feelings, intentions, and states of awareness

of participants and can only be representative of what is disclosed. Normative-evaluative

requires position taking (Carspecken, 1996). It encompasses what is considered proper, or what

should happen. The purpose is to identify what is right, wrong good or bad. Horizontal and

vertical analysis is interrelated and important to the understanding of the meaning revealed. The

next section describes the memoing process and data gathered about Ms. Denler's leadership

through this process.

Memoing.

Field notes were collected during and following each interview. These field notes were

then summarized into four categories (Groenewald, 2004) for analysis: observational notes,

methodological notes, theoretical notes and analytical notes. As a first step in data analysis, these

notes are summarized and analyzed. While field notes are typically part of data collection,

because of the interpretation involved in this model, they provide an important step in analysis

(Groenewald, 2004). This process gives an initial analysis of what happened and how it was

experienced, giving insight into both the participant and the researcher.

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The observational and methodological notes reveal what happened in order to understand the experience of Ms. Denler's leadership. The theoretical and analytical notes provide insight and understanding into how leadership at Jaguar and Fox elementary school is experienced and interpreted both from an internal, personal perspective and from an external, researcher, perspective.

Observational and methodological notes.

The observational notes revealed Ms. Denler's consistent openness and willingness to share her leadership experiences and her reflections regarding her leadership and her work at both Jaguar and Fox Elementary Schools. She is reflective in nature so articulating her experiences and insight into her leadership flowed smoothly and easily throughout our conversations with limited prompting needed. A simple question would often lead to an extended and thoughtful response. As she shared her experiences, her passion became immediately evident. The voice intonations as well as the facial expressions and hand gestures were illustrative instantly and continually of her passion. These expressions and gestures revealed far beyond what words alone could express. Her bright flashing eyes portray a sincere desire to serve children and their future. The grins and frowns, spreading across her face naturally as she spoke and especially when she told stories, demonstrated the joy she finds in her work as well has the frustration and the struggles inherent in the complexities of leading schools in need of significant improvement. Ms. Denler made the interview process exciting, and each interview became an event of anticipation to hear fascinating stories and identify new insights into Ms. Denler and her work.

The methodological notes guided each subsequent interview and allowed refinement of the process in order to most fully explore Ms. Denler's leadership. They supported the credibility

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of the process and the data. Ms. Denler's willingness to share and adeptness in telling stories allowed the conversation to flow naturally without much interruption. Ms. Denler led the discussion with little prompting or probing, allowing for deeper and fuller revelation of her leadership practice and allowing her to direct the conversations. It did require strategic and thoughtful questioning in order to allow Ms. Denler to guide the direction of the conversation and reveal her leadership strategies. At times this was a challenge as my instinct was to control the conversation and direct it in paths I thought it should or was headed based upon my own leadership experience. I had to be conscious to create a conversation but remain focused on her leadership and not allow my words to become her words. This was a balancing act between the creation of an authentic, trusting environment that fostered sharing and one that maintained the integrity of the data collection process and capturing the richness, depth and breath of her experiences.

Secondly, as a previous elementary school principal, I have my own experiences. I was consciously careful to allow Ms. Denler to share her leadership story without imposing my own story onto hers. At times it was tempting to "put words into her mouth" or to impose my thinking onto hers, without allowing Ms. Denler to share her own personal story. I found myself constantly balancing how to both separate my experience from Ms. Denler's and use my insider perspective to deepen the conversation. I wanted to ensure the discussion focused on her leadership while at the same time using my experiences to understand her as deeply and completely as possible. While my own leadership experiences were a potential barrier, they were also a potential asset to understanding and interpreting Ms. Denler's leadership story. Because I understand the daily responsibilities of a principal, I was able to question and probe in areas that led to fuller revelation of her leadership practice. It required thoughtful attention to my role as a

researcher, but my leadership experience allowed Ms. Denler to fully tell her story and informed the process without creating a barrier.

Theoretical notes.

The theoretical notes provide an avenue to begin formulating meaning (Groenewald, 2004). Through analysis of the field notes, specifically the theoretical and analytical notes, foreground and background claims (Carspecken, 1996) were initially revealed. The theoretical notes identify foreground claims; claims readily observable in the data.

Analytical and field notes.

The analytical and field notes provide depth to the description of Ms. Denler's leadership as well as adding to the depth of meaning. The analytical field notes revealed Ms. Denler's leadership style. She is a servant leader with the courage to attack the complexities of leadership and transformational change. She demonstrates persistence in making a difference in the lives of children as she drives her practice and her school forward toward her vision for Fox.

The field notes provide initial insight into Ms. Denler's leadership and leadership experiences, along with the initial data needed to identify findings or deeper analysis to fully understand the essence of her leadership and the daily leadership strategies she uses to lead and create change. The next section discusses the potential limitations of the study's methodology followed by ethical considerations and a description of the credibility and trustworthiness processes.

Limitations

Phenomenological research, while allowing for the deep study of one phenomenon, does depend upon the relationship and trust of the researcher and the participant (Groenewald, 2004). The closeness, or lack of closeness between the two may cause the researcher to miss the

opportunity to know the full experience. Subjectivity may be compromised if the relationship

and trust levels are not high because the participant has not yet had the opportunity to build trust.

While I had a relationship prior to the research, I did not know Ms. Denler well. Our relationship

grew during each interview session and Ms. Denler gradually revealed more and more about her

leadership philosophy and action. At the same time, I must recognize that these are my

perceptions of our relationship. As with subjective claims, what I gained is what she revealed.

Only Ms. Denler herself knows the complete and full picture of her leadership.

In phenomenological research the number of participants is intentionally limited. The

participants are not randomly selected and in fact, are carefully selected because the participants

experience with the phenomena under study is critical to the investigation itself (Creswell, 2007).

Ms. Denler was the only principal studied and she was chosen because of her specific leadership

experience.

Bracketing is an important part of phenomenological research. Simultaneously, it is

dependent upon the ability of the researcher to separate, or "bracket" themselves from the

phenomenon and/or the data (Creswell, 2007).   I was cognizant of this potential limitation and

consciously addressed it in the personal narrative was a component of the initial analysis process.

The researcher reflection journal also helped ensure appropriate bracketing. This was a constant

and conscious tension as I needed to understand her leadership, not my own, but I also needed to

use my own leadership experiences as a tool to most effectively deepen and understand Ms.

Denler.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical research begins in research design and is founded in respect for persons,

beneficence and justice (Creswell, 2007). Each individual in the study was treated with dignity

and respect and was not treated as a means to an end but as a tool to understand the phenomenon of intentional leadership. The privacy and anonymity of the individual was maintained. Beneficence encompasses the ability to do no harm to any individual (Creswell, 2007). In both the design and conduction of the research, the concept of justice was considered (Creswell, 2007).   The consideration of who will benefit was of utmost importance throughout the research process.

I am an employee in the same district as Ms. Denler. While we both hold lateral positions with the district, I now work as a district office administrator. I hold no supervisory or evaluation responsibilities with Ms. Denler. In order to protect against potential bias, I maintained a reflection journal and addressed any concerns or issues on an on-going basis. In addition, Ms. Denler and I explicitly discussed the confidentiality and concerns of bias or ethics and returned to this conversation at each interview to check. It was also made explicit in the data analysis process and the final written analysis section.

Lens of the Researcher

I have over twenty-five years of experience as an educator, with approximately nine years as a teacher, fifteen years as a building administrator and two as a district administrator. As a building administrator, I had personal experience in attempting to facilitate significant change in a school. While bracketing was an on-going process throughout the research, this experience and background did influence my perspective.

My background as a teacher, similar to Ms. Denler, was in Special Education. I taught both middle school and elementary school in three different districts in two Northwest states. My administrative career began as a middle school Assistant Principal in a small semi-rural, semi-suburban district in the Northwest. After two years I became an elementary school

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principal in the same district. Five years later, I moved across the country to the Southeast

region of the Unites States and became an elementary Assistant Principal in the same district as

Ms. Denler worked. I served as Assistant Principal for one year and then was appointed principal

in a school that had earned a state letter grade of "F" the previous year.   Moving from the

Northwest to the Southeast and from smaller districts to a large, urban bureaucracy was

somewhat of an initial culture shock. A source of both learning and frustration was negotiating

leadership and change within a large system. I served as an elementary principal for seven years

and then became a district office administrator. My purpose in moving to a district level position

was to attempt to influence change in district systems and processes in order to support the work

of schools. The position gave me a new perspective of the way of the district. These

experiences and understanding of the district context helped my understand Ms. Denler's

leadership and work.

In order to support meaningful and accurate data analysis, I kept a reflection journal. The

purpose of the journal was to use the notes as an added piece of text, to maintain the researcher

as the research instrument (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), and to facilitate insight, analysis, and

next steps in the research process. The journal also served to identify potential ethical

considerations and biases (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Credibility in qualitative research refers to the reliability of the research (Creswell, 2007).

The use of the post positivist term reliability has been debated by some (Marshall & Rossman,

2011), wanting to maintain a distinction between qualitative research and post positivist research,

but whatever it is titled, the concept of credibility is important to the study. Reliability in

qualitative research (Creswell, 2007) can be achieved through the use of field notes, sound

interview procedures, and careful transcription procedures. In this study, credibility measures included the use of field notes, audio recording of all interviews, and explicit transcription procedures. These methods ensured that what the participant stated was accurately captured, including the subtle nuances such as pauses, tone and intonations.

Validity, or trustworthiness, procedures were also important to the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Validity provides a standard for evaluation (Creswell, 2007). Trustworthiness within qualitative research is defined as a study "well grounded and well supported" (Creswell, 2007, p. 215). Polkinghorne (1989), one of the first scholars to establish a specific process for addressing validity in a phenomenological study, suggested five questions. This study used these five questions (Creswell, 2007) to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. Each of the questions and how it was answered is included below.

1. Did the interviewer influence the contents of the participants; description in such a way that the descriptions do not truly reflect the participants; actual experience? The description of Ms. Denler's leadership was an accurate description of her work as a principal. Ms. Denler checked transcriptions for accuracy and had the opportunity to clarify any experiences included. In addition, the experiences shared by Ms. Denler were in congruence with the examples shared by the four non-principal participants.

2. Is the transcription accurate, and does it convey the meaning of the oral presentation in the interview?
    The interviews were audio recorded and professionally transcribed. Each transcript was checked against the audio to ensure that the transcripts accurately captured the actual interview content.

3.	In the analysis of the transcriptions, were there conclusions other than those offered by the researcher that could have been derived? Has the researcher identified these alternatives?

	According to Carspecken (1996) there are always alternative conclusions and analysis in qualitative research. However, the horizontal and vertical analysis helped the researcher deeply analyze potential claims. The analysis was verified with Ms. Denler as an additional layer of credibility.

4.	Is it possible to go from the general structural description to the transcriptions and to account for the specific contents and connections in the original examples of the experience?

	Yes, because the interviews were transcribed directly from the audio of each interview, the coding and analysis was conducted with the verbatim examples. The original language of examples is included in both the findings and analysis.

5.	Is the structural description situation specific, or does it hold in general for the experience in other situations? (Polkinghorne, 1989).

	The description includes the specific leadership examples shared by Ms. Denler and the four non-principal participants. The examples shared were consistent across participants. The structure description held across Ms. Denler's two principal experiences and across the researcher's principal experience in the same district.

These questions were answered through transcription member checks, and through the horizontal analysis (Carspecken, 1996) described earlier and including participant review of the

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horizontal analysis. The research process was trustworthy and credible, portraying an accurate description of Ms. Denler and the leadership strategies she employs.

Summary

This chapter provided an outline of the qualitative methodology instituted in the study, including sample selection, a description of participant and context, data collection methods and the data analysis process. The phenomenological approach to the study allowed for the deep description of a leader employing political skill in order to influence change. The next chapter describes the findings revealed through the described process.

Chapter 4

Findings

This purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the research study. The research questions the research intended to answer are:

1. How does an elementary school principal understand and enact leadership on a day-to-day basis?

2. To what extent does a school principal intentionally utilize political skill and tactics to facilitate change within a school?

The data collection process involved interviewing principal Ms. Denler five times to discuss her leadership and to answer the research questions. In addition, four other interviews were conducted with individuals that work or previously worked with Ms. Denler.

The chapter begins with a description of each of the study participants, the principal participant, Ms. Denler and the four non-principal participants who I interviewed just once. They were: Mr. Ginlear, who served as assistant principal with Ms. Denler at Jaguar Elementary School, Mr. Vulpes, current Assistant Principal at Fox Elementary School, Mrs. Follwere, the current Data Coach at Fox Elementary School and also a previous teacher at Jaguar Elementary School, and Mrs. Swift, a current teacher at Fox Elementary School.

Next, the change process Ms. Denler enacted at each school is described in order to answer the first research question. The process and emphasis of change, as well as the leadership process utilized to facilitate the intended change is discussed.

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Finally, the leadership skills and political strategies utilized by Principal Denler are described. Each strategy revealed in the data, with participant examples, illustrates how each strategy is used.

Data was collected through a series of semi-structured interviews. Principal Denler participated in five interview sessions, each lasting approximately one hour. The other four interview participants were each interviewed once. Each of these interviews also lasted approximately one hour.

The interview sessions were audio taped and each session was then transcribed. The transcriptions and field notes were analyzed using the spiral process (Creswell, 2009) of data management, reading and memoing, describing, classifying and interpreting, and representing. This process was completed for each individual interview as well as for the entire data set.

Study Participants

During the data collection process a total of five participants were interviewed and nine interviews conducted. The principal participant, Ms. Denler, participated in five interview sessions across approximately three months. Each interview session lasted approximately one hour. The additional interview participants each participated in one interview. Each of these interviews lasted approximately one hour. A semi-structured interview format was employed in order to allow for the deepest and most freely shared responses. The researcher used the responses to probe deeply and for further understanding and meaning in order to most fully reveal Ms. Denler's leadership and most completely answer the research questions. The responses in each interview with Principal Denler helped to determine the subsequent interview questions.

Ms. Denler.

Four of the five interviews were conducted in Ms. Denler's office at Fox Elementary School. One interview, interview four, was held at an Olive Garden restaurant over lunch after a monthly principal meeting. Principal Denler's office is a long, narrow rectangle with a door at either end. The office is at the end of the main office hallway, near the doors leading from the main office into the school's courtyard and the school grounds. Staff members and students pass Ms. Denler's office coming and leaving the main office. Windows into the school courtyard line approximately half of one long side, providing a view into the courtyard and visual access to the movement within the school campus. The blinds covering the windows were open during each interview session, giving a sense of transparency and accessibility. Half of the opposite wall is covered with bookshelves. The shelves contained books, but also several pictures of her two adopted daughters as well as wood-carvings of the words "love", "dream" and "believe". Principal Denler's desk, a large u-shaped dark wood office desk, sits at the far end of the office. A small round table and two chairs sit in front of the windows between the door and Ms. Denler's desk. The windows provide natural light, so the fluorescent lights were off during each visit. A small lamp on Principal Fox's desk provided a soft glow to that end of the office. The walls are bright white and the carpet a standard school commercial strength in tones of blue. The cabinetry in the office is a lighter blue. Above the counter is a poster of a young African American girl in a spring dress. A poster on another wall portrays the face shots of a diverse group of five children. While Principal Denler's desk often contained piles of papers, the office was clean and orderly; a warm and welcoming place to enter.

Meeting Ms. Fox for each interview, I was greeted with a genuine smile and a warm welcome. Normally the words, "welcome friend" were included in the greeting. For each

interview in Principal Denler's office, we sat at the small round meeting table. A small table lamp sat to one side of the table. We sat across the table from each other, facing each other eye to eye.

Principal Denler is an African American in her early fifty's. She is just over five feet tall and has a heavier build. She often was dressed in vibrant colors. I remember vividly one interview meeting: she was striking in a sky blue sweater that set off her chin length graying hair that framed her face. Her graying hair betrays her age while her smooth skin and bright eyes suggest a younger version of Ms. Denler's true age. She consistently greeted me with a smile, always sending the message that she was eager to meet and interested in our conversation, no matter how many other things she had on her to do list at that moment.

Ms. Denler is currently serving in her third year as Principal at Fox Elementary School. She was appointed as principal at Fox after the school earned a state letter grade of "F" under the previous principal. She had served successfully at another school in the district for five years, earning grades of "B", "C", "C", "C" and "B" for each of her five years there.

Ms. Denler: Pathway to principal.

Ms. Denler did not originally plan to become a building administrator, nor originally to become a teacher. Her original plans were to become a missionary. She worked with students, beginning in high school, and found it rewarding, but her original plans were to do mission work in an orphanage. Her first motivation to work with children and eventually to teaching came through reflection upon an elementary school experience. Her fifth grade teacher chastised her for not crying after a paddling and she remembers vividly his telling her, "You will never become anything. You probably won't even finish high school". While a significant experience at the time, the experience had further impact upon her life later as she reflected upon it and

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wondered, "How can a teacher not understand the effect that they have on children? I purposed in my heart that I would be the person who would let kids be accepted and be nurtured and taught. That was just kind of like my mission".

Her second motivation came in college while working in an orphanage. She worked with students involved in the juvenile justice system. After that experience, she decided she had the ability to impact children if her efforts were focused on preventing their entrance into the juvenile system. Once she decided to become a teacher, she moved back home and began working as an assistant in special education programs while completing her education degree. Upon completion of her degree she became a middle school Special Education teacher and then an Exceptional Student Education Specialist, working with parents and teachers to ensure students received appropriate services. The impetus to become a specialist was to advocate for students. Through her teaching experience, she realized parents often did not understand their rights. Parents would attend Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, but did not necessarily know that they could add input or request consideration of specific services for their child. Her desire to advocate for students drew her to the position in order to ensure students were served rather than simply identified as special needs learners. The goal was to create change and make a difference for children.

Up to this point in her career, Ms. Denler did not have the goal of becoming an administrator. Other administrators, including her principal, encouraged her, but she was not convinced. It was not until a compelling news article that she made the decision to enter administration. The article described an individual woman's story and it motivated her "to step out of my comfort level and do something totally different. And so it was about having a change

of perspective". The next day she contacted the local university and began her masters in Educational Leadership.

Soon after completing her masters she become the Assistant Principal at Wildcat Elementary School. Again, she was content, and had no intention of becoming a principal. However, as with the motivating negative experience with her fifth grade teacher, it was an ineffective principal role model that convinced her to become a principal.

After serving as Assistant Principal at Wildcat Elementary School, she was hired as principal at Jaguar Elementary, a school less than two miles from Wildcat. She was hired through a group interview process: four assistant principals were selected to interview for four principal openings. They were guaranteed one of the positions, and the interview determined where each individual was placed. Another Assistant Principal had indicated Jaguar Elementary School was her top and only choice, so Ms. Denler did not consider it an option. She had selected two other schools as her priority choices and had not researched Jaguar thoroughly. After being selected and driving by the school, she was surprised at the striking differences. These differences were initially apparent in the physical setting but also became apparent in the staff and school climate. Jaguar was physically rundown: there was garbage in the play areas and Physical Education court. A bulletin board at the front entrance was old and faded and included information several years old. She described the Jaguar staff as "beaten down". They did not appear to have a sense of pride or efficacy in their teaching. At Wildcat, she described an expectation of success and a pride in the school. She had assumed, being only two miles from Wildcat Elementary, that the schools would be similar. It was not. Ms. Denler described it as a "sad" school, run down and unkempt with low expectations for students. Ms. Denler titled the difference a move from "working poor" to "trailer park poor". "I mean, that's a whole other

culture of thinking. It was a very different level of poverty". She saw her role as a change agent. Her job was to make a difference.

Each time she indicated contentment with her career, change seemed soon to follow. This was true in her transition from Jaguar to Fox Elementary School. After five years at Jaguar Elementary School, and success in creating change, Ms. Denler was appointed principal at Fox Elementary School. She realized success, "I finally had a staff that loved kids and wanted to work, had the perfect Professional Learning Communities (PLC), and administrative PLC. I loved my school. I could end my career here." Then, she received a phone call from the Deputy Superintendent. She was being transferred to Fox Elementary School, a school in the South end of the district that had just earned a state letter grade of "F". She was asked if she was willing to take on the challenge. She expressed her thinking at the moment of the call. "The superintendent and the deputy superintendent are calling me to ask me if I would be willing, as if I really have a choice. I ain't stupid." She reflected on her happiness at Jaguar and desire to continue the work, but also believed that in reality she did not have a choice to say "no" to the transfer. The superintendent had asked her to move and if she responded "no" she would not be viewed as a team player, they could move her anyway, and it would potentially impact her future in the district.

Ms. Denler is currently in her third year as principal at Fox Elementary School. The transition brought change and the realization that a school a few miles away can be a world different. "If Jaguar was a world different than Wildcat Elementary, then this was a different planet". Again, the physical differences were immediately apparent to her, but for very different reasons. Physically the campus was in good condition, but the needs of the school and student population were visually different: "the one thing I think that hit me when I first got here because

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I mean you're talking about a school that's 97% African American. That looks different than any

other school in the district." She continued,

> I knew there were a lot of African American children here. That part I knew, but the other
> stuff that comes with it, the type of parental interaction, it's rawer. I was not expecting
> that level of hostility when I came. There was a lot of anger here…a lot of distrust,
> defensiveness. That caught me off guard.

