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Strategies for Improving Parent-School Partnerships to Enhance Private Schools' Profitability

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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2020

Abstract

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MAS, Fairleigh Dickinson University 2015

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Private primary schools in the United States have experienced a decline in parent-school partnerships, along with a reduction in income. School leaders need to understand the benefits parent-school partnerships have on parent engagement, acquire additional strategies to increase parent-school partnerships, and increase profitability. Grounded in Epstein's parent involvement partnership model, the purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies school leaders use to enhance parent-school partnerships to increase profitability. The participants comprised 3 leaders of a private, faith-based elementary school in Maryland with at least 5 years of experience in the education sector, including membership in the board of directors and the parent advisory board. Data were collected using semistructured interviews, organizational documents, and AdvancED. Through thematic analysis, 4 themes emerged: the opportunity for leaders to identify areas of need and develop appropriate strategies, the value of engaging parents strengthening communication efforts and improving parent-school partnerships, the opportunity to provide parents with a platform to express their concerns and needs as it relates to parent-school partnerships and the opportunity for leaders to apply parent-school partnerships strategies to increase finances and address parents' needs. A key recommendation is that school leaders engage families in school planning and volunteer opportunities to increase parent-school partnerships. The implications for positive social change may include providing school leaders with strategies to increase parent-school partnerships that may translate into increased student learning, empowering students to contribute to local communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my mom, who sacrificed her dreams at a young age to ensure that I was able to live mine. I am forever indebted to you, without your sacrifice, strength, love, and prayers, I would not have made it this far. Thank you and I love you. To my nieces, nephews, and little cousins, please use my journey and the tools God has given you to follow your purpose. To my guardian angels, my brother Shaiheen, my best friends Dawn and Deron, as much as I want you all here with me in the physical form, I know that you have been watching from above and cheering me on. To my ancestors, thank you for fighting the good fight so that this woman from New Jersey could live your wildest dreams.

This achievement would not have occurred without the dedication and knowledge that I observed by working with my client organization. I am forever grateful to the participants who provided me with insight, encouragement, and hope. The willingness to adjust your work process to make it better for the families that you serve showed me how much you value the students and their parents. I hope this research will provide other school leaders, students, parents, and the community with additional knowledge and skills to build positive partnerships. Thank you for willingness to be a part of this journey with me, our interactions and the knowledge that you have shared will make me a better leader and for that, I thank you with all my heart.

Acknowledgments

There are so many people that I would like to thank, and if I miss a few, please blame my mind not my heart. Mom, you have been the inspiration behind me advancing my education. Thank you for all that you have done throughout this journey, there aren't enough words to express my gratitude. Grandma, thank you for keeping me sane and letting me know how proud you are of me. To the rest of my family and my friends who are more like family, words cannot express the love and gratitude that I have for each of you. Thank you for celebrating my highs and ensuring I learned from my lows. God knew I needed each of you then and now. To my work family, thank you for being supportive during a time where I questioned how I could balance it all. To all the families that I have met over the years, each of you has given me the courage to be a better person, and I thank you for giving me the strength to move beyond any limitation. Finally, yet importantly, to my baby and the best support dog in the world, Louie, thank you for bringing me joy.

Dr. Garfield, you are much more than my mentor; the love, knowledge, and support that you have poured into me will stay with me forever, and I will ensure I pass it on to others. Dr. Simmons, thank you for jumping in during my transition to a new chair with unwavering support and knowledge, I would not have been able to complete this journey without you. I want to thank my second committee member, Dr. Jorge Gaytan for his valuable input. I want to thank my URR, Dr. Matthew Knight, for his knowledge and insight. Thank you all for taking the time to ensure that I have a polished and well thought out study.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

In this study, I used the 2015-2016 Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework as the structure for a holistic evaluation of my assigned client organization to explore parent school partnership strategies that school leaders use to enhance private schools' profitability. I used the research question to explore the specific business problem and the conceptual framework as a lens to understanding the findings. As a requirement of Walden University's Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Consulting Capstone, I served as both the researcher and the consultant.