Still, her focus was on creating positive change. She viewed it as both her calling and her

job.

Now, Ms. Denler is in a place that she did not originally envision for her career. She has

worked with students since her first job in high school, but her original goal was not teaching.

She originally planned to do mission work or work in an orphanage but was drawn to teaching

for the potential to proactively influence children's lives. When she became a teacher, she did

not envision becoming an assistant principal: she was satisfied with her role as a teacher. When

she became an assistant principal she did not envision becoming a principal. She enjoyed the

administrative role, but enjoyed the impact upon students in the role of Assistant Principal. "I

saw the principalship as a lot of bureaucracy and politics." She wanted to remain an Assistant

Principal until the time when she realized she could impact students through impact upon

teachers. She reflected upon her principal and how that experience led her to want to be a

principal.

> There was just that lack of vision and the lack of do you understand the impact that
> you're having on these teachers by allowing teachers to be complacent….as a leader you
> do your teachers a disservice when you can't give them something to push for. I just
> realized as a principal, you could do that.

When she became a principal, she did not envision becoming a turnaround principal nor

being in her current context. Yet, her mission of advocating for students has remained

unwavering.

Study participants and relationship with Ms. Denler.

Four individuals were interviewed in an effort to understand Ms. Denler and her leadership as fully as possible, two administrators and two instructional staff members.   Mr. Ginlear, now in his second year as an elementary school principal, worked as an assistant principal with Ms. Denler. Mr. Vulpes is currently an assistant principal at Fox Elementary School. Ms. Follwere, a data coach, was a teacher at Jaguar Elementary School, and is now the data coach at Fox Elementary School. Ms. Swift, a classroom teacher, has worked at Fox Elementary approximately twelve years. A description of each individual follows.

Mr. Ginlear.

Ms. Denler hired Mr. Ginlear as the assistant principal at Jaguar Elementary School when she first became principal. They served together as an administrative team for approximately five years prior to Ms. Denler being appointed to Fox Elementary. Mr. Ginlear is a white male, in his early forty's. We met late one afternoon after school. He was dressed in a light yellow dress shirt, with a coordinated, gray, black and yellow tie. He has a perpetual smile on his face and laughs often as he speaks. He makes eye contact as he talks. While Ms. Denler tends to look up and away while thinking and before speaking, Mr. Ginlear tends to maintain direct eye contact, with little to no pause prior to speaking. Like his constant smile, there is a constant enthusiasm in his voice, especially as he speaks about Ms. Denler. His tone reflects a sincere appreciation and respect for Ms. Denler, her leadership and her accomplishments at Jaguar Elementary School. That respect seemed to have deepened now that he has become a principal and has an insider's understanding of the demands and the work of a building principal.

Ms. Denler hired Mr. Ginlear as a new assistant principal. They were a new administrative team their first year at Jaguar Elementary School, both as new administrators at

Jaguar and as a new principal and assistant principal themselves. According to Mr. Ginlear, being new in their roles together helped them bond and work effectively as a team. Having worked closely with Ms. Denler as an administrator at Jaguar Elementary School, observing her practice and daily discussing issues with her, Mr. Ginlear has insight into Ms. Denler's daily work as a building leader. Prior to becoming an assistant principal, Mr. Ginlear served as a building Technology Specialist for seven years at Manatee Elementary School in the same district. Prior to the Technology Specialist position, Mr. Ginlear had three years of classroom teaching experience.

Mr. Vulpes.

Mr. Vulpes is a current assistant principal at Fox Elementary School. He was hired by the previous principal at Fox and is currently in his fifth year as assistant principal. Mr. Vulpes is a white male in his mid thirty's. He is approximately five feet eight inches tall with a small, but athletic frame. His hair is closely shaven to his head, giving him a bald appearance upon first glance. The day we met, at the end of a school day, he was dressed in a white, long sleeved dress shirt, dark slacks and a red and black time. His sleeves were rolled up, alluding to the nature of the day's work. Mr. Vulpes is in his fifth year as an assistant principal, and does not come from the typical teaching background. Before working in education, Mr. Vulpes worked as a counselor in a residential facility for teenage girls. He then became a middle school and elementary school guidance counselor. Though he was a school guidance counselor in this district, he has never been a classroom teacher. According to Mr. Vulpes, this has caused some lack of credibility with teachers at times, though he now, through the mentorship of Ms. Denler, describes himself as an instructional leader. Ms Denler initially modeled for him conversations and the focus on good instruction. She conducted formal and informal teacher observations with

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him and had him shadow her during post observation and evaluation conferences the first year, prior to having him conduct them independently. They continue to do regular walk throughs as an administrative team and then discuss the results and next steps to support teacher development. They also conduct data chats collaboratively with teacher teams. He describes these steps as learning experiences that built his instructional knowledge and have enabled him to become the instructional leaders he sees himself as today.

Mrs. Follwere.

Mrs. Follwere appears to be in her mid fifty's, a tall slender white female with light brown hair that falls just below her chin with bangs that frame her face. We met over the winter holiday break at a local coffee shop, so her dress was accordingly casual. She wore jeans and a mauve short-sleeved t-shirt. She came prepared with a sheet of notes containing her thoughts describing her experiences working with Ms. Denler. Mrs. Follwere is currently the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RtI) data coach at Fox Elementary School, but also worked with Ms. Denler at Jaguar. She taught and acted as the Title I Learning Specialist at Jaguar Elementary School for many years prior to responding to Ms. Denler's request to transfer to Fox. Ms. Denler first attempted to recruit Mrs. Follwere as a Reading Coach for Fox, but Mrs. Follwere declined. She wanted to work with Ms. Denler, but was not convinced of her qualifications as a Reading Coach. The following year, Ms. Denler recruited her again, for the school's MTSS/RtI data coach position, and this time, Mrs. Follwere accepted. She is now in her second year at Fox and while she transferred for the purpose of making a difference with students, she also transferred for the opportunity to again work with Ms. Denler.

Mrs. Swift.

The room lit up when Mrs. Swift entered. We met early one morning before school. I waited in the school office for her to arrive and was impressed immediately with her vibrant and sincere presence as she entered the front office, chatting with a colleague. She is a fourth grade teacher in her fourth year of teaching but her twelfth year in education and at Fox. She started as a Title I Hourly Teacher, working with small groups of students delivering prescribed interventions. She was encouraged to become a teacher and when the Title I requirements demanded a teaching certificate for hourly positions, she returned to school to complete her degree. The previous principal hired her as a classroom teacher. Mrs. Swift is an African American female with a tall, athletic build. She ran track in college at Bull University and continues to train and coach at a local track club. She is striking with big, bright eyes framed by her short, stylish hair. The day we met she was dressed in light brown slacks and a mustard colored, short-sleeved silk shirt. She has a cheery face and demeanor and her eyes dance as she talks, especially as she talks about students and her work. She is vibrant and energetic and her enthusiasm for her work exudes as she speaks.

Findings

Numerous findings emerged across and through the interviews with Ms. Denler and the four additional study participants. Starting with a short portrait of Ms Denler as a leader, the findings while interconnected and integrally related, each will be described separately and in two sections. The first section will describe the change and process of change at each school, but more deeply at Fox Elementary School. The second section will describe the leadership practices and political skills employed that emerged in the data and provide response to the two

research questions. The cycles of Ms. Denler's leadership for change became apparent in both Jaguar and Fox Elementary Schools. These cycles of changes are described for each school during Ms. Denler's tenure as principal. While the change process has similarities in each school, they are also both different. The next section describes the changes at each school followed by a description of the leadership practices and political skills employed that emerged as evident in Ms. Denler's daily work as a leader.

Ms. Denler the leader.

Across the interviews a picture of Ms. Denler the leader emerged. Ms. Denler is a leader characterized by her passion, her belief in education, reflection and continual learning. The initial conversation with Ms. Fox reveals her passion for her work and for serving students. While she does not come outright and state her passion, it is evident in her voice, her facial expressions, her body language, and her comments. Ms. Fox is thoughtful and during our conversations, tended to look up and away while thinking and then, as she talked, to direct her gaze back down, giving direct eye contact, her bright eyes intense and dancing as she talked. She talks with her hands regularly, the gestures typically within the width of her shoulders. As she talked about students and her work as a principal, her gestures increased outside of her shoulder width and become full arm movements. When thinking, she tended to lean back in her chair, but as she talked, she tended to move up and forward.

She takes her role as a leader and a principal seriously: it is a personal commitment to realize success for teachers and students. According to Ms. Denler, her role as a principal is not simply a job; it is a passion. Failure of her school or of an individual in her school is her failure as well. Others see this in her and she sees it in herself. Mr. Ginlear, her assistant principal at Jaguar Elementary School, stated it explicitly, "She came from her heart in everything. It was

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evident not only in the way she worked with kids, but it was definitely evident in the way she

worked with teachers and it was very evident in the way she worked with parents". She takes

personal ownership and investment in the success of others. "If a teacher fails, it's my fault

because I didn't help them get to a point where they could be successful. It's my job to help them

be successful". Her goal is academic success, but also far more than academics alone. She

commented repeatedly about the need to think beyond achievement scores and academics and to

focus on preparing students for college and for life, and not just any life but a meaningful and

successful life. "We are not just preparing these kids for middle school, we are preparing them

for life." Others expressed her passion as well. "Ms. Denler's greatest strength is her heart. I

mean, she's got a heart. I mean, it's huge. It's huge".

Her passion is due, at least in part, to her belief in the purpose and importance of

education. Ms. Denler believes in education as a moral imperative. Her beliefs come from her

own experiences and from her belief in education as a key to students' future opportunities. Ms.

Denler grew up in poverty.

> If you look at my upbringing, even though my – I had come from a good home, good
> parents, or whatever, we grew up in poverty. I went to a segregated school, all black
> teachers, lowest performing school, really never should've gone to college because we
> didn't have enough money for that. When-by the time I got in middle school, I was
> skipping school, being obstinate, getting in trouble. So I was one of our kids. If they had
> those EH (Emotionally Handicapped) programs or whatever, yeah, I probably would
> have been in something or on my way to one of them.

"We need to prepare these kids for life, success". She stated very clearly, "I think the purpose

of education is to prepare students to have the kind of life that they want to have, a successful

life. I don't think these kids aspire to continue in poverty." She continued,

> They don't know what the alternative is. So the purpose of education is to give them
> options and like for me that option is prepared to go to college. You might decide to go
> to trade school...You're not going to have to be the corner boy…I had to feed my family

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so I broke into the corner store. They considered that to be their only option, but I want my kids to know you know what? I don't have to break into the corner store. I can come up with my own hustle I can learn how to make something and sell it. I can cerate my own store. I can have these other things that I can do.

Each of our conversations was laced with the personal reflection and desire to continually learn and grow as a leader. She is reflective in her practice and is a perpetual learner, seeing everything as an opportunity to learn and to grow. She expects others to learn, but first expects it of herself. She continually pushes herself out of her comfort level and to make herself continually better. This was evident in her teaching and has continued as an administrator. As a classroom teacher her students joked with her each time she returned from a professional development session, knowing there would be something new she was going to try out with them. As a principal at Jaguar Elementary, the staff studied Martin Haberman's book, Star Teachers in order to understand how they could best serve the students they taught. But it wasn't just for the teachers to learn, but was for Ms. Denler's learning as well. She reflected upon the learning and intentionally attempted to grow from it. "I expected people to take me at face value and then how that was in opposition to reality. And if I didn't – that would inhibit my success being a star." She indicated the importance of acting upon what she learns, just as she did with that book study.

Her current assistant principal, Mr. Vulpes, described it this way, "She continues to reach out to ask for more knowledge. What are other schools doing that have gone from an F to a B? How are they doing that? It's taking some of what she's heard and using it". Not only does she learn, but she is reflective in her processing and her decision making. "She really sits back and reflects and I know she's a faith-based person, she prays and thinks about what is in the best interest for everyone. She doesn't think in a silo. She thinks about everyone." During her first

year at Fox, an initial task was the development of the Title I budget. She conducted an open discussion and activity with staff to determine priorities. The priorities suggested by staff were not instructional in nature and included the hiring of a police officer to assist with student behavior. She reflected and learned she had to structure the decision making differently. "What I did was talked about here are our goals, here's our school improvement plan. What are the important areas? And then I made the decisions based on what they said was important."

In another instance, she heard from a fellow principal about a school in a neighboring county that had improved their school grade from a "F" to a "B" through a focus on structured and supported teacher planning. She replicated the process at Fox creating a schedule for grade level teams to plan together with the instructional coaches and an administrator there to facilitate and support the process.

Ms. Denler is a learning leader with a passion for serving others. Those that work with her reinforce the view she has of herself. While this data appears to portray Ms. Denler has an overly heroic character, every participant emphasized this aspect of her leadership. While she is much more complex as a leader, this aspect of her and her leadership are foundational to understanding her daily practice and employment of political skill.

The leadership change process.

Ms. Denler was appointed principal at Jaguar Elementary School through a group interview process. Four assistant principals interviewed for four principal openings all the result of retirements. Ms. Denler was selected for Jaguar Elementary School, but had not done extensive research on the school, as it had been a priority school of another candidate and she had two other choice schools. When she was called she was surprised because she had discounted it as an option, "I didn't even know the school. I didn't even know where the school

was". Therefore, her first physical visit to Jaguar Elementary was both an unexpected and initial disappointment. "I got it and I drove by the school. And physically, it was just a depressing little school." The physical state of Jaguar was deteriorating, indicating to her a lack of pride. Ms. Denler was surprised that a school less than two miles from Wildcat would look so significantly different. The grounds were littered with garbage and overgrown and the bulletin board at the front entrance had not been changed in several years. "I mean it was a mess; it was all grown-up, just a sad-looking school. And you walk up to the school and the display board, the display had been up there literally ten years". After meeting staff, Ms. Denler immediately became aware of a sense of helplessness to affect change and in teacher's perceived ability to impact student learning: "the teachers were depressed; they just felt beat down." Her first goal was to create a sense of efficacy and hope. She used changes in the physical environment as a catalyst for teacher change. By addressing the physical environment she worked to develop pride in the school and demonstrate her care for the teachers and students. She first attacked the external grounds and then began working internally, both with the physical environment and simultaneously, the affective environment. She cleaned the grounds and, when the plant operators said they could not complete all of the work, recruited volunteers from her church congregation to help. The grounds were cleaned and physical repairs made. Next, she moved to the Teacher's Lounge. She used the lounge as a model for change in classrooms as well as a message to teachers about their importance and her care and concern. She painted and updated furniture to create a welcoming cheery place for teachers to meet and eat. As teachers realized the positive impact of the change, they began to make changes to the physical environment of their own classrooms. Pride began to develop. At the same time, Ms. Denler focused on building relationships and highlighting what could happen. She and Mr. Ginlear intentionally modeled

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fun and put processes and celebrations in place to spotlight the positive things teachers and students were accomplishing.

Initial success was evident in teacher's willingness to attempt change. Small groups of teachers began attempting change and as these were successful and highlighted, others also began to attempt change. Momentum continued to develop in the second year as teachers realized their impact upon student learning and relationships continued to develop.

During the third year, and with initial successes achieved, the state and district corrective action plan allowed Ms. Denler to re-interview the entire staff. Prior to the re-interview process, Ms. Denler intentionally set the tone with a co-construction of the school vision and a book study of Martin Haberman's Star Teacher in order to build the knowledge and expectation of what was needed in order to be an effective teacher at Jaguar Elementary School and to achieve her vision for the school. These discussions and collaborative work built a common expectation for what type of teacher and work were needed to achieve success at Jaguar. "We started looking at inquiry and just deliberately looking at how we can improve the school. So by the time the interviews came, we were poised for that." Ms. Denler pledged, both personally and publically to staff, to adhere to the re-interview process, no matter how difficult. The result was some teachers self-selected to transfer, realizing they were not a match for the school and students. Through the study "some teachers actually were able to identify themselves as not a good fit for the school". Approximately fifteen teachers transferred, either voluntarily or involuntarily. Ms. Denler had made a personal commitment to trust the process no matter how difficult it became, "These teachers would be asked to leave". One involuntary transfer was a personal friend. "Her father and my dad served on Deacon board together." Ms. Denler described it as on of "the most difficult years of my career", but also "one of the best thing that could have happened to our

school". It allowed Ms. Denler to hire individuals that fit the profile the school had identified using Haberman's "Star Teacher" book study. The new hires held the "whole notion that it is the teacher that makes the difference". She restructured Professional Learning Communities and the teachers researched, "And we continued to study. And if research shows that it was good practice, that is what we began to implement and we began seeing the difference".

The school earned a state school grade of "B" the following year. Jaguar's success was evident in the increased student achievement and also in a high teacher retention rate. The school had not yet realized their full potential, but they were on the path to realizing the vision.

The initial needs at Fox Elementary School were different. At Fox Elementary School the grounds were pristine and the building in good repair. Upon initial view of the physical plant, the school was orderly and cheery. The tone of staff, however, was much different. While it was the physical plant at Jaguar Elementary School that set the initial poor perception, it was the emotional state of the staff at Fox Elementary that was of initial concern. At Jaguar there initially lacked a sense of efficacy. The teachers had a sense of helplessness and simply needed to see educators and students being successful in order to realize it could be done. "The teachers were depressed; they just felt beat down." Ms. Denler started "by just trying to highlight what could happen". At Fox the beliefs ran much deeper and rather than a sense of helplessness: there was a deficit mentality blaming the child and family for the school's lack of success. Ms. Denler needed to adjust her approach to create change. Initially, she indicated staff attempted to blame the previous principal for the schools "F" letter grade, "Teachers were complaining about her-they tried to use her as an excuse for this school being an F school". She was clear in her response, "She did not come in those classrooms and teach those kids. So you cannot blame her for the scores of these students, because regardless of your administrator, it's still you that goes

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in that classroom and teachers those kids on a day-to-day basis". She stated the teacher general teacher mentality when she arrived at Fox, "These kids' bad and somebody need to do something with them or these families don't care and somebody needs to do something". Her task was to change teacher's beliefs about children from a deficit perspective to a strength-based perspective. Broadly, year one was focused on conducting a needs assessment and setting the stage for change while dealing with immediate human resource needs. Year two focused on implementing systems to support change and student success and year three has focused on building and sustaining momentum for continual improvement, building upon the successes achieved year one and year two.

At Fox, in year one, Ms. Denler focused on the three major tasks: conducting an initial needs assessment; setting the vision and expectations; and removing ineffective personnel. Ms. Denler's first step was to assess the overall school and identify the immediate and long term needs. She used data analysis, informal observations of classrooms and conversations with staff and others to gain information. The first immediate need was a lack of continuity and issues around personnel. In order to address these a common vision and clear expectations were needed.

The second focus was establishment of a vision and expectations for staff and students. Ms. Denler worked collaboratively with the staff to review data and create a school vision. "Here's where we are, and here's where eventually I would like us to be" was the initial vision task. Next, she shared clear expectations for staff and for students. The expectations for staff included defining instructional, behavioral and professional expectations. "What I had to do was to say here are some absolutes from me as an administrator." First, she told teachers that they were responsible for student learning.

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As a teacher, you kind of have to have that, my kids will succeed…If you're going to be a good teacher, you got to own it. You've got to be willing to say what your students' need, back it up with data, and you cannot let anyone get in the way of your students' success. And so that's basically what I told them.

She then showed video clips to illustrate what good teaching looked like. Ms. Swift recalled, "She would find us different video clips, kind of like some examples and non-examples" and "we are now doing a book study". Behavior expectations were also made clear. At the beginning of the year, she identified the need and gave examples of highly structured classrooms. Ms. Swift summarized the expectation in one sentence, "It needs to be militant".

She writes and communicates clear expectations for adult behavior and responsibility. She created, with the administrative team, expectations and responsibilities for each administrator. These are shared and reviewed with the Assistant Principals, but also shared with the entire staff. In addition, expectations are modeled. Ms. Swift stated it clearly, "She models what she expects of us. That is huge."

For students, an expectation of success became the mantra. College banners were posted in classrooms and around the school. The morning news show and conversations with students focused on the expectation of attending college. The goal communicated to students was not about the state assessment: it was about attending college. The goal was to help students create a vision for their future beyond the next grade level or passing the state assessment.

The third focus on human resource issues, specifically, the removal of ineffective teachers. One immediate realization during the needs assessment was that in many classrooms the level of instruction was inadequate, or as stated by Ms. Denler, "the poorest instruction known to man". "These kids deserve better than this. And in classroom after classroom you would go in the kids would be behaving, the teachers would be horrible. So we had to get rid of

them." Through a continual connection back to the vision and expectations, hard conversations with individuals, and extensive documentation, twelve teachers were removed at the end of year one. During year one she removed the entire kindergarten team. She used the staff discipline process to remove what she termed an "ineffective teacher" who, in frustration, used profanity in the classroom. She "spent a lot of time documenting" some teacher's behaviors in order to non-renew their contract. Others, she used authentic conversations to convince to transfer. Others were involuntary transfers and placed on other schools by the district.

The district indicated to Ms. Denler that they would move additional teachers as involuntary transfers prior to the start of the school year when she was initially transferred to Fox. There was a lack of follow-through by the district, however, and no teachers were moved so at the end of year one, Ms. Denler met individually with each teacher. "You cannot get us where we need to go, so you will need to transfer." She removed the entire Kindergarten team the first year. "Basically what I said to them was we can't both be here." The district did agree to move them at the end of year one and these teachers accepted transfers to other schools or were placed by the district. The district "offered a way out and I told them they had to take it."

One teacher was non-renewed due to documentation of behavior resulting in disciplinary action. Some teachers were extensively documented for performance issues and then their contract was non-renewed. Ms. Denler told the story of one such teacher.

> This young man…was passionate about kids, but he was miserable. The kids were miserable. He was screaming at the children, but he really wanted to be a good teacher, but it was like he's not going to be able to do it here. It's not going to happen here and so it just had to come to a point where I realized it wasn't going to happen here. I gave him the opportunity to transfer. He didn't take it because he really wanted to be a teacher. He cared about the kids, but it wasn't going to happen for him here. I took him to OPS [Office of Professional Standards]. He left. He wound up working with the R Club.

Other teachers chose to transfer based upon conversations with Ms. Denler. "Just being honest is how it's happened. Some people have left the district. Some have just quit and gone on to different professions." Others stayed in the profession, but transferred to other schools.

> This one teacher…she was killing my scores and I just wanted her out of that grade level and I told her here's where we're going. I know you don't want to go there, so I need you to move somewhere else and she kept trying to justify it, but here are out goals I just kept the school improvement plan in front of her and then finally she transferred to a middle school because she felt that was more the direction she wanted to, but I said you cannot teach my intermediate children because you can't take them where they want to go.

As she had these conversations with teachers, she used district documentation processes. The district administration had originally indicated they would take the responsibility for involuntarily transfer teachers Ms. Denler wanted removed. However, when the district did not follow through she met individually with the teachers and told them they would be transferred. She then followed up in a written e-mail and copied the Deputy Superintendent. He then worked with Ms. Denler and Human Resources to finalize transfers. Because re-interviewing the staff as she had done at Jaguar was not a possibility, she simultaneously worked with the district processes in documenting teachers and with the process for voluntary and involuntary transfers to remove teachers.

The data at the end of the year revealed improvements in student test scores. In addition, teachers were beginning to understand how to analyze and use student data. Unfortunately, however, this success created some resistance moving into year two.

The focus of year two was building capacity of teachers and parents and building systems. Ineffective teachers had been removed, but human resources were still a critical priority. The focus in year two was the development of teacher's practice. This was a somewhat bigger challenge in year two as the success in year one confirmed for some teachers that the

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change in principals was responsible. They saw no need for a change in their instructional practice because the previous principal and ineffective teachers that had now been removed were responsible for the school's failure. These teachers perceived this as a confirmation of their current way of work and created resistance to change in their practice. In addition, the district's interim superintendent visited the school, and in an attempt to motivate teachers, told them "Teachers know best. You just do whatever you want to do". Unfortunately, this supported the thinking of those hesitant to change. Many were resistant to coaches and to feedback, but Ms. Denler was persistent in her expectations and vision. "I had to go back and check teachers" to hold them accountable. Her approach became, "Here's a road map. Here's our action plan. Here's what we want to accomplish…having the plan, having it posted and it was those ongoing conversations, just being honest is how it's happened." She did celebrate and highlight teacher successes in staff meetings and in the weekly staff update, "Fox Watch", but the additional personal accountability was also needed at Fox, differently than it had been needed at Jaguar.

During year one Ms. Denler also worked to establish relationships and trust with parents. There was initial hostility and distrust, so she made an intentional effort to be visible daily, to listen to parent concerns, and to follow through consistently with parents. "You've gotta build that trust. Building that trust and then them knowing that you genuinely care." In year two, the focus was engaging parents with the school; holding school events and getting parents to attend and engage on a participatory level. Ms. Denler worked with the Office of Strategic Partnerships and conducted "taking it to the streets, where we actually went door to door and talked with parents. I think that went a long way in helping parents to understand how serious I was about making a difference in the school". The efforts have resulted in a change in parent involvement.

I see an increase in engagement. I see more parents who are involved. I see parents really looking at the notes that come home…they're reading the newsletter because they know there's really information in there that will help them. They're coming to the library asking, 'Can we check out books this weekend?'

In order to support the staff and student growth, structures and systems were critical. During year two, Ms. Denler prioritized the creation of structures and processes to enable the school to operate smoothly but also to support the continual growth and development of staff. She focused on defining and creating a leadership team, team leaders, student support services, and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).   Nine student support personnel work full time at Fox: a guidance counselor, two full time social workers, two full time psychologists, a data coach, a diagnostician and a behavior coach. Ms. Denler had a vision of a "hub" of coordinated support for students and families from this team. She worked with the team to realize the vision of the "hub" and these staff members, in collaboration with the administrative team, work daily to coordinate and align services to students. There has been a reduction in overlap of services and an increase in the amount of service provided to students and families. Ms. Bengal is part of the Hub, "Making us a social services team to meet the needs of the students. I think this has been a real positive change".

While there was growth in instruction and student engagement in year two, unfortunately, the school earned a state grade of "D". The staff was disappointed, but the "D" did serve a positive purpose as staff began to realize that there was a need for action on their part, so the "D", while discouraging, served to help create the urgency and leverage for change. And, there were some smaller successes: there were half as many third grade retentions as the previous year and student engagement increased. Ms. Denler now had the systems in place, but needed to continue to build capacity and build momentum for change in year three.

The focus of year three is accountability and sustaining and developing the systems and capacity needed and building continual momentum for growth among staff, students and parents. "Where I'm looking now is sustaining the work and finding ways to improve on what we're doing". The school is focused on lesson planning and specific instructional strategies. Coaching, self-reflection, book studies and intentional professional development are the tools being implemented to achieve instructional improvements.

A collaborative lesson planning system was implemented in order to improve planning and to support new teachers. Ms. Denler realized, through lesson plan review, that one team was using different district curriculum guides to plan, creating inconsistency across instruction. She created a schedule where each grade level team spends one day a month, off site, planning instruction with the support of the instructional coaches and an administrator. This structure is intended to improve collaboration, support and instruction.

The instructional focus has included a staff book study using "Teach Like a Champion" and specific reading training on Guided Reading with follow up support form the Literacy Coach. Ms. Bengal summarized the changes due to the focus on systems and instruction, "I've seen real change…a big improvement in what is in the classroom since I first came there…We're staring to see changes in teachers really understanding, building those relationships an understanding who their kids are and where they come from".

Thus far, the results are promising. Instruction has improved and the level of student engagement has increased significantly. Guests in the school, as well as staff, notice the difference in the culture and climate at the school.

Leadership practice and political skill.

Three major themes emerged about Ms. Denler's daily leadership practice and use of political skill; vision and continual improvement, intentional and strategic practice, and a human resource focus. The three themes are described separately, but each is interrelated and integral to the others. No leadership practice operates in isolation of the others and Ms. Denler does not employ them separately. These practices are part of her daily work and how she utilizes political skill to facilitate change.

Vision.

Ms. Denler is a big picture thinker and sets and communicates a clear vision as a leader. Mr. Ginlear explained her big picture thinking. "She as a plan…It's a big plan. And then she lets others fill in those details on how to get there and she keeps it moving." At both Jaguar and Fox Elementary School she collaboratively developed and communicated the vision as a focus for school improvement and growth. The importance of vision connects back to her belief about the purpose and importance of education. She spoke of setting the vision at Fox Elementary School: "I think the purpose of education is to prepare students to have the kind of life that they want to have, a successful life…You need to be able to get a good job. In order to get a good job you're going to have to know how to read, write, reason, problem solve, and I believe that's the purpose of education". According to Ms. Denler, in order to achieve that success, the work of the school is critical. "So the purpose of education is to give them options and like for me that option is you're prepared to go to college". The goal is not necessarily that all students go to college, but they realize it as an option and it becomes a realizable choice for every student.

> You might decide to go to trade school. You might decide to drop out and be a drug
> dealer on the street, but you know what? If you are a drug dealer on the street, you're

going to know how to operate your business…you're not going to have to be the corner boy.

At Jaguar Elementary School Ms. Denler worked with teachers to develop what they wanted to see happen, co-creating a vision for what the school would and could become. Those that worked with her agreed, indicating that Ms. Denler set the big picture for where the school would move but then allowed others to work collaboratively to figure out how to realize it. In the words of Mr. Ginlear, "She has a plan, a big plan. And then she lets other people fill in those details of how to get here. And she keeps moving". At Jaguar she maintained the focus on the students and the vision for their success and would not allow anyone or anything to detour her. She used the vision as a tool to focus and unite staff and also to address resistors. She highlighted successes as the school moved forward.

To address resistors, Ms. Denler uses the vision as a focus of where the school is going and the action needed to take the school there. When a teacher at Fox Elementary School was not performing in the classroom at a level needed to achieve the vision, rather than a personal affront, the vision provided the catalyst for change. Ms. Denler recalled several accounts of conversations that followed the same format: here is our vision and where we want to be, here is what is happening in your classroom, and here is the professional development needed so we can achieve this reality.

Conversations with individuals followed a similar format. Ms. Denler recalled a conversation with a Kindergarten teacher she was non-renewing at the end of year one. "Here is our vision, here is what I see happening in your classroom, you are not able to get us where we are going". She used the same structure for other teacher conversations, "Here is the road map. Here's our action plan. Here's what we want to accomplish". Mr. Ginlear recalled similar

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conversations at Jaguar when there was resistance, "We want you to try this. We want you to do this. And if it wasn't done, you'd have to bring them in, and sometimes there was a write-up".

At Fox Elementary School there are multiple student services personnel, including instructional coaches, full time social workers, full time psychologists, a guidance counselor, and a data coach. In order to coordinate these services to better serve students' needs, Ms. Denler envisioned a coordinated hub. The group made the hub a physical and perceptual reality under Ms. Denler's direction. Rather than overlapping services, the group now works in one room, coordinating services on a daily, student by student basis. The impact is a system that provides more effective and coordinated support for students and families. This in turn allows the school to achieve its larger vision for student success.

Mrs. Follwere believes the clear vision has helped her know what is expected and her role within the school. Initially the vision acted as a guide to support teachers' decisions regarding whether to stay at the school. "She makes it pretty clear. "This is where we are and it isn't for everybody. This is where we are going and you need to know that, because you're going to be expected to …" do as a staff member.

"She begins with the end in mind and that is a good place to start". Student behavior has been a school wide challenge. Mrs. Swift identified the consistent and clear vision for behavior management and high structure in the classrooms as one significant factor in improved classroom management and student behavior. Ms. Denler created a clear vision in collaboration with the staff to identify what it should look like in classrooms and then also set the expectation with staff that they could and would get there. Then she provided the training and support to help each individual succeed.

The vision is communicated on a continual basis with goals for achieving it. The current year's motto is "C" or Better" as one step in moving the school forward toward accomplishing the vision. This is on posters in the school, in the weekly "Fox Watch" staff newsletter, on t-shirts, and repeatedly reinforced at staff meetings.

Mr. Vulpes explained how Ms. Denler came to Fox, gained the big picture of where they were and where they wanted to be and then figures out and implements one piece at a time to achieve that vision. She sees the big picture and then figures out how to do one piece at a time to get "the biggest bang for the buck". When she arrived at Fox, in addition to the walk throughs to gauge need, she met with each individual team.

Ms. Swift described the focus on changing the level of structure in classrooms to improve classroom management as one step in realizing the vision. First, the staff defined what is and is not acceptable "because we can't just come in assuming that the kids are going to know". Then, "she wanted to make sure that we laid down the routines and procedures, expectations of what is and is not acceptable". Next, "she actually had some video clips and we are now doing the book study". She has now made available to staff videotaping themselves. "She does walkthroughs as well offering feedback, I mean it's constructive criticism, which is what I highly welcome". According to all of the participants interviewed, there is an increase in the level of classroom structure and in student engagement during instruction. This is one step in building a positive culture in order to realize the school vision.

It become immediately apparent that parents were angry and lacked trust in the school staff. She knew her vision for parent engagement in student learning, so devised an intentional plan. Knowing her vision for meaningful parent involvement, she built from the end in mind and intentionally worked to establish trust through accessibility and responsiveness to parents. She

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maintained the same position at arrival and dismissal to get a parent perspective and to establish accessibility. She did this intentionally so parents would know where to find her each day. Once trust was established, she took steps to engage parents with regular family events and regular parent communication through the phone messaging system and school newsletter. Now, she is working to create active engagement in student academics.

The vision, thus, requires momentum and continual movement forward. This is where Ms. Denler helps move from current reality to vision reality. In each of our five conversations, and as our dialogue deepened across interviews, Ms. Denler discussed the importance of creating momentum and continually moving forward, improving upon what is happening. There was never a mention of arrival or completion. She repeatedly expressed the desire and need to get better, no matter how good it seemed at the time. "I think about where I have to go and what I need to do to be there". She operates on two planes simultaneously at all times, focusing on both the short-term needs and building to the long-term goals.

Intention and political strategy.

Ms. Denler articulated her personal belief and her personal responsibility to create change as a leader and to create the culture and environment where every student has the opportunity for success. Her daily practice creates such a reality. Ms. Denler exhibits this belief in her daily practice through specific, daily leadership practices: setting clear expectations, modeling the expected behaviors, employing shared leadership and decision making, reflecting critically, holding authentic conversations, and using stories. She intentionally employs these practices to facilitate change and achieve her goals for the school. She specifically uses modeling, decision-making, authentic conversations and stories as political strategies in the change process.

Expectations.

Expectations for self, staff and students are clear, both on the broad level expecting all students to learn and specific to job responsibilities. Ms. Denler talks extensively about expectations for herself and for staff. The teachers also speak of her expectations for students as well as for themselves. Ms. Denler begins with high expectations of herself. "One of my kind of beliefs is that if teachers fail it's reflective of my leadership". My job as principal and your job as teachers is 'to educate the children, no matter where they are, our job is still to educate them".

Ms. Denler intentionally addressed expectations upon arrival at Fox. The staff at Fox was blaming students and parents and did not initially see the need for change in their own practice. While they recognized there was a need for change, they did not see their personal responsibility in that change. Ms. Denler used the initial staff meeting to begin setting the expectation of what needed to be accomplished.

> I had to create the recognition that teachers needed to be part of the change. Teachers talked about "bad" kids and that someone needed to do something with the students and the parents. I needed to create awareness and need that teachers also needed to change and were part of the problem.

She immediately set the expectation for change and for student learning. At the first staff meeting Ms. Denler had a district representative come present the school data. The initial response from teachers was "the whole sense of 'blame the child'. "All the teachers wanted to talk about how, 'these kids, these kids. They're low, they're bad, they're dah-dah-dah-dah-dah." The next step was to meet with the staff and involve them in identifying goals and creating an action plan. "At that first meeting, that was my objective, to set the stage for what we needed to accomplish." When the teachers tried to blame the previous principal "they tried to use her as an excuse for this school being an F school", Ms. Denler responded.

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I finally said to them, 'I know her. We're not drinking buddies, but I know her, and I get what you mean by she's not a people person, and that she can destroy morale. But I told them, here's one thing I know: she did not come in those classrooms and teach those kids. So you cannot blame her for the scores of these students, because regardless of your administrator, it's still you that goes in that classroom and teaches those kids on a day-to-day basis…If you're going to be a good teacher, you've got to own it. You've got to be willing to say what your students' need, back it up with data, and you cannot let anyone get in that way of your students' success.' And so that's basically what I told them.

The expectations are accomplished with support and monitoring. This year at Fox, Ms. Denler incorporated monthly team planning. The teachers were in additional need of how to plan using the state standards so once a month each team has coverage in order to work with the instructional coaches. The expectation is that the team will collaboratively create the team's plans for the month. An administrator attends as both a means of support and a method of accountability. "It sends a message that this is really important. But also you're there to know what they're supposed to be doing".

Expectations are set for staff and students, but for administrators as well. A flow chart of roles and responsibilities for each administrator, including Ms. Denler, identify the responsibilities of each individual. This is shared with staff and used at administration team meetings.

Both the administrative staff and instructional staff interviewed reinforced the clear expectations for their individual work and the work of the school. Mr. Vulpes reinforced the "She has clear expectations of just of herself and then for me and for the school as a whole and for teachers and for success." Mrs. Swift discussed the clear expectations that have been established for behavior management in the classroom. "She wanted to be sure we laid down the routines and procedures, expectation of what is and is not acceptable." Expectations are coupled

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with support. "And she made sure that everyone had the appropriate training in behavior management if they needed it."

In her initial year at Fox, Ms. Denler set clear expectations of student success regarding their future. The focus became college as a possibility and an expectation. Teachers brought in college banners and emblems to post and talked with the students about goals beyond FCAT, about college. Ms. Denler continually reinforced with teachers that their purpose was to prepare students for success, "in spite of where they are now or the potential barriers".

The expectations support the vision and the culture. "She does not make excuses and she keeps it real. Regardless of how ugly the truth is, she's going to give it to you and that's what you need".

Modeling.

Ms. Denler uses modeling as an intentional strategy that both reinforces expectations and shows staff what it looks like in practice. She also uses it as a political skill to leverage change. The modeling at Jaguar Elementary School was intentional in order to achieve change. "I think the most important thing we did was leading by example, by practicing what we were preaching, and showing people that's how it worked". Modeling resulted in staff and student buy-in for the change. Ms. Denler modeled instruction in classrooms as well as videotaping herself teaching and using it at staff meetings to they could clearly set the expectation that teachers be videotaped and learn new practices. In addition, the modeling school wide celebrations of student success were incorporated in order to help teachers realize the students' capabilities and support celebrations at the classroom level.

Mrs. Swift reiterated similar examples about Ms. Denler's leadership at Fox Elementary.

She models what she expects of us. That is huge. As teachers we are wanting so much of these students, but if we're not modeling it, it's very hard, it can be hard for them to get it. She models what she expects of us and that's good. That's very, very good.

The clear modeling, coupled with the clear expectations, in the perspective of her instructional staff member, is an important factor in the change at Fox. Modeling is an intentional political skill strategically used to persuade individuals and the team to conform and exhibit specific behaviors and actions. It provides an example of expected behavior; the example of that the expectations look like in practice. It is the visual motivation to act and behavior in certain ways. This includes professional as well as instructional behavior. Ms. Denler models greeting staff and holding informal, personal conversations. She also models professional problem solving so teachers see have a model of interaction with each other. Both Mrs. Bengal and Mrs. Swift mentioned Ms. Denler's modeling. Mrs. Bengal quoted Ms. Denler's thinking, "If I ask my teachers to be on duty, I'm on duty" Mrs. Swift added, "She models what she expects of us and that's good." She also models instructional practices. She has both taught strategies in classrooms while teachers observe so teachers can see the strategy used effectively with their own students. She also videotaped herself and shared with staff to demonstrate a strategy being implemented as part of a school focus. Mrs. Swift summarized the impact of instructional modeling, "It really, really helps because it's one thing to sit there and talk about it a lot, but when you're actually seeing it that makes a huge difference". While the modeling alone was not enough to influence all behaviors or individuals, it was a meaningful strategy to influence change in both adult to adult interactions and instructional practices.

Decision-making.

Ms. Denler employs shared leadership but also a decision-making process that is not always shared. She skillfully uses various decision-making strategies politically to ensure staff

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buy-in even when she makes the final decision. The four participants interviewed all indicated a sense of ownership and influence upon their work and the work of the school. The words shared leadership was used in each interview as a descriptor of Ms. Denler's style. Mrs. Bengal described the shared leadership structure of team meetings. "It was a time when she would share things that she wanted to happen or that we would want to happen and then we would brainstorm ways to get there or subcommittees. Then we would come back and report upon what's happening." She went on to explain the impact of these structures, "She believes in shared leadership". "It gives us working with her confidence and true teamwork…she's really open to ideas". At the same time, however, not all decisions are made through a shared process and this was clearly stated by Ms. Denler and each participant. Each individual valued and supported the decision making process in place and agreed that Ms. Denler makes certain decisions. The clear communication, expectations and vision were cited as supportive to the decision-making process. There is a trust that decisions are made in the best interest of students and in order to achieve the common vision, and while they are not involved in every decision, they do feel they have input and when decisions are made without a shared process, they understand why. In some cases, there was a sense of relief expressed that Ms. Denler makes certain decisions. It released staff of the pressure of the impact of making some decisions. There appears to be a working balance between shared leadership and principal decision-making.

Ms. Denler employs refined political skill and strategically decides which decisions she will make alone and which decisions will be made through a shared process in order to achieve her desired results. "At some point somebody has to be in charge to say, 'This is the way you're gonna do it' and so I just learned to reserve that right as a principal to make some decisions." The explanation of decisions and how they are made is shared with staff and this communication

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and thus, staff feel valued and in the process. Ms. Denler uses context and the level of staff skill in deciding the decision making process. The initial year at Fox, Ms. Denler used a shared decision-making process to plan the Title I budget. The staff was not yet prepared to make decisions aligned to the vision. The priority of staff was hiring a police officer. This did not align with her vision for Fox Elementary, nor did she believe it would help the school move forward so she has learned to structure process around choices that she believes move the school forward while building staff buy in for the vision. "I picked the kind of things that they had input, but being very strategic in what I put in front of them to get the kind of response that I want. Like controlled choice." Ms. Denler structured the choices not to be manipulative, but because teachers believed the problem was the children and were not ready to take responsibility in decision-making or instruction.