Background of the Problem

Parent–school partnerships have become a concern in schools around the world. Steyn and Kimu (2013) mentioned the importance of parent-engagement and the instrumental role that engagement plays in the lives of students, families, and schools. Researchers have established a correlation between parent–school partnerships and parent engagement (Povey et al., 2016). There has been minimal research on the role of parent–school partnerships and school profitability. Maney, Scanlon, and Goldschmidt (2013) are three of a few researchers who have explored how parent–school partnerships influence school profitability. Maney et al. implied the need for school leaders to collaborate with parents, pastors, school leaders, and the community to address parent–school partnership challenges. Parent involvement is a vital component of parent–school partnerships.

School leaders must involve parents in aspects of the school beyond student learning. Nitecki (2015) and Day (2013) suggested that doing so would increase parental

engagement and empowerment. As a result, the leadership strengthens its relationship with parents (Day, 2013). Steyn and Kimu (2013) indicated that without parent involvement, student achievement decreases. Effective parent–school strategies are vital to school quality and performance (Strier & Katz, 2016). It is crucial for school leaders to personalize their engagement strategies to meet and exceed the expectations and requirements of students and parents (C. Campbell, Dalley-Trim, & Cordukes, 2016). By implementing positive engagement strategies, school leaders create lasting relationships with students and parents.

Problem Statement

Successful parent–school partnerships increase private schools' income (Povey et al., 2016) and are vital for K-12 private schools' success (C. Campbell et al., 2016). Private schools have experienced a reduction in income for several reasons, including a 12% decrease in K-12 private school enrollment in the United States between 2004 and 2014 (U. S. Department of Education, 2017) and a decline in parent–school partnerships (U. S. Department of Education, 2016). The general business problem is that K-12 private school leaders are experiencing a decrease in parent–school partnerships and profitability. The specific business problem is that some K-12 private school leaders lack strategies to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies leaders of K-12 private schools use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. The target population consisted of three leaders of a private faith-based

elementary school in Maryland with successful experience in enhancing parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide school leaders with strategies to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. Meaningful parent-school partnerships improve the success of a school (Nitecki, 2015). Effective parent-school partnerships are beneficial to student learning (Povey et al., 2016). Increased student learning translates into an increase in educational preparation of students, which may translate into students making important contributions to the local community and beyond.

Nature of the Study

Three research methodologies available to researchers are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. I used the qualitative method for this study. Researchers use the qualitative method to explore multifaceted issues (Choy, 2014). Researchers use the qualitative method to obtain feedback from participants regarding their experiences (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Cox, 2012). I used the qualitative research method because I received feedback and related documentation from participants. Researchers use the quantitative method to examine data to test hypotheses about the significance and nature of variables' relationships (Corner, 2002). Therefore, the quantitative method is inappropriate for this study because I did not examine data to test hypotheses for examining variables' relationships or differences. Researchers use the mixed-method research methodology when combining both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (C. A. Green et al., 2014). Because there is no quantitative component to the study, the mixed method is inappropriate.

The research designs available to this project included phenomenological, ethnographic, and case study. I used the case study research design because I explored the what, how, and why of a phenomenon, which in this case is enhancing parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. Researchers use this design to explore a case, bound in time and place using interviews conducted in real situations (Dasgupta, 2015; Yin, 2018). One of the advantages of using a case study design is the partnership between the researcher and the participants, including the researchers' opportunity to encourage participants to provide information that pertains to the what, how and why of the research topic (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). Researchers use the phenomenological design to interpret individuals' lived experiences (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013) and philosophical foundations of knowledge (Dowling & Cooney, 2012). Phenomenology is inappropriate for this study because I did not study the meaning of individuals' lived experiences or explained philosophical foundations. Researchers use the ethnographic design to study the culture of groups of people (Zilber, 2014). Ethnography is a broad approach, which involves direct observations of particular members' activities (Symons & Maggio, 2014). Ethnography was inappropriate for this study because I did not study a group's culture or observe the activities of members of a culture.

Research Question

The overarching research question for this study is: What strategies do leaders of private K-12 schools use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability?

2. How do you communicate with parents regarding enhancing parent-school partnerships to increase profitability?

3. How do you assess the success of the strategies you have used to enhance parent-school partnerships in your school to increase profitability?