> It was like these kids' bad and somebody need to do something with them or these families don't care and somebody needs to do something. So sort of what I had to do was to say here are some absolutes from me as an administrator. There were some things that I absolutely had to do.

> Instead, Ms. Denler asked for staff input and then made the decision.

> What I did was I talked about our goals, here's our school improvement plan. What are the important areas? And then I made those decisions based on what they said was important. They still got input on how to do it, but I structured the question in a different way.

> Mrs. Follwere summarized the process, "She really believes in shared leadership. She of course in the end when it's tough in the final decisions she's going to make them, but she hires people or puts people around her that she trusts to do their job". Mrs. Swift shared similar sentiments. There is "a lot of staff input…But even with our input she makes the decisions at times. Especially if the input is fifty-fifty. She just has to make the executive decision of what's best".

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The school structures support shared decision-making. The leadership team meets weekly, with representation from each grade level. The structure of the meetings also fosters teacher ownership of decisions with sharing of ideas and, as Mrs. Follwere stated, "major brainstorming". One example is the manner in which the school has approached the school-wide behavior management system. Behavior management has been an ongoing challenge and concern of teachers. The Leadership Team is leading the discussion and changes in the school's behavior management system. Ms. Denler has not agreed with all of the group's decisions, but she has allowed the process to create opportunity for teachers to make decisions to take responsibility and ownership and to be part of the continual improvement process.

Mrs. Follwere summarized her feeling about Ms. Denler's decision making processes, "I just love working with her and just kind of the way she sets things up, trusts people to do their job. It's not like micromanaging". Ms. Denler has strategically used political skill to structure decisions so staff has both trust in her and a sense of ownership in decision-making while she maintains control of certain decisions.

Reflection.

Ms. Denler, a leading learner, practices continual reflection. This was evident in her reflection upon each interview as well as in her discussion of her work as a leader. She put it simply, "I always feel compelled to learn how to do it better".

In our first interview, Ms. Denler recalled her work as a teacher and the ongoing joke with her students about her continually learning and trying something new with them to help them learn better. Her continual thought pattern was and continues to be, "Well, this is good, but if I did this, it'd be better". She chuckled as she remembered her students laughing, "We're going to try something. Ms. Denler up there back to school again."

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The reflective learning has continued in her role as administrator. As she shared the process at Jaguar Elementary for both studying the qualities needed of a teacher in their setting and where they each fit into that puzzle, she reflected upon her own learning. The intent of the book study and self-survey using Martin Haberman's *Star Teachers* was to identify the type of teacher needed in order to realize the school's vision.

> And I even learned something about myself as looking at that. I expected people to take me at face value and then how that was in opposition to reality. And if I didn't that would inhibit my success of being a Star teacher. And so we took those things we worked on and it's like if I really want to be at a struggling school, this is what will stop me from being successful here and just how do I deal with it.

It was not simply about the teachers identifying if the teacher was a match for Jaguar Elementary, it was also a learning process for Ms. Denler as a leader. Ms. Denler puts her reflection and learning into action.

At Fox, she continues to try to push herself to better support teachers and teacher's development. A district administrator mentioned a trip to another county to see a turnaround school and the systems in place to support teachers. She reflected upon the differences between the exemplary school and her school and realized her teachers needed additional support systems in place. When her request to visit that same school was not granted, she learned as much as she could about the school and then used that information to make changes at Fox. Given the example from the other school, she reflected upon ways to create the routine opportunity for teachers to plan together with the instructional coaches. She made budget adjustments, created a draft schedule, shared it with the leadership team, and then created an implementation plan. Each grade level team is now spending one day once a month with the full team of instructional coaches, working collaboratively to create lesson plans.

Her underlying belief in reflection and learning is evident in her practice. "Our students are going to miss out if we're not willing to push people to be the absolute best. And even when they get to their absolute best, to push them to be even better; and that, myself included."

Authentic conversations.

One of the most prominent strategies used by Ms. Fox, which is both a leadership practice and a political skill employed, is authentic and "real" conversation with both individuals and the entire staff. This is one of the strategies most frequently employed by Ms. Denler to facilitate change. She intentionally uses these conversations to create a sense of trust and accountability, but also to pressure change and action.

Open conversation with the entire staff supports the change process and the continual strengthening of the school climate. Ms. Denler uses these conversations to acknowledge the intensity of the work and its impact upon the staff as a method of building consensus. Mandates of state accountability required the school to add an hour of instruction each day extending the school day to after 4:00 p.m. Staff were concerned about the impact upon their personal lives. Ms. Denler first explicitly connected the additional time to the needs of the students and the school vision. Then, she acknowledged the demands and stress it put on teachers and their families. Mrs. Swift articulated her perspective of the conversation. "She is very, very positive and takes a load off our shoulders. It's like if our principal is gung-ho for this, then we can do it too". It seems to be the can do attitude with the willingness and demonstrated consistency of working alongside teachers with tough issues that builds buy-in and sustains positive attitudes. "She makes you want to do it and makes it real but manageable."

In addition, the conversations with the whole staff keep the staff focused on the vision and the work. She acknowledges what is needed from the teachers as well as alleviating a sense

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of deficiency for individuals that do not meet these demands, giving teachers an opportunity to leave, but with dignity. Mrs. Follwere recalled at the end of year two at Fox Elementary and conversations with staff contemplating a transfer. First, as with the extended day situation, she clearly articulated the vision. She explicitly but in a professional and caring manner, clearly communicated that if the teachers did not fit with the vision, they needed to leave. Mrs. Follwere remembered how Ms. Denler talked with staff about the process. "She made it pretty clear, this is where we're going and you need to know that, because you're going to be expected" to do specific things.

In addition, these conversations are facilitated with sincerity and personal emotion. "She'll stand up in front of them (staff) and will let them know she's not perfect, things she's done. She'll cry in front of them. She is just authentic about what it is."

Individual teacher conversations are also daily practice and political strategy. One striking, and painful example was during the re-interview process at Jaguar Elementary. While Ms. Denler admitted it was one of the most beneficial strategies for change at the school, it was also one of the most difficult. Staff members had to re-interview to retain their position. Ms. Denler had made a personal commitment to stay true to the process. She had developed relationships and friendships, both in and out of school, with many staff members. One teacher is a member of the same church congregation and another that is a family friend of Ms. Denler's father. Through the interview process, neither met the criteria for staff membership at Jaguar.

> I had to have the hard conversations with friends: I had to stick to the process and be authentic with these teachers. It was not a matter of not liking them, but they were not a good fit for the school and the needs of the students.

Similar conversations are part of her work at Fox Elementary as human resources are one of the major keys to the needed change. In year one, Ms. Denler quickly realized the need for

significant staff changes. At the beginning of the year the district asked for a list of teachers to involuntarily transfer. Ms. Denler researched and conferred with the previous principal. She then presented a list to the district. The district, however, did not follow through with the promised conversations with these teachers, so Ms. Denler took the initiative herself. "I actually called them into my office and said, 'Both of us can't stay here. You know where I want to go. You can't help me get there, so you need to leave." Each teacher agreed to a voluntarily transfer.

One teacher's initial response was an emotional plea for another chance. "I couldn't, and I told her, 'It was nothing personal, but I got to get this school out of "F" status, and I can't do it with you". While the teacher still wanted to stay, she did submit a voluntary transfer.

During the second year at Fox, Ms. Denler considered nonrenewal of a fifth grade teacher. She used nonjudgmental, authentic conversation to help this teacher identify a career shift that aligned with her passions and skills. The teacher was not achieving the needed student learning results. Ms. Denler frankly, but sincerely, told the teacher, "You cannot teach my intermediate children because you can't take them where they need to go". The teacher agreed to be moved to a primary position. While initially reluctant, his classroom is now a school wide model classroom.

The authentic conversations leverage change and support accountability of her clear expectations. This strategy requires strong relationships and depth of communication skill, but has been an effective strategy for Ms. Denler. Teachers that she has helped move out of the school still indicate they would return to work with her again. A teacher Ms Denler had non-renewed called her recently to thank her and let her know he was substituting and had been offered a position. He thanked her for her willingness to be honest. She quoted what he told her,

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"Sometimes it's hard to hear the things that you have to say', but he appreciated the honesty, and he said, 'if I had a chance to work for you again, I would".

Stories.

Ms. Denler is a storyteller. She uses stories intentionally and as a political strategy in several ways to influence the actions of individuals and the larger staff. The stories help staff both see and relate to the vision and to "hear my heart" and as a tool to create change. "I share a story to help them understand. Just giving them something to connect to. And another thing we had started doing was giving them opportunities to watch videos of success, have other people tell their stories, have successful teachers tell their stories".

She talked about helping teachers see the goals as a possibility and identifying with students and their instructional needs in order to get buy-in and motivation for change.

> I shared the story about the first moon landing and just different things like my grandfather didn't even believe it was real. He thought it was all fake and I just kind of used that story to help them connect with what we needed to accomplish our goals. So that's something I do on a regular basis.

She continued later in the discussion to share the purpose of using stories, "Just giving them something to connect to…giving them opportunities to like watch videos of success, have other people tell their stories, have successful teacher tell their stories, challenges that they went through".

Student behavior has been a consistent teacher concern. In order to help staff understand her expectations for both staff and students, Ms. Denler tells her personal story as a child of the expectations her parents set for behavior, "Act like a Denler. Be a Denler". These were their home guidelines for success and for representing themselves and their family. She has now shared and used that with both staff and students. The behavior motto at Fox is "Act like a Fox.

Be a Fox". She used this to help teachers understand that they cannot simply expect behavior, they must teach and reinforce the behaviors they expect.

She also includes stories in the weekly staff newsletter, Fox Watch, as an inspiration and a method of acknowledging and dealing with current stressors or school priorities. In our interviews, Ms. Denler talked in stories as she shared her story of leadership. It comes naturally as she talks: when questions were raised, her first instinct was to answer as a story and then explain her thinking as she told that particular story. The use of stories is purposeful to get individuals to connect to the work as well as see the possibilities in themselves and their students. The intent is to influence actions and behaviors as well as beliefs in order to influence change.

A human resource focus.

Ms. Denler intentionally focuses on human resource issues. While her approach at Jaguar and Fox has been different, the creation and continual strengthening of relationships as well as the building capacity of teachers, administrators, and parents, are consistent strategies for change and demonstration of political skills utilized. At Jaguar, the initial human resource focus was on overcoming the sense of helplessness and building a sense of efficacy. At Fox, the initial human resource strategy was the removal of ineffective teachers and an attempt to change staff's beliefs about students. Overcoming the pervasive deficit thinking that blamed students and parents and helping the educators realize the need for change in their own practice and expectations. She is achieving this through the intentional use of relationships and capacity building. The focus on relationships is an intentional political skill.

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Relationships.

An obvious strength of Ms. Denler is her skill in intentionally and continually building relationships. This allows her to employ the other strategies such as the authentic conversations, and also allows her to accomplish the human resource changes needed. It is also the foundation of her political skills. She creates and strengthens relationships through demonstration of care and concern, trust in others, and support of teachers' work.

Ms. Denler demonstrates care and concern for staff through her accessibility, approachability, authenticity and recognition of others. Especially at Fox Elementary, Ms. Denler's accessibility to staff has helped the culture shift. The previous principal was professional but perceived as distant and disconnected from staff. Ms. Denler, in contrast, immediately focused on being visible and accessible to staff. She physically moved the principal's office from the front of the office facing the school parking lot, to the side of the backside of the front office at the entrance to the courtyard, the main thoroughfare of staff. She not only is physically visible, but she can also maintain a visual on the courtyard which sits at the center of the classroom and main school buildings. Both Mrs. Follwere and Mrs. Swift noted her open door policy and her accessibility to staff. "She wants to be sure she's available to us and that's warming in itself because she's letting us know that I'm not going to be standoffish. I'm here for you and whenever you need me, I want to be available to you". She gives every staff member her cell and home phone number as a sign of her accessibility and approachability. Mrs. Follwere put it simply, "She makes you feel like you're important".

Her care and concern are also evident in her conversations. During a recent grade level team meeting, the teachers reviewed recent results of the district benchmark math assessment.

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One teacher's students had shown improvement, but not the growth she had expected or felt reflected her teaching. She walked out in the middle of the meeting upset. Ms. Denler followed her out, empathizing sincerely but maintaining her expectation for the teacher's involvement in the data process. In frustration, the teacher threatened to quit. Through her care and concern, Ms. Denler stopped her from walking away and coaxed her back into the team discussion. Care and concern is also demonstrated in more formal methods such as the family picnics for staff and the weekly Fox Watch newsletter.

Demonstration of trust is a second tool Ms. Denler uses as a political skill to build and sustain relationships. She clearly identified the importance of trust, "You gotta build that trust" and "them knowing that you genuinely care". To build trust, she has implemented the use of protocols as well as allowing individuals to take initiative and to make mistakes. Ms. Denler uses protocols to ensure equity of voice and provide a structure to teacher conversations.   These are used in staff meetings as well as other school meetings as a consistent way of work.

Others believe Ms. Denler's trusts them to do their work as a critical factor in their success. Mr. Ginlear, now a principal, believes he flourished because she trusted him and allowed him to do the work. "She trusted me like you wouldn't believe". Her trust in others creates a willingness to take risks and when she responded with encouragement, even if they made mistakes, it not only built trust but also encouraged others to take initiative and to take risks in attempting change in their practice.

Ms. Denler demonstrates her support for staff through recognition, resources, and professional development. Staff is confident in her support for their work because she provides them the necessary resources and professional development to help them do their work. When Ms. Denler arrived at Fox, the school had no Smart boards in classrooms. Other schools had

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been purchased Smart boards though district Title I funds, but Fox had not completed the required process. While the initiative was complete, Ms. Denler worked to get the Smart boards and was able to get them for a majority of classrooms. In addition, she asks staff what they need and then works to follow through with the resource if it helps teachers move student learning forward. She also identifies and brings teachers requests and needed professional development as a support. The staff was concerned about behavior management, so she offered training at the school site for teachers. Ms. Swift articulated the impact of Ms. Denler's support clearly, "More supported, just because she is making sure that if we need help with anything, she's going to provide it for us, even to the point where if we need to go outside of the school to do training, she's willing to do that".

Ms. Denler's relationships are evident in the conversations with those that have worked with her. They are also evident in the response of those teachers that have been asked to leave. A teacher whose contract was non-renewed recently came back to visit with Ms. Denler, to thank her for her authenticity and care in helping him find a match for his strengths. He is using his teaching degree and experience to run a child care program and is experiencing success and satisfaction he did not realize as a teacher.

Capacity Building.

Relationships are an important element of Ms. Denler's leadership and political strategy and enable her to successfully implement other leadership practices. Another critical human resource strategy she employs is capacity building. Ms. Denler intentionally works to develop the capacity of teachers, administrators, and parents. By building the capacity in others, she influences their actions and beliefs across time. It is a strength-based strategy intended to build upon the strengths of each individual in order to create change.

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At Jaguar Elementary, the initial strategies to build capacity were implemented with the goal of building teachers' sense of efficacy. The school's situation allowed change to evolve over time in an organic process. At Fox, there was an urgency and need for immediate change. In addition, the staff as a whole had different needs than the Jaguar Elementary staff. The Fox staff not only did not believe in themselves, they did not believe in the ability of their students. Initially, there was a deficit attitude of blame. While replacing some staff affected that pervasive belief, there was still the need to address both the belief systems of staff and their instructional practices. A complicating factor at Fox is the state Department of Education's intense and prescriptive involvement. Department of Education staff are present at the school weekly and prescribe actions for the instructional coaches and school staff to implement.

At Jaguar, Ms. Denler used modeling, highlighting success, and creating the freedom and encouragement to try new instructional strategies. Initially at Jaguar, Ms. Denler focused on modeling in order to demonstrate what could be done. She modeled by physically changing the campus and staff lounge and then providing the resources for teachers to do the same to their classroom. She also modeled instructional practices in classrooms to show teachers what she was expecting. In addition, she and the assistant principal, Mr. Ginlear, videotaped themselves, both in order to encourage teachers to videotape and analyze themselves and to demonstrate to the staff the instructional strategies of focus. "It was about working with them and giving them the support that they needed."

Once teachers started also attempting change, these teachers were highlighted and celebrated. As more teachers attempted change and were successful, momentum built and additional professional development activities were added. They conducted book studies and implemented the inquiry action research cycle to allow teachers to study their own practice.

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Teachers with leadership skill emerged as they gained confidence and others developed. This allowed for quicker and faster development as teachers helped other teachers continually develop their practice.

At Fox elementary, Ms. Denler initially focused, in year one, on replacing ineffective staff. In year two, the focus shifted to the development of each staff member. The process was somewhat different, however. While at Jaguar, teacher development was allowed to develop naturally, at Fox, the learning has been much more directed, at least initially.

Ms. Denler also works to intentionally develop the capacity of her assistant principals in order to help them develop, but also to support the school's improvement. She intentionally gives them experiences as well as opportunity to fail and to learn from these experiences, "giving them the opportunity to fail now rather than become a principal and fail." In addition, she supports their professional learning in their own administrator Professional Learning Community (PLC), "we have a couple of books that we're looking at but also just to talk about here's what happened".

Mr. Vulpes development as an assistant principal is an example of the capacity she has built. Mr. Vulpes has reflected extensively upon his own growth under Ms. Denler. He had been hired as the assistant principal by the previous principal but it is Ms. Denler that he credits for his development as a leader, "it changed the way I lead others. But then it changed the way, too, that I lead myself." Through her clear communication and expectations as well as her trust in the assistant principal's ability to lead, he now believes he is an instructional leader and believes in his ability to lead and to become an effective principal. He is currently in the district's principal certification program.

In order to help students do their very best, Ms. Denler knows parent support and active engagement are important. She described the need to engage parents "in interacting, as in holding their child accountable, as in being accountable themselves". This has been an intentional, long-term process across her three years at Fox. First, she worked to build trust through her visible presence and follow through. Initially, parents were hostile and resented Ms. Denler. She stationed herself each day at arrival and dismissal in an accessible location to interact with parents and build trust. Second, she worked to get parents to attend school activities and engage with the school. Now, her intent is involvement on a deeper level that actively engages parents in holding themselves and their child accountable for learning. Approximately half of the parents at Fox have completed high school or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). This potentially means there are fewer parents with the aspiration of college for their child. Not only is Ms. Denler helping parents engage with the school in more meaningful ways, she is now working with a local university to offer parents the opportunity to earn a diploma or a degree.

It is a political skill to develop others to achieve her vision and goals, purposely using relationships and capacity building to influence others.

> It's that law of magnetism where you pull in people that have that ability and it's kind of looking for those abilities in people. And that's how you build your team and then your team becomes leaders in themselves because they're leaders like you. So, it's I don't need to be one arm, I got twenty now because they think the same way I do. So, it is a very skilled kind of thing to be able to do that.

Barriers.

The focus of this study was the leadership practices and political skill employed by Ms. Denler, but barriers became a prevalent theme in the data across all interviews and four of the five participants. Ms. Denler identified two barriers: the teachers and the district. The barrier

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revealed by three of the other four participants was also the district. When asked what she saw as the biggest barrier to her school's success, Ms. Denler identified teachers, specifically teacher experience and expertise. "I feel bad saying it, but it's kind of true: the teachers. Only because they're just so new and so young. And I know they'll get there, but…you really gotta have very skilled, highly qualified teachers". This is not surprising as Fox has a significant number of new teachers over the last several years. It is also why Ms. Denler has focused on building teacher capacity is a critical component of the change process.

According to the data, three main areas contribute to the district acting as a barrier to school improvement. Each of these requires Ms. Denler to employ political negotiation skills to achieve her desired outcomes for the school. First, the district has not followed through on promised or needed support. Second, there is little to no differentiation to allow Fox to meet the unique needs of its students or its situation in state oversight. Third, there is inadequate communication between the school and district.

The district has not followed through with promised supports and this has impacted what the school can accomplish as well as eroding trust between Ms. Denler and school personnel and the district personnel. In year one, district administration indicated they would involuntarily transfer identified teachers out of Fox. Ms. Denler submitted the list of teachers, but the district rescinded the offer and required Ms. Denler to retain the teachers. Prior to the opening of year three, the Area Superintendent, Ms. Denler's direct supervisor, held a conference with Ms. Denler and told her she would be demoted or fired if the school did not earn a letter grade of "C" or higher. Since that meeting, the Area Superintendent has visited Fox Elementary twice and has not offered or provided any support or mentoring for Ms. Denler. On at least two occasions, Ms. Denler has asked the Area Superintendent for support and it has been either ignored or denied.

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Ms. Denler asked for permission to have a group of teachers visit a turnaround school in a neighboring county. Her request was denied. She then requested permission to attend a site visit on the other side of the state because the state DOE had suggested she research a successful initiative at this specific school. This request was ignored. Now, Ms. Denler attempts to operate with limited district interaction and with documentation. "I CC several other people. I don't just contact directly and …I document a lot more. I'm used to documenting down. Not so much documenting up, but I do. " "I am very cautious. I think about what I want to accomplish. What are the potential barriers and then how can I make it happen despite the barriers"? Copying others on communications and "documenting up" are political strategies used to influence action.

Second, lack of curriculum and staffing differentiation is a barrier. Over ninety percent of Fox Elementary School's kindergarten students enter below grade level, but the kindergarten model and curriculum are the same as across the other seventy-three elementary schools in the district. The school was denied a request to differentiate the curriculum themselves. Through data analysis and the work of the School Based Leadership Team (SBLT), the school identified the need for social skills/school skills for students. District personnel have told Ms. Denler that the school cannot add the social skills curriculum to the daily school schedule. Differentiated pay is also a barrier identified in the data. The school has extended the school day an hour and teachers are paid for the additional time. The administration, however, is not given additional pay but is required to work the additional hour. Because the principal and assistant principal are salaried employees, the district decided that they would not be compensated for the additional hour worked daily.

Finally, communication between the district and school is a barrier. There is no regular communication between the district and school to provide support or monitor progress. The Area

Superintendent has visited the school twice during the first six months of the current school year. The second visit lasted less than ten minutes. When Ms. Denler submitted a request for substitutes for additional teacher planning, paid for with school funds, but requiring approval, the Area Superintendent did not respond. A district team made a site visit to a turnaround school in a neighboring district to identify effective strategies. None of the strategies learned have been shared with Fox or Ms. Denler. The state oversight team does conduct site visits twice each school year and district staff do attend these visits. The follow up and ongoing communication, however, is not evident. The state team gives weekly updates to the district superintendent, but these are not shared with Ms. Denler. The state made the decision that the school schedule did not meet state differentiated accountability requirements. The school was unaware of any needed changes until a district supervisor gave the school a new schedule to implement. The school was not involved in the discussion or creation of the schedule changes.

Overall, the data indicates that the lack of support, differentiation and communication create a sense of frustration on the part of Ms. Denler and school staff. These barriers, according to Ms. Denler, create an improvement ceiling and prevent the school and its students from realizing their full potential. At the same time, Ms. Denler does not seem to employ the same type of honest dialogue as political strategy with the district as she does with teachers in her building. She appears to be more adept negotiating with her staff than using her political skill to negotiate with the district.

Ms. Denler is passionate about serving children and creating a school that supports the development of each and every child. She is also committed to her work and to making a difference at Fox Elementary School. At the same time, she is frustrated with the lack of support

in realizing her vision for the school. She stated these comments directly and explicitly across interviews.

Background and more subtly, Ms. Denler revealed both pride and tension within her work. She is proud of her leadership at both Jaguar and Fox elementary schools, and proud of what has been accomplished. At Jaguar, the school grade increased to a letter grade "B", student behavior improved, the school culture shifted, and teacher retention increased. At Fox, the successes are not yet obvious in the school grade or academic data, but analysis of Ms. Denler's comments reveals a pride in the cultural changes at Fox and in the relationships she has built with teachers. She believes in her ability to make a difference and in the positive impact she has had at both Jaguar and Fox. In addition to pride, there was also a tension that became evident in the theoretical notes. Ms. Denler stated explicitly her belief in the importance of education and is committed to her work and to her school. Simultaneously, she believes in family, having two adopted teenage daughters of her own. The theoretical notes reveal a tension between her responsibilities and commitment to her school and those to her daughters. While she believes in education for every child and advocates for every child, she is individually responsible for the wellbeing and success of her two children. How does she meet the needs of the six hundred students at Fox while attending to the same needs of her own family? She attempts to balance this tension by making her daughters part of the Fox school family. During each of my visits to the school, her daughters were present and both were actively engaged in the workings of the school. Our interviews were scheduled after the school day, normally just after the rush of dismissal but while remaining students awaited pickup. Her daughters helped greet visitors at the front desk, supervised students whose parents had not yet arrived, answered phones, and

completed requests for teachers and office staff. They were known to staff and students and were both professional and at ease in their interactions.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the major findings regarding Ms. Denler's leadership at Jaguar and Fox Elementary Schools, her daily leadership practices and her use of political skills. The additional finding of barriers was also discussed. The following chapter provides an analysis of these findings followed by a discussion of implications for practice and additional study.

Chapter 5

Summary, Analysis and Discussion

This chapter analyzes the research findings and discusses the analysis in relation to the literature in order to answer the research questions and to further understand Ms. Denler's leadership practices and political skills. This chapter analyzes each funding through a discussion of the vertical and horizontal analysis (Carspecken, 1996) followed by a discussion of the analysis in connection to the research questions and the current leadership literature. This chapter concludes with a discussion of implications and recommendations. The research questions are reviewed below:

1. How does an elementary school principal understand and enact leadership on a day to day basis?

2. To what extent does a school principal intentionally utilize political skill and tactics to facilitate change within a school?

This research attempted to help bridge the need for research regarding how leaders work on a daily basis to create transformative change (Anderson, 2009). The research focused on understanding a principal's daily leadership practice and leadership strategies to facilitate school change and create school transformation. The research attempted to answer the research questions through the in depth study of one principal, Ms. Denler. In order to know her daily leadership practices, five semi-structured interviews were conduced with Ms. Denler. Four

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additional interviews were conducted with assistant principals and instructional staff members that worked directly with her. This extensive data was then coded and analyzed to identify the daily leadership practices as well as the political skills used to influence change.

The analysis of the findings began during the data gathering process and continued through the coding and the vertical and horizontal processes. Memoing during the data collection process provided additional data describing what was seen and heard in each interview. To understand Ms. Denler's daily leadership practice and political skills as fully and completely as possible, horizontal and vertical analysis was conducted (Carspecken, 1996). This provides a meaning analysis that helps understand both the articulated and the unarticulated meaning of the phenomena studied (Carspecken, 1996), in this study, the leadership of Ms. Denler. The analysis occurs simultaneously, but each is explained separately in order to understand each part and how it contributes to the full understanding of the data. Vertical and horizontal analysis is first reviewed followed by the analysis. The chapter also includes a discussion of unintended findings followed by implications and recommendations for future research.

Horizontal and Vertical Analysis

Horizontal and vertical analysis was conducted to analyze the interview data in an effort to understand Ms. Denler's leadership. Horizontal and vertical analysis are conducted simultaneously (Carspecken, 1996) and are integral to each other, but are explained separately for purposes of ease of understanding. The horizontal analysis includes a reconstructive analysis of the objective, subjective and normative-evaluative claims revealed in the data. The vertical analysis identifies the foreground and background claims operating within the three validity claims. The foreground claims are immediately referenced in the interview data while the

background claims are remotely referenced, but underlie the objective, subjective and normative-evaluative claims (Carspecken, 1996).   While the horizontal and vertical analysis is employed simultaneously, both during data gathering and data analysis, they are discussed here individually in order to understand each claim and how each interacts to create the full picture of Ms. Denler's leadership in the context in which she leads.

Throughout the analysis, my own personal reflection and experience are intertwined as an additional component of the analysis. The purpose of this is to transparently communicate the influence of my experiences upon the process as well as adding to the depth of analysis. The "more familiarity you have with the culture of your subjects, the closer your articulated meaning fields are likely to be to what actors themselves report" (Carspecken, 1996). The reflections on my personal experiences influence and contribute to the analysis because having been a principal in the same district, and in a similar context of school change, I possess a familiarity with the culture of the context as well as an insiders perspective that informed the analysis.

The horizontal analysis allows for the analysis of meaning through objective, subjective, and normative-evaluative claims (Carspecken, 1996). Objective claims are gathered through observation and accessed through the senses: they are available to all that observe or participate in the situation because they are explicitly evident. These claims are readily evident in the data and are accessible to each observer or participant. They make statements about the world and about what has taken place (Carspecken, 1996). Subjective claims refer to the emotions, desires, and intentions of the subject. The amount and extent they are shared is controlled by the subject and analyzed by the observer through his or her interpretation. These claims can be revealed or concealed and are thus characterized by "privileged access" (Carspecken, 1996). They are concerned with "my world" or "her world" rather than "the world" (Carspecken, 1996).

Normative-evaluative claims are statements of "our world" (Carspecken, 1996), describing what is appropriate or proper behavior about how individuals should act. These claims involve position taking and are integrally associated with values. Together, and in conjunction with the vertical analysis, these claims allow the researcher to gain an insider's perspective of the individual, in this instance, allowing insight into Ms. Denler's leadership.

Vertical analysis reveals the foreground and background claims operating within Ms. Denler's leadership practice, adding a layer of meaning to what she reveals about herself and her leadership. These claims offer an explanation and understanding of the participant's actions (Carspecken, 1996). The foreground claims are immediately recognizable and referenced in the interview text, while the background claims are inferred through the data. Claims may move from background to foreground as the participant reveals additional information or insight and add to the understanding of the phenomena studied, bringing to light what one normally understands without explicit awareness (Carspecken, 1996).

Horizontal and vertical analysis reveals aspects of meaning beyond what is explicitly stated (Carspecken, 1996). Interview text from each interview and within each identified theme was repeatedly read and then analyzed for objective, subjective, and normative-evaluative claims. The claims for each theme are explained and then analyzed to paint the clearest and most accurate picture of Ms. Denler, her leadership strategies, and her beliefs about leadership. The analysis was completed separately with the text of each of Ms. Denler's interviews, with the text from the non-principal participants, and then together as a whole. The identity claims and the foreground and background claims for each finding are described in the next section.

Vision analysis.

The objective claims identify Ms. Denler as a visionary leader who establishes a collaborative vision for each school. This is a foreground claim evident in both Ms. Denler's statements as well as the statements of the four additional interview participants. The vision at Fox is a shared vision that contributes to positive change in the school culture as well as in student achievement. Subjective meaning claims illustrate the positive impact of the common vision. The vision has created a camaraderie and cohesion among staff and they value its impact and the direction it gives them as individuals and as a school staff. Without the common vision, it is hypothetical to assume that the same progress at Jaguar or Fox would not have been achieved. Ms. Denler uses the vision creating process as well as the vision itself as a leadership strategy to create cohesion and momentum for positive change. She keeps the big picture always in site but also uses smaller goals to keep continual movement toward the larger goal. The normative-evaluative claim identified illustrated the importance Ms. Denler places on vision as a tool to facilitate change. Ms. Denler believes effective leadership involves a common vision as a tool to create change and build momentum for moving forward. A clear and common vision is a critical leadership skill (Burns, 1978) and a critical component of change at both Jaguar and Fox Elementary School. Vision is a tool to express the larger purpose and moral imperative of education and the daily work at each school (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Thinking of my own leadership experience and of the principals that have served as my mentors, the intentionality and focus Ms. Denler maintained on the vision was impressive and very obviously a strength. The vision functions as a focal point for many things at Fox, including maintaining momentum, developing staff cohesion, and decision-making. Not all

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leaders demonstrate this ability to pull people together around a common focus. Often, the vision is either a large statement that is part of official documents but not part of the daily leadership or school operations or is not evident at all. At Fox, the vision is known and serves as a focus of the short and long term goals of the school. It is integral to Ms. Denler's daily practice but also the daily practice of the staff.

Ms. Denler possesses an advocacy position (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011) demonstrating the need to create a school and society that gives every individual the opportunity to succeed and to know and have the choices regarding opportunities in the future. This underlies Ms. Denler's vision for the school. Her expressed commitment to ensure that every student get a chance to live the life they hope for was a re-occurring theme embedded in her vision for students.

Intention and political practice.

The second finding identified the intentional leadership practices and political strategies that describe Ms. Denler's daily practice. Objective claim analysis reveals Ms. Denler leads with intention and deliberateness. This intentionality builds trust among staff and between Ms. Denler and staff. Change resulting in a better, more equitable school and system cannot be achieved or sustained without intention (Rallis & Militello, 2010; Rost, 1991; Theoharis, 2009). Ms. Denler intentionally uses the strategies of communicating expectations (Smyth et. al, 2009), modeling desired behavior (Shields, 2004), decision-making processes (Spillane, 2005), reflection (Anderson, 2009; Rayner, 2009; Ryan & Rottman, 2007; Shields, 2004), authentic conversations (Anderson, 2009; Ryan & Rottman, 2007; Shields, 2012; Starratt, 2004), and stories as a tool to facilitate change. She uses these strategies intentionally and strategically to

facilitate change. They are not used in isolation of each other but are employed simultaneously and interdependently.

The objective claims reinforce the initial findings and reflect how Ms. Denler employs intentional leadership strategies on a daily basis. The subjective claims demonstrate the impact of these leadership practices, both from Ms. Denler's perspective and from the perspective of those that work with her. The subjective claim analysis unveils the staff's valuing of the clear expectations, serving to build trust and consistency. Ms. Denler's modeling supports the implementation of expectations as well as influencing change in the choices and behaviors of staff, students and parents, which is her political motive. Ms. Denler, as well as the others interviewed, clearly articulated the need for strategies in addition to modeling because some individuals need additional support and or motivation to act in ways that will allow for the realization of the school vision (Burns, 1978; Rost, 1991; Senge, 1990). This is her strategic use of modeling as a political skill to influence the actions of others. The normative claims reveal how authentic conversations facilitate trust and result in the perception that staff is valued and each individual is an important member of the school (Danielson, 2007; Rayner, 2007). These conversations also serve as an accountability measure, holding each individual to the expectations. This behavior might be best thought as authentic feedback, which Starratt (2004) views as virtue ethics where the principal is seen as providing genuine and targeted feedback to influence student and adult behavior.

The authenticity of the leader (Anderson, 2009; Starratt, 2004) acts in the best interest of others and holds these authentic conversations in an effort to bring out the best in each individual (van Kippenburg et. al, 2004). As the leader of the school community, Ms. Denler takes responsibility for the relationships she creates and for using those relationships to have authentic

conversations that produce a quality, learning environment for teachers and students (Starratt, 2004). This responsibility and authenticity are connected through her presence (Starratt, 2004); her engagement with others in relationships that affirm, enable and critically analyze individuals (Rost, 1991), the school community and the environment in an effort to serve the best interest of students (Spillane, 2005, van Kippenburg, 2004). Ms. Denler's authenticity (Anderson, 2009) and presence (Starratt, 2004) are critical to her ability to facilitate change at both Jaguar and Fox critiquing, enabling, and acting in ways that promote the vision and being true to the norms of the school.

The subjective claim analysis illustrates the decision-making processes utilized by Ms. Denler build trust and are enabled by trust and her relationships with staff. The normative claims align with distributed leadership practice. Distributed leadership practice (Spillane, 2005) is not necessarily enacted as staff making every decision, but is rather the interaction of the leader, follower and situation where trust and involvement across all three components are present (Sergiovanni, 2007). As a leader, Ms. Denler has responsibility to multiple audiences, including students, teachers, parents, the district, and larger governing agencies (Starratt, 2004). This responsibility necessitates critical analysis and strategic involvement in decision-making in order to fulfill the responsibility to all audiences. Ms. Denler employs loose and tight coupling (Sergiovanni, 2007) to make decisions with differentiation based upon context and the skill of those involved in the process. This sense of responsibility of multiple audiences limits all participants to have input in each and every decision that a school leader makes.

The leadership strategies evidence normative claims that Ms. Denler holds about leadership that ground her leadership practice and her actions to negotiate change. Clear expectations are critical and serve to allow individuals to work most effectively and to develop

practice (Bass, 2008; Shields, 2004). Individuals, at heart, want to work effectively, want to be held accountable, and want others to be held accountable as well (Rost, 1991).   Ms. Denler demonstrates what she expects of others: modeling the expectations in action. These leadership actions facilitate the growth of skill, efficacy and self-worth of staff (Shields, 2004). They also serve as political strategies used to influence the behaviors of staff in ways that will best support student learning, according to Ms. Denler's vision for Fox.

Leadership requires courage (Sergiovanni, 2007). Ms. Denler understands the necessity for moral courage and possesses the skill to hold authentic conversations and holds to this commitment in spite of the temptation to avoid the conflict. The moral imperative to serve children outweighs the individual desire to avoid conflict and requires addressing challenges (Foster, 1986). The foreground and background normative claim illustrates Ms. Denler's believe that children deserve the best from every adult every day. It is an illustration of Ms. Denler's advocacy stance (Anderson, 2009).

Ms. Denler employs each leadership strategy as part of an intentional and critical reflection process. The process involves reflection, enlightenment, and learning in a cycle of continual growth (Shields, 2011). Ms. Denler demonstrates leadership responsibility (Starratt, 2004) in beliefs and actions.

In addition, as part of her use of political skill, Ms. Denler uses power strategically to achieve goals (Malen, 1995; Smyth, et al, 2009). Her use internally has been more effective than her external use of power with her relationship with the district. This use of power appears less effective and at times appears to limit her ability to advocate for students in ways she deems necessary in order to move the school forward. She referred to it as a "ceiling effect" in school improvements, limiting the school's ability to achieve its potential.

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While these strategies are an integral part of Ms. Denler's daily leadership and appear to come easily and naturally to her, the background claims reveal the difficult aspects of these strategies and the toll they potentially take upon Ms. Denler emotionally. While she obviously believes in the importance of being authentic and holding staff accountable, at times this has put a stress upon relationships in and out of the school as well as upon her own sense of confidence and satisfaction in her work. No one expressed knowing what happens in the individual conversations, but each acknowledged awareness of their existence. As a principal, Ms. Denler is alone in these conversations and in bearing the weight and impact of them upon the individual and the school (Theoharis, 2009). The positive impact outweighs the tension, but the tension exists, nonetheless (Theoharis, 2009).

The vertical and horizontal analysis enlightens how Ms. Denler intentionally employs leadership strategies and political skill. She supports one strategy with another in a method that purposely and strategically supports the growth and development of each individual and the entire school, while simultaneously building upon each other (Rost, 1991). She integrates daily leadership and political strategies that support the continual development of relationships, trust, and growth in staff (Anderson, 2009; Byrk & Schneider, 2003). This requires strength in human resource management and use of political skill within human resource management. The following section provides an analysis of the findings regarding her human resource management.

Human resource management.

Ms. Denler focuses on human resource management as an integral component of her leadership and use of political skill. Objective claims disclose her focus on human resource management involving the use of political skills of social astuteness, interpersonal influence,

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networking ability, and apparent sincerity (Ferris, et. al, 2007). She thoughtfully and intentionally builds relationships with staff and builds capacity in teachers, administrators, and parents. Ms. Denler authentically builds relationships by demonstrating sincere care and concern and holding authentic dialogue regarding performance. Her utilization of networking, specifically with the district, is less developed. She has not built the same type of relationships with district staff that she has within the staff at Fox and the authentic dialogue with the district was not evident. Rather, Ms. Denler indicated she attempts to "operate without the district as much as possible".

Subjective claims illustrate the impact of these human resource strategies and political skills upon others. Strong relationships with Fox staff allow her to build staff capacity in a way that supports student learning. There is evidence staff feel valued and important, leading to a willingness to attempt change (Sergiovanni, 2005). She uses these political skills to influence the behavior of others (Malen & Cochran, 2008). Ms. Denler's trust and concern for others creates relationships that foster change. In addition, it supports the retention of staff in a context of typically high turnover (Darling-Hammond & Friedlaender, 2008). Ms. Denler uses a strength-based approach, based upon the foundation of her relationships, to build confidence and capacity in others. She creates the willingness to take-risks and to attempt new practices, all resulting in growth in individuals and in the overall school.

Ms. Denler's use of human resource management strategies demonstrates her normative-evaluative beliefs about leadership. Relationships, and the skillful ability to employ political skill in order to establish and maintain working relationships is a critical leadership practice (Malen & Cochran, 2008). Other leadership practices are contingent upon the ability to create and sustain these relationships (Bass, 2008; Rost, 1991). At the same time, the data reveal Ms.

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Denler does not believe she can rely solely upon relationships. While relationships are necessary (Burns, 1978; Rost, 1991), she is aware they are not sufficient to her effective leadership.

A background normative-evaluative claim is the importance of creating a climate where staff is a family. Building a sense of family is foundational to the reasoning behind the relationships built. In addition, the sense of family is a strategy that allows Ms. Denler to cope with the emotional strain of the other leadership strategies used as well as the role of a principal itself (Theoharis, 2009). It also allows her to balance the needs of the school with the needs of her own family. Her daughters have become part of the Fox Elementary School family, allowing her to meet their needs while at the same time meeting the demands of her role as principal. In my observation at each interview, the presence of her two daughters appears to reinforce her care and concern for staff and of her work of the school. Her daughters actively help other staff and students, answering phones, running errands within the school for staff, and supervising students while office staff contacted parents.

One additional background claim is revealed in the vertical and horizontal analysis. The overall impact of these leadership and political strategies across time remains unknown. Is the use of these leadership practices and political skill that focus on human resources through an organic process of growth enough? Is it enough to create the quick change needed to exit the school from state sanctions and is it enough to retain staff in an emotionally intense environment such as Fox Elementary School? Ms. Denler did not mention these concerns explicitly, but they were implied in her repeated mention of concerns for the work at Fox. Staff retention has been an ongoing issue at Fox. Relationships and the perception of being valued and supported by the principal in the school's work support teacher retention (Darling-Hammond & Friedlaender, 2008) but the questions remains as to whether these strategies alone will retain staff, allowing her

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to build the momentum and sustainability for change. Further, they deepen the understanding of her own foreground concerns about her job as a principal. Ms. Denler mentioned a sincere desire to serve the school and students because of the potential she sees in both. At the same time, she mentioned the fear of being a "scapegoat" and being replaced if the school does not earn a letter grade of at least a "C" or if the school does not meet the criteria needed to release the school from state oversight. These personal concerns add pressure to her daily work and at times seem to cause her to question her effectiveness as a principal.