4. How do you communicate strategies to enhance parent-school partnerships throughout the organizational ranks and among stakeholders?

5. What additional information would you like to share about "lessons learned" regarding strategies to enhance parent-engagement and increase profitability?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework I used in this study was Epstein's (2010) parent involvement partnership model. Epstein stated it is essential for school leaders to view students as individuals because it helps link families to the school and greater community. Epstein emphasized the importance of school leaders building successful partnerships with families to improve engagement and organizational success. The goal of the parent involvement partnership model is to promote stronger communities and more sucessful and sustainable schools. Epstein's model provided a lens for understanding strategies school leaders use to enhance parent-school partnerships to increase profitability. The parent involvement partnership model was beneficial to this study because it provided a means for understanding and explaining the successful

strategies school leaders use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase

profitability.

Operational Definitions

Financial viability: Financial viability related to schools includes measuring

actual and planned outcomes. School leaders, who have increased financial viability plan

resources, manage performance and concentrate on growing profits (Swift, 2012).

Parent-engagement: Parent-engagement includes parent and school leaders

working together to advance the learning, development, and health of children (Eisner &

Meidert, 2011). Effective parent engagement strategies comprise of parents and school

leaders holding equal amounts of trust (Strier & Katz, 2016).

School partnership: Nitecki (2015) described partnerships as a child-focused

approach in which families and leaders work together to improve opportunities and

success for children developmentally.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are principles based on logic but without verification (Fan, 2013). I

assumed that participants of this study would be accessible, honest, anddirect, and

provide thorough responses to interview questions and access to supplementary

documents and data. It was also an assumption that using the criteria for performance

excellence in the Baldrige Excellence Framework as a tool to evaluate XYZ company

(pseudonym) would provide a system-based perspective for the evaluation of the research

question. Another assumption was that using semistructured interviews along with

XYZ's organizational documentation would result in a greater understanding of parent–school partnerships within the organization. Researchers' assumptions influence and shape the research (Kirkwood & Price, 2013). The data and materials collected assisted with deciding the authenticity of these assumptions.

Limitations

Limitation sections are valuable for understanding weaknesses of the research efforts (Brutus, Aguinis, & Wassmer, 2012). Limitations are weaknesses that are out of the researcher's control (Bell, 2014). Qualitative studies including participant interviews maybe limited by bias (Opdenakker, 2006). Leaders may not remember every experience or event, creating participant bias.

For this study, interviews were restricted to three senior leaders, which took place via telephone and, for this reason; the reduced number of senior leaders was a limitation. Another limitation of this research study was that interviewees came from one faith-based private school in Maryland. The research study did not extend beyond this geographical location nor did it include experiences from other private schools throughout the United States. Accepting data from leaders at only one faith-based private school eliminated experiences of school leaders of other faith-based private schools.

Delimitations

Marshall and Rossman (2016) and Ellis and Levy (2010) identified delimitations as restrictions that confine the scope of a study. The delimitations of this study were the population and location. The research population consisted of three school leaders from the assigned client organization, each with more than 5 years of experience. Each senior

leader worked at the same faith-based private school in the Maryland area and had experience with the school's parent-school strategies and finances. I was limited to the experiences of school leaders from only one faith-based private school. The research study did not contain experiences from other faith-based private school leaders from different regions of the United States.

<div align="center">**Significance of the Study**</div>

Contribution to Business Practice

This study is of value to the practice of business because of the financial benefits of parent-school partnerships. Similar school leaders could use this model to increase parent-school partnerships and school profitablility. By developing a model to implement, school leaders may be able to review progress and develop action plans to engage families better. School leaders have a responsibility to ensure their students reach their fullest potential; implementing a model may help them do so.