An Advocacy leader (Anderson, 2009) bears the greater risk of emotional and political pressure. The emotional toll upon leaders presents professional and personal challenges (Theoharis, 2009). Ms. Denler is resilient but experiences significant emotional and political stress that she must manage in order to maintain and develop her effectiveness as a leader. At the same time, Ms. Denler realizes the need to support other staff members in their management of the emotional weight of the work in order to retain effective staff.

Summary.

The major objective claims revealed in the data give an overall sense of Ms. Denler's leadership practices and the work at Fox Elementary School. A collaborative vision is present. Ms. Denler is a deliberate and intentional leader and also a learning leader. She uses clear expectations, modeling, explicit decision-making processes, and authentic conversations as change tools. Beyond the daily leadership strategies just mentioned, Ms. Denler focuses on human resource management. She uses strong relationships and political skill to employ the other leadership and political strategies, including building capacity in others.

The subjective claims add understanding of Ms. Denler's leadership. The vision has created cohesion among staff. The data reveal a trust in Ms. Denler and her decisions. Further,

staff feels valued because of the relationships Ms. Denler has developed, showing care and concern and creating a sense of family and belonging. Ms. Denler's intentional leadership and political skill influence the behavior of others within Fox in positive ways. While no one leadership or political strategy works in isolation of any other, each strategy is important but insufficient alone (Blasé & Blasé, 2002). Each works integrally with the others.

The normative-evaluative claims reveal the foundational norms that guide Ms. Denler's leadership. Vision is an important leadership tool and critical to change. Clear expectations modeling, and decision-making processes allow individuals to work more effectively and at higher levels. Creating and maintaining relationships is an essential, but insufficient leadership and political skill. Leadership requires courage and the will to do uncomfortable things when they serve the best interest of students (Rayner, 2009; Theoharis, 2009). Students deserve the best of every adult every day therefore advocacy for students are part of leadership (Anderson, 2009).

Barriers.

Although the research questions focused on discovering Ms. Denler's daily leadership strategies and utilization of political skill, the data revealed an important finding influencing the leadership practices employed by Ms. Denler. The district surfaced as a barrier to her leadership strategies and to the success of the school. These claims were background in the first interview, and became gradually more foreground in each subsequent interview, with both Ms. Denler and three of the four non-principal participants.

It is first important to define the district as referred to in this research. The district, as defined here, is the organizational unit represented by the superintendent, school board area

superintendent, and various district level administrators and curriculum personnel. It does not refer to any one individual, but to the district as an entity.

The foreground objective claims include the district administration as a barrier to Jaguar and Fox's school success. With the exception of Mrs. Swift, each interview participant explicitly identified the district as an obstacle to the progress and success of the school, both Jaguar and Fox. Ms. Follwere and Mr. Ginlear mentioned the need to act strategically to overcome the role of the district. Mr. Ginlear described how he and Ms. Denler "broke the rules" in order to meet the needs of Jaguar Elementary School. Mrs. Follwere suggested that the removal of Ms. Denler from Jaguar prior to completion of the change process created a barrier for Jaguar Elementary School, broke the school's momentum, and illustrated the district's lack of concern for school needs. The background claim is Mrs. Follwere and Mr. Ginlear's focus on the school and seeming lack a larger district perspective. At the same time, they realize the need for district support. Mr. Vulpes explicitly addressed the challenges to change presented with the district's presence at Fox Elementary School.

Background objective statements revealed in the data include the district's lack of understanding and support of school needs. Second, is the district administration's lack of trust in the school's leadership. While Ms. Denler did not specifically mention the belief that the district does not trust her leadership, it was implicit within the data. If the district trusted Ms. Denler's leadership, she would have the discretion to make decisions and to implement an improvement plan. This background claim is supported by objective claims. The district changed the school master schedule in the middle of the current school year without the prior communication or involvement of the school staff. The district also declined Ms. Denler's request to implement a specific social emotional curriculum in response to the school's behavior

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data. These situations also exemplify the lack of clear communication structures between the district and school. Repeated communications and requests by Ms. Denler have gone unanswered by her immediate supervisor, the Area Superintendent. When the district makes a decision impacting the school, clear communication with Ms. Denler is not consistently apparent. The district raised concerns about the instructional coaches with the superintendent and state oversight personnel, but these concerns were not initially shared with Ms. Denler. In addition, the district administration adjusted the school master schedule and shared a draft with the school without first discussing schedule concerns with Ms. Denler or other school personnel.

Subjective claims were clearly foreground and evidenced by a sincere concern of both Ms. Denler and the school staff. Ms. Denler explicitly stated the district is not fulfilling its responsibility to the school and this is having a direct impact upon the school's progress and ultimate potential for success. According to Ms. Denler, until the district changes its way of work and support to Fox Elementary School, the school and its students will not realize their full potential and will struggle to sustain current achievements. A second subjective, but foreground claim, is Ms. Denler's frustration with the district. Background in this subjective claim is Ms. Denler's advocacy and the challenges faced in advocating for her students within the district context.

Two normative-evaluative claims surfaced in the analysis. First, Ms. Denler believes district administration is a critical component of school change. The school and district must act as partners to create success for students (Kozleski & Smith, 2009) with the district possessing a responsibility to support her and her school (Rorrer et. al, 2008). Second, the district has a responsibility, and a critical role in creating and supporting school change at Fox. Fox cannot achieve and sustain the needed and potential change without district support.

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A third, and background claim, is the need for principals to posses the political awareness, knowledge and skill in negotiating with the district to achieve the support and change needed (Burrello et. al, 2013, Rorrer, 2009). Ms. Denler is clearly aware of the need for a relationship and support with the district. What is less apparent is her skill in negotiating with the district to obtain what she needs. Ms. Denler gave several situations where the district acted as a barrier to her work: the request to visit a successful school in a neighboring district, the change in the master schedule without school input and the denial of the request to add a social-emotional curriculum without explanation of why it was denied. She also mentioned on several occasions the Area Superintendent's lack of support and communication, including only three school visits during the school year and no response to communication when a student shot another student with a bb gun at dismissal. What became evident in the data was Ms. Denler's lack of intention and use of multiple political strategies in her interactions with the district. There were no intentional steps to build district relationships or to hold authentic conversations, political skills she used effectively within the school building. Rather than build relationships or work collaboratively with the district, she chose to attempt to act in isolation. When asked about her interaction with the district, her response was, "How do I do this without the district?"

As a previous principal, I found it difficult to critique this aspect of her leadership. I certainly understand and have compassion for her frustration with the district. At the same time, it is my normative belief, learned but not mastered in my own experience, that principals have the responsibility and must have the political skill to negotiate strategically with the district. The more skill with which a principal maneuvers and builds relationships with strategic district personnel, the better the principal can advocate for the needs of his or her students. Ms Denler

has adopted, for seeming purposes of survival, a passive stance with the district. A more aggressive stance, while risky for her personally, might better support needed change at Fox.

Ms. Denler lacked intention and strategic use of the political skills she used effectively at the school level. The evidence did not indicate effort to build relationships with the district or to use authentic conversations. She expressed frustration with the Area Superintendent's lack of response to her emails and calls, but she did not make any additional calls or send any emails to prompt a response. When the Area Superintendent did not respond to her request for permission to visit another district, she did not take action to get a response. Instead, she stated, "What are you gonna do?" Another expressed frustration was the Area Superintendent's lack of response to a situation where one student shot another student with a BB gun. She sent a message requesting support for transferring the child to an alternative school when he returned from the suspension. The Area Superintendent did not respond. Ms. Denler made no additional attempts to pursue her request or gain a response. Instead, the student returned to Fox. Ms. Denler expressed frustration with the Area Superintendent's lack of visits to the school. "I have seen my Area Superintendent at this school twice. Once was at instructional review and one was a drive-by 'cause she came in and she went in to one classroom; then she left". While frustrated, however, Ms. Denler did not make any attempt to invite her or to request a meeting with her. She does not seem to intentionally create district relationships that will help her leverage resources or change for her school. There was a lack of networking and social astuteness at the district level (Ferris, et. al, 2007).

A second political strategy Ms. Denler used effectively at the school level but failed to use at the district level was authentic conversations. She used these extensively within her building, but when asked about her interaction with the district, she stated, "I am very cautious. I

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don't ask questions". With teachers she used the vision and the school goals as a tool to facilitate change in practice or removal of teachers from Fox. She does not use the same strategy with the district. When the district indicated she could not add the social-emotional curriculum, she did not have a conversation to attempt to persuade the district to change the decision. She did not related it to her vision or to her plan for the school. When the Area Superintendent did not respond to her request for permission to visit the successful school in a neighboring district, she did not peruse the request. The district changed the school schedule: Ms. Denler accepted it and implemented it without questioning any of the changes or defending the current schedule with her purpose or vision. There was no evidence that she ever shared her vision or plan for change at Fox with district personnel.

Rather than operate intentionally and employ political skill, Ms. Denler attempts to operate outside of the district's influence. When asked how she uses the district to achieve school goals she indicates her attempts to operate without the district's involvement.

> I've gotten to a point where it's like I know some of the things that need to happen here or I feel like I know some of the things that need to happen, but I also know that until the district sees what this role needs to be here, it's not going to happen. So it's like how do I do this despite the district/ How do I do this without the district? How do I get this done despite this barrier?

When asked specifically about how she attempts to negotiate with the district, Ms. Denler responded, "I'm still working on that one. I don't have the answer to that one".

The other area of political skill application that appeared to be absent from Ms. Denler's repertoire was her lack of building a political base of support from within the parents and families around the school community. While she was building trust, she did not think to engage the school community in offering resistance to the district's leadership.

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Ms. Denler did have recommendations to improve the district's support of Fox or any struggling school. She made three specific recommendations: urgency and understanding of the school context; adjustments to human resource policy, and differentiation of resources and support. Ms. Denler expressed the need for the district to observe the school and actively listen to the school and its' needs. Knowledge of the school relates directly to building communication and a relationship characterized by trust between the school and district.

The subjective claim makes evident the belief Ms. Denler holds in the need for the district and the importance of district support. The normative-evaluative claim portrays the district's responsibility to support a school. Further, a school does not and cannot operate in isolation of the district structure (Kozleski & Smith, 2009; Rorrer, 2009). Both are interdependent and integral to the success of the other.

Second, Ms. Denler recommended changes in human resource policy, included the staffing model, hiring processes, and teacher contract. While Fox has more instructional coaches than schools not under state oversight, given Fox has over twenty new teachers at the school, the coaching model is insufficient to support new teacher development while also supporting change in overall teacher practice. The district instructional and support employee staffing model at Fox is the same as the other seventy-three elementary schools in the district. This reveals Ms. Denler's normative-evaluative claim that the demographics of certain schools require different resources.

The third recommendation centered on the need for differentiation. "You ask schools to step outside of the box, but I can't step out of the box if you still got a box on the outside to say I can't move". Ms. Denler sees the need for curriculum and resource differentiation and decision-making at the school level. Ms. Denler shared a curriculum example. Approximately sixty

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percent of Fox's students scored at the lowest proficiency level on the state standardized test. The school is mandated to use the same core curriculum at the same pace and in the same way as every other school. They have requested, but been denied the flexibility to adjust the curriculum.

The background claim reveals the district's perception that the core instructional problem is not reflective of the curriculum, but is rather an instructional and leadership deficit. This reveals a district normative-evaluative claim that the district knows best: the school does not have the knowledge or skill to make curricular decisions. Further, the role of the school is to implement the decisions of the district, because the district is in the position to know what is best for each school. These claims run in direct conflict with Ms. Denler's beliefs and norms about her role as a principal. This creates a tension for Ms. Denler and for her daily leadership practice and underlies her frustration with her perceived lack of district support.

An additional background claim is Ms. Denler's lack of recognition or employment of political skill in the community to leverage change with the district. There was no evidence that Ms. Denler made attempts to use community partnerships or relationships to influence district support or action. She viewed the community as important to engage in order to support student learning and school success, but never mentioned community relationships as a political tool to negotiate with the district. When Ms. Denler shared her effort to work with a local university, her purpose was to help parents so they can support student learning, "I care about the partnership, because that might be an opportunity for them, you know, for some of our parents to get their degree or some training and get some classes or something." There was no evidence to suggest Ms. Denler sees the community as a potential ally to influence the district. As a limitation, while we discussed her desire to work with the community, I did not ask her directly

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about how she was creating or leveraging community relationships to influence the district's actions.

This aspect of the findings caused considerable reflection during the analysis. As a former principal in the same district, I shared Ms. Denler's analysis of the district and identified with her claims. At the same time, now in a district office role, I have learned to be cognizant of a larger district perspective. I more explicitly understand how the district is a barrier, but I also see now through a different lens. The analysis reveals the importance of the relationship between school leaders and the district (Kozleski & Smith, 2009).

Overall Analysis

The analysis of each data finding revealed individual objective, subjective and normative-evaluative meaning claims as well as foreground and background claims. In conjunction, these also reveal overall identity and vertical claims about Ms. Denler's leadership strategies and political skill. These claims are illustrated in Table 3.

The objective claims illustrate the impact of Ms. Denler's intentional leadership strategies. Ms. Denler has strong relationships with staff and Fox Elementary School has a common vision. She was successful at Jaguar and, while not evident in all of the academic data improvements are obvious at Fox. Ms. Denler is a visionary leader and leads intentionally and strategically to facilitate change. These are foreground claims based upon the full set of interview data from Ms. Denler and the additional interview participants.

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strategically to facilitate change. These are foreground claims based upon the full set of

interview data from Ms. Denler and the additional interview participants.

Table 3

Identity Claims Describing Ms. Denler

Objective	Subjective	Normative-Evaluative
Creates a collaborative vision	Vision created cohesion	Common vision is critical to change
Acts intentionally	Intentional leadership influences behavior of others	Effective leaders are intentional
Establishes clear expectations	Clear expectations have built trust	Clear expectations allow individuals to work more effectively, at higher level
Models expectations	Clear expectations have built trust	Leaders must model what expect
Reflects to learn		
Focuses on relationships	No one strategy works in isolation: each strategy is important but insufficient	Moral courage is essential
Focuses on capacity building		Effective leaders are learners
Gains input on decisions but not all decisions are shared	Relationships are strong and have built trust	Effective leaders build relationships and possess strong interpersonal skills
Intentionally employs leadership strategies	Staff value giving input on decisions	Relationships are critical but insufficient
	Staff relieved not to Make some decision	Principal is responsible for decisions made
	Staff feel valued	
	Staff trust Ms. Denler	Principal is responsible for student performance
	Decisions are made in interest of students	Principal must advocate for students

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The subjective claims reveal Ms. Denler's beliefs about herself as a leader. Ms. Denler uses leadership strategies effectively to build relationships and in turn uses the relationships as part of her intentional work to build capacity in others, including teachers, parents, and administrators. In turn, these leadership strategies facilitate positive change for the students and the school. Ms. Denler believes herself to be an effective leader and to possess the leadership skills needed to facilitate change at Fox Elementary School. The background claim illustrates that this is evidenced in staff's desire to work with Ms. Denler and in the willingness of staff she has removed for performance issues to work with her again. Ms. Denler believes that she could be a better leader if the district supported her needs and the needs of her school.

The normative-evaluative claims about her leadership and current context tended to be background claims, implied in the data. Ms. Denler sees school success as a function of a partnership between the school-based leadership and the district. The leader plays an important role and must employ some specific strategies, but the leader cannot operate in isolation of the larger district context.

There is never one correct method or conclusion in qualitative analysis (Carspecken, 1996). The results are influenced by the analysis methods and by the individual conducting the analysis. In this case, my own experiences as a principal influenced the process, providing an insider perspective, but also creating a potential bias in what was revealed. Intentional and conscientious awareness was required in the interviews and analysis. The transparency of this perspective, both to Ms. Denler and in the data analysis process allowed for a deeper revelation from Ms. Denler and in the data itself.

During the analysis process two surprising factor surfaced. The data did not reveal an intentional focus on the use of data by Ms. Denler to support change. Even when asked about how she measures success, Ms. Denler relied upon qualitative notions of the sense she had for change in the school environment. This does not necessarily mean that data is not used as an integral part of the work at Fox, but that it is not one of the intentional leadership strategies revealed in the data and employed by Ms. Denler to create change. This lack of intentional use of data did not become particularly missing to me until analysis. It was evident in the research data. Mr. Vulpes mentioned how he uses data with the School Based Leadership Team (SBLT) to analyze behavior data and make revisions to the behavior management system. Ms. Follwere shared examples of how "the hub" uses data and processes to coordinate service to students. Given the state oversight at Fox, it is interesting that Ms. Denler does not describe data processes as one of her intentional leadership strategies. It does reveal another example of her trust in her colleagues. She does not use data processes as a specific leadership strategy, but trusts others, Mr. Vulpes for example, to use data to create change. Background in this evidence is her belief that the principal creates the big picture for the work at the school and it is then others' responsibility to take action that enable the vision to become reality.

Second, Ms. Denler made little mention of "the Initiative" at Fox Elementary School. She referred to the program several times, but it was not an explicit or implicit aspect of her daily leadership or her change strategy. The Initiative has been implemented in one classroom in grades Pre-Kindergarten through third grade and includes a support employee in each classroom, additional social work services for families and mandatory parent involvement. Ms. Denler expressed concerns and lack of a district plan to support school-wide implementation. In

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addition, it is an expensive model and the challenges of sustainability, let alone expansion, are a challenge.

The vertical and horizontal analysis reveals Ms. Denler is an intentional and visionary leader. She utilizes multiple leadership strategies and political skill to facilitate change within her school as the findings described in Chapter Four illustrate. The analysis reveals the explicit and implicit beliefs and practices that are foundational to her work. The next section will describe the implications of the analysis as well as recommendations for future research.

Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

The purpose of this section is to connect the research findings to the research questions and the literature on Advocacy and/or Transformative leadership. To do this each major component of Advocacy leadership is discussed in relation to the leadership of Ms. Denler as revealed in the findings. Discussion of the results in light of the literature regarding Advocacy leadership will aid in the identification of implications not only for Ms. Denler, but also for any principal embroiled in the change and transformation process. This section is organized into five sections; a discussion of the Advocacy leadership literature and the findings of this study, implications of the study, limitations, recommendations for future research and concluding remarks.

Advocacy Leadership

The major tenets of Advocacy leadership include student advocacy, authenticity, reflective learning, collaborative decision-making processes, intended change, and utilization of politics and power (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011). Each tenet is briefly reviewed and then compared and contrasted against Ms. Denler's leadership and the data gathered in this study. As a review, Advocacy leadership is transformative leadership (Shields, 2011) intended to improve

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student learning, but as importantly, to advocate for the larger purposes of education and to deconstruct and reconstruct inequities in the system and in society in order to serve the needs of every student. Advocacy leadership intends change at the student, school and societal level, transforming the education of individual students, the system, and society (Anderson, 2009). It is a complex view of leadership involving internal action to create change within the school (Theoharis, 2009) as well as external action, influencing the policies and structures within the larger community.

Advocacy.

As advocates for children and leaders who see a larger purpose to education, Advocacy leaders focus on the big picture while also acting in the present to address short-term needs and objectives. They are able to operate on multiple levels simultaneously focusing on both short and long term goals (Anderson, 2009) within the school and within education. Ms. Denler clearly operates with the big picture in mind. At the same time, she explicitly and intentionally identifies short-term goals. Ms. Denler is a big picture thinker, with a clear vision that is an integral part of her daily leadership practice. At the same time, she identifies the immediate next step, always thinking about how to move the school forward. Foundational to advocacy leadership is advocacy for the larger purposes of education (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011).

The importance of vision as well as the ability to work on multiple levels simultaneously is evident in the literature and confirmed in the study of Ms. Denler. What appears to be a larger challenge in Ms. Denler's daily leadership practice is how to stay focused on the larger inequities within education while still addressing the daily needs of students and staff. While Ms. Denler stated her belief in the larger purposes of education and the need to address larger issues in order to create opportunity for students, her daily actions focus on the long and short-term needs of her

specific school and of the internal operations of Fox. While her school is a microcosm of the larger district and school district bureaucracy, and Ms. Denler expressed desire to influence the larger system, thinking of the larger implications for children on a daily basis is evident, having the time and skill to act outside of the current school context to influence larger structures, is an additional challenge. I remember Ms. Denler reflecting, "I don't know always know how to engage community partners intentionally to support change" and lamenting on time.

Ms. Denler's actions within the school building consistently reflect a focus on serving the needs of the Fox students. There was less evidence, however, that she possessed or employed advocacy within the district or the larger community. In part, she expressed the tension of time. In addition, however, she did not appear to have the skill to advocate with the district or with the community.

The day to day work of change within the school, especially in light of an extended school day, make it a challenge to strategically think about larger scale change. The current change is in and of itself overwhelming at times. Theoharis (2009) discussed the intensity of the work and the difficult principals had in sustaining their personal lives, the professional work, and all levels of impact they wanted to influence. Each of the seven principals he studied expressed severe "stress, frustration and pain" that "deeply affected them" (Theoharis, 2009, p. 110). Ms. Denler displays similar intents and frustrations.

The role of an advocate is complex and demanding. While navigating the internal spheres of influence, Ms. Denler was unable to navigate the external spheres of influence with equal energy and effect.

Authenticity.

A second important characteristic of Advocacy leadership is authenticity. Authenticity refers to the leaders ability to form relationships founded in trust (Anderson, 2009) on multiple levels; the individual level, school level and societal level. Authenticity also requires the leader possesses the courage and willingness to hold the difficult conversations with others (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011, Starratt, 2004), knowing they are critical to the needed change in individual practice and in student learning.

Within her school, Ms. Denler demonstrates authenticity. As revealed in the data, a strategy of Ms. Denler's leadership is building relationships. She has intentionally built relationships with students, staff and parents. She has also begun to develop community partnerships. She has conducted door-knocking campaigns and has begun building a partnership with a local university to give her teachers and parents educational opportunities. Authentic leadership is open leadership characterized by trust (Anderson, 2009). Another strategy of Ms. Denler's intentional leadership is the use of authentic conversations with teachers to facilitate change. She believes in the importance of these conversations as a tool to maintain focus on the vision, help others improve as well as a tool to remove ineffective teachers. She uses dialogue on a daily basis Ms. Denler characterizes the description of authentic leadership in her daily practice.

Authentic leaders form trusting relationships at multiple levels (Shields, 2011). While there is evidence of Ms. Denler's authenticity at the individual level, there is not evidence of her authenticity with the district. She has not established relationships with district personnel that support her efforts at the school level. Ms. Denler acknowledges the importance of the district's

support, but she perceives it as a district responsibility rather than her role or responsibility as a principal. The findings indicate she intentionally attempts to influence change without district involvement, failing to build relationships and avoiding authentic conversations. It is not clear whether it is a lack of awareness, power, or skill, or a combination of these, that prevents Ms. Denler from being more authentic at the societal level.

Reflective learning.

Advocacy leaders are reflective learners, continually pushing their own comfort zone (Anderson, 2009). Ms. Denler demonstrates continual reflection and learning and uses her learning as a modeling tool for others within her daily school level leadership. This learning (Shields, 2009) involves the continual process of reflection, enlightenment, and action. In her own words explaining the importance of continual learning, "Our students are going to miss out if we're not willing to push people to be the absolute best. And even when they get to their absolute best, to push them to be even better; and that, myself included." Everyone must be a learner, and the leader must example that learning, continually "going back to the table, always looking at where you are; being willing to be open". Ms. Denler demonstrates continual learning as a leader, in Starratt's (2004) terms knowing thy self and being true to that self.

Similar to the components of advocacy and authenticity, Ms. Denler functions differently at the school level then she does at the district or societal level. Ms. Denler reflects and acts upon this reflection regarding her building level leadership. She is not as reflective in her actions and effort with the district, however. All comments Ms. Denler made about the district were based on the district's lack of action or support. She did not reflect and identify a need to interact in different ways with the district or community. This lack of reflection resulted in missed opportunities for both Ms. Denler and her school. She was not aware of the need to

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interact and hold honest conversations with her Area Superintendent or other district staff. Nor did she share any reflections or learning regarding her ability to gain community support. If she was able to reflect, learn and better negotiate with the district and the community, she would potentially be able to acquire resources and influence larger change within her school.

Decision-making processes.

Advocacy leaders are characterized by collective leadership strategies (Shields, 2011). The literature frames this component of leadership as shared (Anderson, 2009) or distributed (Sergiovanni, 2004; Shields, 2011). While the terms have differences, they will be discussed here as synonymous as they both include the goal and structures that incorporate others into the decision making process. It is characterized by collaborative leadership with structures and processes for collaboratively problem solving and providing input. Distributed leadership facilitates democratic participation that empowers others and ensures opportunity for all perspectives to have a voice (Shields, 2011). Ms. Denler's decision-making incorporates shared processes. Participants expressed clear input and involvement in decision-making processes at Fox. At the same time, both Ms. Denler and the four non-principal participants all noted that Ms. Denler makes certain decisions independent of a shared or distributive process. While staff still provides input in many of these circumstances, and articulated satisfaction with the current decision-making process, there is not complete shared or distributed leadership present. One could draw the conclusion that fully shared leadership is not needed or appropriate. Ms. Denler has created processes that staff value and incorporates deliberate participation and ownership among staff. Staff has a voice in the decision making at Fox, but these processes are intentionally structured based upon the perceived capacity of the personnel. Ms. Denler does not structure the process in the same way at Fox as she did at Jaguar due to her perception of staff readiness and

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capacity to make decision that serve the best interest of students. Context and trust in staff matter and did influence her extending or reaching out to a new staff who she did not yet believe in to make the right decisions in light of student needs. When Ms. Denler first arrived at Fox she involved staff in the Title I budget development process. The staff voted to hire a police officer to help with student behavior. This did not align with Ms. Denler's vision for the school or students. She realized she had to structure involvement in decision-making in a different way, "Their solution was to hire a cop. I was like that's not even the kind of message I want to send." The staff did not yet have the capacity to make decisions that aligned with the vision and changes that would increase student learning. She had to build instructional knowledge and skill so that decision making would be based upon sound principles of what would support effective instruction and her vision for the school.

The classroom walkthroughs that brought her to tears due to the poor quality of instruction were indicators of the need to structure decision-making while she built trust and instructional capacity. To make decisions that would support the implementation of effective instruction, they needed the foundation of effective instruction. For this reason, she has retained decision-making rights in some instances. It is potentially true that there are limitations to shared and distributive leadership and that it is effective for principals, if relationships of trust are not present, to make decisions independently. Ms. Denler clearly gives staff a voice, but she also strategically employs this strategy (Spillane, 2005). Mrs. Swift recognizes that Ms. Denler makes some decisions alone, but she also stated she has voice in decisions, "A lot of staff input, a lot of staff input. She asks us, 'What do you feel would be best for us?' There are times…she just has to make that executive decision of what's best regardless of how she feels she wants it, just what's best for the school and the kids because that's why we're here. People understand."

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Intended change.

The purpose of Advocacy leadership is change (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011). The leader intentionally disrupts the status quo (Anderson, 2009) in order to push individuals and the system out of the comfort level of the current reality and into positive change intended to impact student learning and students' future. Ms. Denler is deliberately embroiled in change at Fox, but it was also focused on intentional change at Jaguar Elementary School as well. Advocacy leaders intentionally work to transcend a current way of work in order to create change and right societal inequities (Anderson, 2009). Background in Ms. Denler's leadership is change intended to influence larger societal issues: her attempts to support parent education and to support student realization of opportunities such as college are evidence of these attempts. They are less intentional in her daily practice, however, especially beyond the school level. At both Jaguar and Fox Ms. Denler disrupted expectations, processes and practices in order to create change. She has not, however, attempted to disrupt the status quo at the district level. In discussing the district as a barrier to her and her school's success, Ms. Denler identified need for the district to differentiate resources and revise human resource policies. She did not, however, identify any responsibility or action on her own part to facilitate these changes. She stated, "Somebody's got to be willing to do it because that's the only way you're going to make a difference", but she took no action to create such a change. She identified the need to differentiate curriculum, but when the district denied her request to add a social-emotional curriculum, she took no action to advocate for what she believed was needed to meet the need of her students. She discussed the need for modifications to the staffing model in order to differentiate for individual school needs. She questioned the district policy, "Why does TPR have to be the same across the district?" She believes every school can be successful with district support, "I just think it could be done, I

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really do, if we're just willing to sit down at the table and say, 'This is what's going to happen at these schools". She did not, however, take any action to create this change or to create a conversation with the district.

Transformative leaders (Shields, 2011) are characterized by bottom up versus top down processes. Interestingly, at Jaguar where the change needed was less intense and could happen through an organic process across time, Ms. Denler built processes and structures to create change and decisions from the bottom up. While she has used some of these strategies at Fox, and participants expressed a sense of involvement and value in the decision-making and problem solving process. Ms. Denler intentionally frames some problems and decisions differently and or individually. This was both a foreground and background claim that reflects the contextual nature of leadership (Shields, 2011). She does not view the capacity of staff at Fox to make decisions and problem solve as deep as what was present at Jaguar, so she has intentionally framed the problem solving and decision making processes according to her perceptions of staff capacity.

Within her school level leadership, Ms. Denler acts intentionally to disrupt those processes and actions that do not support student learning. Her leadership on other levels outside of the building, however, is not as intentional. While she identified a need for change at the district level, she did not act with intention to change the current processes or policies.

Political skill.

Finally, politics skills are integral components of Advocacy leadership. Politics is a unidirectional and integral aspect of leadership (Anderson, 2009; Malen, 1995; Shields, 2011). An Advocacy leader understands and uses politics and power strategically to facilitate change (Shields, 2011). Ferris et. al (2007) describe four political skills used by Advocacy leaders:

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social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and apparent sincerity. Within the school building, Ms. Denler uses all four integrally. She is aware of hers and knows herself well. She uses this knowledge in conjunction with her interpersonal influence founded in her relationships. In turn, she has positioned herself in the building as a trusted principal, and has sincere networking ability with students, staff and parents. This is due, at least in part, because of her apparent sincerity. She is authentic and parents and staff trust her and her desire to help the school as well as each individual.

How Ms. Denler employs these same skills with the district is less intentional and strategic. While she expressed frustration with the district, she did not have specific strategies for changing this relationship. She uses social astuteness and is well aware of how district personnel operate. The skills she does not appear to intentionally use are interpersonal influence and networking ability. She has, instead, chosen to avoid negotiating with the district and instead, acts in isolation from them as much as possible. "So it's like how do I do this despite the district? How do I do this without the district? It's like I know my superintendent ain't going to come over here and help me." When asked specifically about how she negotiates with the district, she responded, "I don't have the answer for that one. That's the million-dollar question. And that's the part where I keep saying...I'm doing the best I can".

Ms. Denler uses political skill effectively at the school level, but does not employ political skill at the district or community level to negotiate change for her school. This has created a missed opportunity. Ms. Denler is an African American that lives and works in an African American community. She is a member of a local church congregation in a community where the church congregations play an influence role. Ms. Fox did not use these resources, however, to support the needed change in her school. Ms. Denler had the potential to use

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political skill and influence to leverage her relationship with the district, protect her position as principal, and create a strong alliance in support of her school and her leadership. She was not aware of the power she possessed in the community or with the district that might have influenced the support she received from the district and community.

Power plays into how the politics demonstrate themselves. Sergiovanni (2007) identifies three types of power, pyramid, railroad and high performing. Again, there is some difference in how Ms. Denler integrates power within the building versus with the district and community. Within Fox, Ms. Denler is high performing. High performing power is characterized (Sergiovanni, 2007) through the process of connecting people and outcomes. Ms. Denler uses her relationships to exercise power for the good of the school. This is exemplified in the decision-making processes employed at Fox. Ms. Denler has created systems to allow staff voice decision-making, but does not use this process in all instances. Her relationships and trust allow her to employ this strategy strategically and with support of the staff. At the same time, Ms Denler empowers others within Fox and has created the structures to share ownership and the ability to influence outcomes. Understanding and negotiating the power relationship with the district office to achieve change at Fox, Ms. Denler seems to operate under the district's power of pyramid and railroad. The authority of others and the hierarchical structure of the district seem to inhibit her ability to achieve what she deems both necessary and possible for Fox.

With the community, she did not appear to be aware that she possessed power that she could use, as she did within her building, to affect change at both the district and school level. Whereas at the district level, she operated under pyramid and railroad power, the use of power was non-existent at the community level. This created a missed opportunity for influence and change.

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Leaders facilitating change negotiate power and politics to influence change (Malen & Cochran, 2008). Ms Denler utilizes politics skill within her intentional leadership strategies in the school to positively affect change. Her use of political skill as a background claim as she does not explicitly name the use of politics, but she does employ political strategies as identified in the literature. She is less intentional in her utilization of political skill within the larger district perspective and there is no evidence to support any use of power at the community level.

This is a personally challenging aspect of the analysis. Having intimate familiarity with the district context and my own leadership experience as both a building principal and district administrator, I also struggle to negotiate change and successfully employ political skill within the larger bureaucratic system. It absolutely does impact the ability to produce needed change, but it is difficult to influence the larger district structures that resist change (Theoharis, 2009). It is the vulnerability of the researcher (Carspecken, 1996) that exposes the power of the analysis itself. At the same time, one has great compassion for Ms. Denler's situation and the difficulty of negotiating change within a large urban bureaucracy, making the critique uncomfortable. It is a difficult statement to make, but it appears Ms. Denler does not currently possess the skill or courage to use political skill and power in strategic ways that would benefit her school, students, and her own leadership.

Ms. Denler demonstrates some of the aspects of an Advocacy leader, although not every component as fully as described in the literature. It is difficult, therefore, to be able to make the claim that she as an Advocacy leader. Ms. Denler exhibits the characteristics of an Advocacy leader within her school building, but does not demonstrate advocacy, authenticity, reflective learning or employment of political skill and power with the district or larger community. A critical element of Advocacy leadership (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2004) is the stance and

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strategic action to influence not only the individual and school, but also the larger society. There is no evidence to support Ms. Denler's influence upon the district or society.   That does not imply, however, that she is not capable of becoming an Advocacy leader. Awareness and professional learning could potentially create the skill and ability to act as an Advocacy leader on all levels.

Blasé and Anderson (1995) and Anderson (2009) describe Advocacy leaders as open and transformative, as compared to more closed, authoritarian leadership or more open facilitative leadership. While the data tend to illustrate Ms. Denler as open and empowering, her limited political skill with the district and community seem to inhibit her ability to be an Advocacy leader and her ability to influence change on a larger level. This gap illuminates potential growth areas for Ms. Denler and potential limitations in the literature. Ms. Denler does not appear to fully employ political skill with district interactions and relationships. Growth in this area has the potential to increase her effectiveness and to escalate change at Fox. The discussion also highlights potential gaps or misalignment in the literature. Given the scarcity of Advocacy leaders as described in the literature (Anderson, 2009), one must question whether what is described conceptually is accurate and can be realistically applied and sustained in the context of the complexities of school leadership, especially in large urban bureaucracies. This discussion highlights implications in the findings of this study as well as potential areas of focus for future leadership. The next section discusses implications of the findings, limitations of the study, review of credibility and trustworthiness, and potential areas for future research.

Implications

The purpose of this research was to study the daily leadership of one building principal in order to identify leadership practice and strategies employed. As a researcher, I wanted to

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understand a principal's daily practice and use of political skill. The goal was to identify practices that might inform other practitioners. The findings suggest implications for school leaders, for districts, and preparation and professional learning programs. The implications for building leaders include internal and external leadership involving advocacy, intentionality and political skill within the school, with the district, and with the community. Districts, in order to achieve and sustain school change, play an important role in the identification, planning, and communication in support of schools and school leaders (Rorrer et. al, 2008). Third, the results suggest leadership preparation programs and leadership professional learning should include explicit study of intentionality, advocacy and political skill.

Leaders ultimate responsibility is the learning of the students in their building. To accomplish this, effective leaders collaborate internally and externally (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2008). As evidenced in this study, the principal has established internal relationships. Less evident were relationships external to the school building beyond the immediate parent community of the school. Advocacy leaders that facilitate change actively employ advocacy, authenticity, and political skill at multiple levels (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2011).

One role of the school leader is to establish relationships with the district (Cooper, 2009; Copland, 2003) employing political skill in order to negotiate the district bureaucracy and dynamics successfully. An advocacy leader understands the complexities and challenges but also the importance of intentionally working to build relationships, advocate, and employ political skill with the district. It is the principal's role and responsibility to negotiate in order to gain resources and influence that support school effectiveness. The leader's ability to advocate and strategically build relationships is an essential element of advocacy leaders. The principal, through moral deployment of power and politics, can leverage support for students and the

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school's initiatives and can also create alliances that give the principal potential power within the district for positive change.

Second, the findings illustrate the important role of the district in school change and the barriers created without clarification and intention in that role. Districts play a critical role in school change (Childress, Elmore & Grossman, 2006; Kozleski & Smith, 2009; Rorrer, Skrla & Scheurich, 2008; Schlechty, 2003). The relationship and collaboration between the school and district can be the difference between successful change and failure at the school level (Rorrer, et. al, 2008). In addition to teaching school leaders how to work with the district, the district must also intentionally define and communicate its role. Rorrer and colleagues (2008) describe four district roles: instructional leadership, reorientation of the organization; establishment of policy coherence; and maintenance of an equity focus. Schlechty (2003) suggests three essential district capacities necessary for successful school change: the capacity to establish and maintain a focus on the future; the capacity to maintain constant direction; and the capacity to act strategically. These capacities are integrally linked. The district leadership has the ability to simultaneously manage and leverage these capacities in support of schools.

Building upon Schlechty's work, the SWIFT Center (Burrello, Beitz, Toson, Kozleski, Miller & Green, 2013) describe the integral relationship between districts and schools necessary to produce school change. These authors (Burrello et. al, 2013) outline six district capacities and five school level capacities needed. The district capacities include leadership purpose and the values that are support to the pursuit of the purpose, infrastructure, community development and education, resources, assessments, and leadership commitments. The school capacities are teacher knowledge, skills and dispositions; professional learning communities; instructional program coherence; resources and ideas; and leadership socialization induction. The relationship

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between the school and the district is dynamic (Burrello et. al, 2013) and a necessity of creating and sustaining positive school change. These roles focus on actions and changes in district roles and responsibilities, creating a collaboration and coherence between the school and district (Burrello et. al, 2013; Rorrer et. al, 2008). The literature does not imply that there is one best method of creating an effective district, school relationship (Kozleski & Smith, 2009), but rather that it is a complex relationship that like building level leadership, must be developed and implemented as a continue improvement process according to each local context. The district must champion sustainability while the school must champion implementation of interventions with fidelity (Burrello et. al, 2013).

The leadership literature describes the need for district support in order to achieve and sustain change (Kozleski & Smith, 2009; Rorrer, 2008). The school will make improvements under the leadership of the principal, but will not be able to maintain the change or reach the expected levels without the district's involvement and support (Childress, et. al, 2006; Kozleski & Smith, 2009). Ms. Denler described a perceived "ceiling effect" of success for her school without the needed district support. This ceiling effect is reflected in the literature and significantly impacts school success. District structures and supports are important school effectiveness factors. Principals also play a role in preventing the "ceiling effect". It is the integral interaction between the principal and district that creates conditions for sustainable school change.

Finally, the findings have implications for leadership preparation and leadership professional development. The interpersonal skills leaders need and skill in building and maintaining internal school and external relationships are often not components of leaders' professional learning (Kozleski & Smith, 2009). Providing leaders insight and support into these

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levels and how to employ them to facilitate change will help create and sustain school level change that improves student learning. Building leaders need professional learning regarding how to advocate with the community and how to create relationships with the district in order to negotiate building level change. Again, explicit learning regarding negotiation relations with the district and community is infrequently a component of either leadership discussions or of professional learning opportunities (Kozleski & Smith, 2009). Building leaders that are held accountable for creating positive reform and change at the school level would benefit from training and support to enable them to achieve desired results. If the professional learning and support are not included, a continued cycle of replacing principals will result in potential temporary change, but will never allow schools or systems to reach their full potential or the potential of public education (Kozleski & Smith, 2009).

Both aspiring and current leaders would benefit from the explicit inclusion of strategies for the moral deployment of politics and power at the school, district and community levels. University leadership preparation programs and district professional learning opportunities would support leadership growth and effectiveness as Advocacy leaders. If Advocacy leaders are part of successful schools for all children, then it is necessary to teach these skills intentionally.

Limitations

The results of this study reveal important leadership practices and findings regarding principals and districts' roles in facilitating school change. The analysis and conclusions would be incomplete, however, without a discussion of the potential limitations.

The research studied one participant, Ms. Denler. While this allows for the deep understanding of her thinking and actions, the results cannot be generalized across other school

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principals. The findings can inform other leader's work, but we are not able to generalize these findings to all leaders or suggest that the leadership practices and strategies of Ms. Denler would or should be appropriate in all leadership settings.

The design of this study employed semi-structured interviews and relied upon interviews with participants as the data collection tool. The lack of observation of Ms. Denler in action creates a potential limitation: the findings rely upon the description of Ms. Denler and four others of her leadership and cannot be verified against her actual actions and implementation of her leadership. While there was congruence between Ms. Denler's description of her leadership and the information obtained from non-principal participants, observation might have strengthened the results and uncovered potential inconsistencies.

Ms. Denler identified the district as a barrier to her leadership and to her school's success. The participants also identified the district as a barrier to school success. While valid and evident across participants, the study design did not include interview of district personnel. Thus, the district perspective from these findings is missing.

Recommendations for Future Research

The research findings in this study highlight important areas for potential future research. These research areas deal with principal leadership, district leadership, and the Advocacy leadership model to support leadership resulting in increased student learning. Future research expanding the scope of this research, investigating specific aspects of principal practice and political skill, and studying the roles and responsibilities of districts in collaboration with schools would benefit and inform the field. Additional research to understand how Advocacy leadership is and can be realized and to refine the conceptual model of Advocacy leadership will not only

add to the leadership literature, but will also support the actualization of leadership that creates

equitable schools and improves student learning.

This research provides and in depth description of one principal's leadership. Future

research is needed to expand the scope to include additional studies of individual principals and

to study the findings across principals. In addition, the design of this study relied upon

interviews as the data gathering methodology. Additional study of a principal's daily leadership

practice through a combined methodology involving interview with observation of the principal

within the daily leadership context would allow for understanding how leadership skills is played

out within the context of the daily operations of the school.

Second, additional study in specific aspects of leadership is needed. This study raised

questions about how principals create and implement decision-making structures. The literature

proposes distributed leadership practices (Sergiovanni, 2004; Shields, 2011; Spillane, 2004).

Ms. Denler employed collaborative leadership, but not all decisions were distributed. What is the

balance of distribution that is most effective in moving a school and teachers forward? How do

the many constituencies affect principal's transparency to engage each to their satisfaction while

preserving trust and confidentiality of certain decisions?

Schools and leadership are inherently political (Malen, 1995; Malen & Cochran, 2008).

Political skill at the individual, school, district, and community level are integral aspects of

leadership (Anderson, 2009; Cuban, 1972). This continues to be an area of needed study in order

to understand how leaders best apply political skill at each level. Further research is needed to

understand which political strategies are most successful and how principals intentionally

employ political skill effectively. In addition, which political skills are most effective when

operating in different contexts in order to serve positive change that benefits students? What are

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the political skills needed to successfully create change, build capacity and access needed resources for a school? Study of principals successful in negotiating the political dynamics of schools both internally and externally as part of school change to improve student learning, especially in the contexts for urban schools or schools in the context of high levels of poverty, would be beneficial to practitioners embroiled in change.

The moral use of power is an important aspect of political skill (Malen & Cochran, 2008). As principals employ political skill at the various levels, how does a principal use power to facilitate the effective use of political skill? Power and politics are integrally linked. How does a principal leverage power, political skill and intentionality within the school, district, and larger community? Study of how these aspects of leadership interact and are effectively used to create meaningful change is needed. Further, what does it mean to be attentive to power, intentionality and policy? Understanding the policy implications will benefit both school and district leadership in ways that support the use of power, politics and intentionality within policy development and enactment.

Advocacy leaders endure tremendous personal and professional stress and pressure (Anderson, 2009; Theoharis, 2009). Research is needed to investigate strategies leaders successfully employ to manage the emotional and political weight in order to sustain their leadership impact and maintain personal and professional health. This understanding is important in order to support the development and sustainability of Advocacy leadership.

In addition to political skill, this study exemplified the importance of the district in school change. The study of how successful leaders collaborate and negotiate with the district to create and sustain successful change in school learning will support the creation and sustainability for system change.

Ms. Denler did not follow a traditional route to become a teacher. She originally planned to work in missionary work. Through her work in an orphanage with children in the juvenile justice system, she changed her goals to education. Her Assistant Principal, Mr. Vulpes, also came to education through a non-traditional route. He was a juvenile counselor in a residential center for young women. Research to identify the demeanors and values of this type of work in comparison to advocacy leaders and any differences between traditional track building administrators versus non-traditional track administrators would potentially inform pre-service, professional development and recruitment programs.

The second major area of potential future research focuses on district level systems and support. Districts have been identified as a barrier (Theoharis, 2009), but also as a critical component of school change (Kozleski, 2009; Rorrer, et. al, 2008; Schlechty, 2003). A final finding in the research, not intended in the original research questions, was the role of the district as a barrier to change at Fox. According to the perceptions of Ms. Denler and the other participants, the district fails to understand the local school context, does not communicate clearly, and does not provide the needed support at the school level. Ms. Denler proposed a three-pronged approach to adequate district support of her school. First, work to understand the school context and actively listen to the school personnel. Second, address human resource policies and contract adaptations that support school improvement. Finally, differentiate support and curriculum to allow the school flexibility to meet the unique needs of its students.

The role of the district in school reform has been understudied (Rorrer, et. al, 2008), but is critical to understanding how to successfully achieve and sustain school reforms. Study of how districts currently support school reform efforts will inform future reform efforts. When schools successfully implement and sustain change, what is the role of the district. Kozleski

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(2005) proposes a structure for school reform. Others (Rorrer, et. al, 2008) have identified roles the district must incorporate in order to support school reform. Schlechty (2003) and Burrello et. al, (2013) have identified more specific capacity factors that interact to facilitate or inhibit specific school reform. Studies that locate those factors and their interaction from the views of critical actors at both the school and district level needs further study. Study of the implementation of these structures and capacity building roles that support both district and principal practice would be helpful.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to offer a rich profile of how one principal enacts leadership and employs action to facilitate change. The two research questions asked how an elementary school principal understands and enacts leadership and to what extent the principal utilizes political skill and tactics to facilitate change. The research revealed that Ms. Denler is a servant leader possessing a moral imperative for education and the work of schools. Within her school, she employs intentional leadership strategy and political skill to achieve change. Her leadership actions with the district were less intentional and she did not use political skill to leverage change for her school.

Ms. Denler employs intentional strategies and political skills within her school to achieve change. In addition to her intentional leadership action strategies, Ms. Denler maintains a human resource focus as a leader. These also serve as political strategies to influence the behaviors of staff. She intentionally builds relationships by showing care and concern for staff and having the willingness and courage to hold authentic conversations. In addition, she works to build capacity in staff, administrators, and parents. Her belief in the human capacity of others betrays her belief in collaborative leadership and the need to continually learn and grow.

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While Ms. Denler used intention and political skill within her school, she does not use these same intentional or political strategies at the district or community level.

A final finding in the research, not intended in the original research questions, was the role of the district as a barrier to change at Fox. The district is perceived as lacking the urgency, understanding of the systems to provide the resources and support that will allow Fox and its students to achieve its true potential.

Leadership is complex and leadership for change within the current context of schools is growing more complex (Anderson, 2009). Employing intentional and political skill within the school while also operating intentionally and strategically with the district and community are essential but challenging aspects of leadership, specifically Advocacy leadership. Ms. Denler exemplifies a principal with a strong heart for leadership and education and aspects of advocacy, but also seems to lack the awareness and skill needed to operate as an advocacy leader within the district and community simultaneously.

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Appendix A:

Consent Forms

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

IRB Study # _____ Pro 9307_____

We are asking you to take part in a research study called:
  How does a principal use intention and strategy in the enactment of advocacy leadership?

The person who is in charge of this research study is Lisa Grant. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. USF Professor, Dr. Leonard Burrello, is guiding this study and may be involved.
The research will be done at Fairmount Park Elementary School, Pinellas County School District, St. Petersburg, Florida.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. We encourage you to talk with your family and friends before you decide to take part in this research study. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to:
  • Offer a profile of how a principal enacts leadership using intention and strategy to facilitate transformational change.

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- A doctoral student is conducting this study.

Study Procedures

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to:
- Participate in four to six interview sessions
    - Each interview will last for approximately one hour and will be conducted at your school site or at another location convenient to you.
    - The interview sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed. You will be asked to review each transcript for accuracy. The audio recordings will not be shared with anyone other than you, the faculty advisor, Dr. Leonard Burrello, and a transcription service. The audio recordings and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and will be maintained for five years after completion of the study.
    - The interviews will be scheduled at a time convenient to you between September 2012 and approximately January 2013.
    - The content of the interviews will include your educational and leadership background and experiences, your experiences as a principal, and the actions and strategies you use as a principal
    - During the interview you may be asked to identify additional interview participants that have potential insight into your experiences as a school principal

Total Number of Participants

Up to eleven individuals will take part in this study at USF. Snowball sampling will be used to identify potential additional interview participants.

Alternatives

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

Benefits

The potential benefits of participating in this research study include:

- Increased understanding of your leadership and the impact upon your students, staff and school

Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation

We <u>will not</u> pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Cost

There will be no additional costs to you as a result of being in this study.

Confidentiality

We must keep your study records as confidential as possible. The audio recordings and transcripts of the interview will be kept in a locked safe at the principle investigators residence. The records will be maintained for five years and then will be destroyed.

However, certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are:

- The research team, including the Principle Investigator and faculty advisor
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study. For example, individuals who provide oversight on this study may need to look at your records. This is done to make sure that we are doing the study in the right way. They also need to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety. These include
    - Pinellas County School Board, Department of Assessment, Accountability and Research, Other individuals who work for PCSB that provide other kinds of oversight may also need to look at your records
    - Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP).
    - The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF Office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. We will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are.

Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study, to please the investigator or the research staff. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

New information about the study

During the course of this study, we may find more information that could be important to you. This includes information that, once learned, might cause you to change your mind about being in the study. We will notify you as soon as possible if such information becomes available.

You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints

Questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, call Lisa Grant at 727-543-4853 or grantli@pcsb.org.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the Pinellas County School Board, Department of Assessment, Accountability and Research at (727) 588-6253.

If you experience an unanticipated problem related to the research call Lisa Grant at (727) 543-4853 or (727) 588-6312.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638.

Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please sign the form, if the following statements are true.

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_____   _____

Signature of Person Taking Part in Study   Date

_____

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect. I have provided them a copy of this form to take with them.

I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands:
- What the study is about.
- What procedures will be used.
- What the potential benefits might be.
- What the known risks might be.

_____

_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent   Date

_____

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

IRB Study # ____ Pro 9307_____

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The person who is in charge of this research study is Lisa Grant. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. USF Professor, Dr. Leonard Burrello, is guiding this study and may be involved.
The research will be done at Fairmount Park Elementary School, Pinellas County School District, St. Petersburg, Florida.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. We encourage you to talk with your family and friends before you decide to take part in this research study. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

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Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to:
- Offer a profile of how a principal enacts leadership using intention and strategy to facilitate transformational change.
- A doctoral student is conducting this study.

Study Procedures

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to:
- Participate in one interview session
  - The interview will last for approximately one hour and will be conducted at your school site or at another location convenient to you.

- The interview session will be audio-recorded and transcribed. You will be asked to review the transcript for accuracy. The audio recordings will not be shared with anyone other than you, the faculty advisor, Dr. Leonard Burrello, and a transcription service. The audio recordings and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and will be maintained for five years after completion of the study.
- The interview will be scheduled at a time convenient to you between August 2012 and approximately January 2013.
- The content of the interview will include your experience with a principal with whom you worked, and the actions and strategies you used by the principal

Total Number of Participants

Up to eleven individuals will take part in this study at USF. Snowball sampling will be used to identify potential additional interview participants. You have been identified through the snowball sampling procedure because of your experiences with the principal.

Alternatives

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

Benefits

The potential benefits to you are:

- Increased understanding of your work and the impact upon your students, colleagues and school

Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation

We will not pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Cost

There will be no additional costs to you as a result of being in this study.

Confidentiality

We must keep your study records as confidential as possible. The audio recordings and transcripts of the interview will be kept in a locked safe at the principle investigators residence. The records will be maintained for five years and then will be destroyed.

However, certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are:

- The research team, including the Principle Investigator and faculty advisor

- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study. For example, individuals who provide oversight on this study may need to look at your records. This is done to make sure that we are doing the study in the right way. They also need to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety. These include

    o Pinellas County School Board, Department of Assessment, Accountability and Research, Other individuals who work for PCSB that provide other kinds of oversight may also need to look at your records

    o Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP).

    o The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF Office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. We will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are.

Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study, to please the investigator or the research staff. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

New information about the study

During the course of this study, we may find more information that could be important to you. This includes information that, once learned, might cause you to change your mind about being in the study. We will notify you as soon as possible if such information becomes available.

Questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, call Lisa Grant at 727-543-4853 or grantli@pcsb.org.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the Pinellas County School Board, Department of Assessment, Accountability and Research at (727) 588-6253.

If you experience an unanticipated problem related to the research call Lisa Grant at (727) 543-4853 or (727) 588-6312.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638.

Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please sign the form, if the following statements are true.

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_____   _____
Signature of Person Taking Part in Study   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect. I have provided them a copy of this form to take with them.

I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands:
- What the study is about.
- What procedures will be used.
- What the potential benefits might be.
- What the known risks might be.

_____
_____
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

Appendix B
Interview Protocols, Principal Participant
Interview One Protocol

Purpose:
- Development of a relationship and trust with the participant
- Understand the participants background and experiences; her values and beliefs

Questions:

- Tell me about your educational background and experiences

- What made you decide to become a teacher?

  - To become an administrator?

- Tell me about your first administrative experience

  - What is most memorable about this experience?

- How do you articulate your beliefs to staff, others?

- What is the role of politics in your leadership?

- What do you do when you see an inequity in your school?

  - District?

- What do you do when others do not possess the same beliefs?

  - Other staff?

  - Parents?

  - District staff?

- What is the importance of culture to the success of a school?

  - How do you establish a positive, productive culture?

  - How do you monitor and manage it on an on-going basis?

Interview Two Protocol

Purpose:
- Continued development of a relationship and trust with the participant
- Understand the participants values and beliefs
- Understand her intentional activities, leadership to achieve goals, vision and culture

Questions:

- What are your core beliefs about the purpose of education? About leadership?

- How do you articulate your beliefs to staff, others?

- What is the role of politics in your leadership?

- What do you do when you see an inequity in your school?

  o District?

- What do you do when others do not possess the same beliefs?

  o Other staff?

  o Parents?

  o District staff?

- What is your vision for Fox?

  o How did you develop the vision?

    ▪ Who did you involve?

    ▪ How did you involve them?

  o How did you get staff buy-in to support the vision?

  o How do you share it?

  o How do you use it?

- How id you initially identify the school's strengths?

  o Challenges?
    ▪ Year One?

- What did you do about it?
  - How?
- What worked?
  - Why?
- Didn't work?
  - Why?
  - Year Two?
    - What did you do about it?
      - How?
    - What worked?
      - Why?
  - This year?
    - What are you doing about it?
      - How?
      - Why?

- What is the importance of culture to the success of a school?

  - How would you describe the culture of Fox?

  - How do you establish a positive, productive culture?

  - How do you monitor and manage it on an on-going basis?

- You mentioned in our first discussion that it is your job to help teachers become better teachers. How specifically do you do this?

Interview Three Protocol

Purpose:
- Continued development of a relationship and trust with the participant
- Understand the intentional strategies employed at Fairmount Park
  - Year 1
  - Year 2
  - Year 3
- Understand her intentional activities, leadership to achieve goals, vision and culture and their impact (the results)

Questions:
- What was your focus/goals year one in creating change at Fairmount Park?
  - Why?

  - What strategies did you intentionally use to accomplish your goals?
    - The how

  - What were the results?

  - What politics strategies did you use?
    - Within the building?
    - With the district?

  - What political strategies did you see teachers, others use?

- What was your focus year two in achieving your goals for Fox?
  - Why?

  - What strategies did you intentionally use to accomplish your goals?
    - The how

  - What were the results?

  - What politics strategies did you use?
    - Within the building?
    - With the district?

  - What political strategies did you see teachers, others use?

- What is your focus for year three?
  - Why?

  - How are you intentionally doing to accomplish your goals?

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- What political strategies are you using?
  - Within the school building?
  - With the district?

- What do you do when you see an inequity in your school?

  - District?

- What do you do when others do not possess the same beliefs?

  - Other staff?

  - Parents?

  - District staff?

- What is your vision for Fox?

  - How did you develop the vision?

    - Who did you involve?

    - How did you involve them?

  - How did you get staff buy-in to support the vision?

  - How do you share it?

  - How do you use it?

- How id you initially identify the school's strengths?

  - Challenges?
    - Year One?
      - What did you do about it?
        - How?
      - What worked?
        - Why?
      - Didn't work?
        - Why?
    - Year Two?
      - What did you do about it?
        - How?
      - What worked?

        ○ Why?
      ■ This year?
        • What are you doing about it?
          ○ How?
          ○ Why?

- What is the importance of culture to the success of a school?

    • How would you describe the culture Fox?

   • How do you establish a positive, productive culture?

   • How do you monitor and manage it on an on-going basis?

- You mentioned in our first discussion that it is your job to help teachers become better teachers. How specifically do you do this?

Purpose:
- Continued development of a relationship and trust with the participant
- Understand the intentional strategies employed at Fox
  - With conflict
  - With shared leadership
  - With decision making
- Understand her intentional activities, leadership to achieve goals, vision and culture and their impact (the results)

Questions:
- What is the importance of culture to the success of Fairmount Park?

  - How would you describe the culture of Fairmount Park?

  - How do you monitor and manage it on an on-going basis?

  - How do you sustain it knowing the intensity of the daily work?

- What do you do when you see an inequity in your school?

  - District?

- What do you do when others do not possess the same beliefs?

  - Other staff?

  - Parents?

  - District staff?

- How do you make decisions at Fairmount Park?

- You have mentioned building capacity of teachers and other school leaders. How do you share leadership as part of that process?

  - What power/role do your assistant principals have?
  - What power/role does the SBLT have?
  - The SBLT have?

- What are the challenges?
  - Year One?
    - What did you do about it?
      - How?

- What worked?
  - Why?
- Didn't work?
  - Why?
- Year Two?
  - What did you do about it?
    - How?
  - What worked?
    - Why?
- This year?
  - What are you doing about it?
    - How?
    - Why?

- You mentioned in our first discussion that it is your job to help teachers become better teachers. How specifically do you do this?

<p align="center">**Interview Five Protocol**</p>

Purpose:
- Continued development of a relationship and trust with the participant
- Understand what has made the difference in achieving change at Jaguar and at Fox
- Identify perceived needs to support leadership, school and change

Questions:
- Do you conduct exit interviews with teachers that leave your school (especially of teachers that are effective or highly effective)?
    - If so, what have you learned from these interviews?

- How do you build capacity in your Assistant Principals?
    - Example, Michael R's development as an instructional leader

- The district and state (FLDOE) use FCAT data to measure your school's success. What other measures to you use to measure change and success?
    - ESE referrals for service?
    - Behavior referrals?
    - Climate survey?
    - Title I survey?

- If you were a district administrator, what would you recommend?
    - What have you learned that schools need from the district in order to be successful and successfully achieve change?
    - What district policy needs to be created in order to support school leaders and school change?

- If teachers are a barrier to the school's success (number of new teachers and lack of experience), what is needed in order to support the development and retention of teachers?

- What made you successful at Jaguar?
    - What did you do?
    - How did you do it?

- To what extent are you employing the same strategies and tactics at Fox?
    - Which have been appropriate or inappropriate at Fox?

Appendix C

Non-Principal Participant

Interview Protocol

Previous Assistant Principal Interview Questions
Mr. Ginlear

Purpose:
- Gain deeper insight into the leadership of principal participant through description of an event or events and the leaders actions and impact of those actions in that event

Potential Questions:
- Tell me about your background and experiences

- Tell me about how you came to work with Ms. Denler at Jaguar Elementary School

- Explain your role during the period you worked with Ms. Denler

    o What were your roles and responsibilities as Assistant Principal?

- Tell me about the focus initial change at Jaguar
    o How were these determined?

    o What were the strategies used to create change?

    o Describe your actions and role within these strategies

    o Describe Ms. Denler's role and specific actions

- What happened when there was resistance?

- What were the results?

- Tell me about the impact Ms. Denler's actions had upon
    - The situation
    - You
    - Others involved (students, staff, the school)
    - Upon the culture and climate of the school

Non-Principal Participants
Interview Protocol
Current Assistant Principal Interview Questions
Mr. Vulpes

Purpose:
- Gain deeper insight into the leadership of principal participant through description of an event or events and the leaders actions and impact of those actions in that event

Potential Questions:
- Tell me about your background and experiences

- Tell me about how you came to work with Ms. Denler at Fox Elementary School

- Explain your role during the period you have worked with Ms. Denler

    o What are your roles and responsibilities as Assistant Principal?

    o How are these same/different than your role as Assistant Principal under the previous principal?

- Tell me about the focus of change at Fox
    - Year one with Ms. Denler
        - Results?
    - Year two
        - Results?
    - Year three (this year)
        - Results?

    o How were these determined?

    o What are the strategies used to create change?

    o Describe your actions and role within these strategies

    o Describe Ms. Denler's role and specific actions

- What happens when there is resistance?

- How are decisions made at Fox?

- What are the main/significant strategies you see Ms. Denler employ to achieve the intended changes at Fox?

- What is the impact upon
  - You
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Parents
  - District
  - The overall school culture

Non-Principal Participants
Interview Protocol

Potential Interview Questions

Purpose:
- Gain deeper insight into the leadership of principal participant through description of an event or events and the leaders actions and impact of those actions in that event

Potential Questions:
- Tell me about your background and experiences

- Tell me about how you came to work with Ms. Denler at Jaguar Elementary?

    o At Fox?
        ▪ Why?

- Explain your role during the period you worked with Ms. Denler

- What did Ms. Denler do as a leader/principal to achieve change at Jaguar Elementary School?

- What is Ms. Denler doing as a leader/principal to achieve change at Fox Elementary School?

- Describe Ms. Denler's leadership actions

    o Similarities to Jaguar?
    o Differences

- What are her strengths as a leader?

- What happens when there is conflict or and individual/group do not buy into the vision

- How are decisions made/who is involved?