The data obtained during interviews uncovered evidence that fills a gap in the literature by linking views from previous research regarding parent-school partnerships of both school leaders and families in K-12 private schools. Improved parental involvement can lead to better business practices by providing school leaders with practical strategies to prepare students for successful educational and professional careers. The potential contributions of this study to professional or practitioner application were to provide leaders with strategies to increase parental involvement and financial stability.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide school leaders with strategies to increase parent-school partnerships. Effective parent–school partnerships can contribute to social change by creating an encouraging environment and motivating parents and school leaders to engage with one another (Alameda-Lawson, 2014). After this study, I could educate school leaders on the effects of improving parent involvement efforts. By implementing the recommendations from this study, including improved communication with families, the leaders of the K-12 private schools may form partnerships with students, families, and the community, which may assist with increasing engagement and eventually improving the school's profitability.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies leaders of K-12 private schools use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. A comprehensive and logical literature review provides a foundation for the examination of a research topic (Mikesell, Bromley, & Khodyakov, 2013). By conducting literature reviews, researchers contribute to previous research about the research topic and integrate the findings related to the research study topic. In this literature review, I provided a thorough examination of the research topic. I organized this review of parent engagement to align with Epstein's (2010) parent involvement partnership model. Researchers using this model to assert active communication between school leaders and parents lead to an increase in recruiting, volunteering, and community collaborations (Lindberg, 2014). Epstein first introduced the parent involvement

partnership model, formerly known as the school-family-community-partnership model in the late 1980s, which was revised in 1995 and again in 2010, this model has become significant to parent involvement research.

Numerous researchers have explored parent involvement. Several researchers studied the socioeconomic effects on parent involvement (Kingston, Huang, Calzada, Dawson-McClure, & Brotman, 2013) while others have explored the impact parent involvement has on parent and school leader relationships (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016). There is little research on the link between parent–school partnerships and school profitability (Steyn & Kimu, 2013). Epstein's examination of parent involvement implies that when parents and school leaders work together, the connections between these two groups strengthens, leading to an increase in student and school success.

Process for Gathering Information

I gathered scholarly articles from multiple databases including Google Scholar, The National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education, and the Archdiocese of Washington. I searched the Walden University online library, ProQuest, SAGE, Education Source, ERIC, and Thoreau Multi-Database. I used the following keywords: *parent-engagement, parent-engagement strategies, parent–school partnerships, financial viability, parent involvement, service learning, communication with parents, community collaboration, parent volunteering, decision-making, the effects of parent involvement, barriers to engagement, private school funding, private K-12 parent-engagement,* and *school profitability* to search each database. All keywords were

included in all search fields (including keywords, titles, and full text) while exploring

databases for current scholarly resources.

The search results included books, nonpeer-reviewed articles, peer-reviewed

journal articles, some of which were outside the required 5-year range (See Table 1). I

gathered scholarly data and information in compliance with the DBA's requirement. The

requirement is that the sources used in the literature review have publication dates within

5 years (i.e., 2016-2020) of the anticipated approval of the study from Walden's chief

academic officer to ensure the literature used is current.

Table 1

Literature Review

Source	Total #	# Within 5-Year Range	Percentages
Books	7	4	57%
Peer-reviewed articles	233	104	45%
Dissertations	2	2	100%
Total	242	110	45%

Epstein's Parent Involvement Partnership Model

Epstein's (2010) parent involvement partnership model was the lens for my

review of professional and academic literature. Epstein theorized by improving school,

family, and community partnerships, parents understand their partnership role and work

together with school leaders and the community to create programs and opportunities for

their children. When parents, school leaders, and the community view each other as

partners, a supportive and uplifting environment is formed (Epstein, 2010). Garbacz et al.

(2016) found when school leaders present and implement a parent involvement system;

school leaders increase positive supports available to families at school and enhance

student accomplishments and partnerships with parents.

A positive school, family, and community partnership may support and increase

student and school success. Epstein (2010) encouraged school, family, and community

partnerships and described the effects these partnerships have on the success of student

achievements and overall school performance. Leaders recognize parental involvement as

an effective strategy to enhance student success (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Wilder, 2013).

With a caring school environment, participants continually work to improve partnerships

(Epstein, 2010). Demircan and Erden (2015) tested Epstein's model and found that the

importance of building partnerships with parents was to increase partnership approaches.

Epstein identified six types of involvement, including how these types could be useful

when building partnerships for parent involvement in schools.

The identified types of involvement provide an outline of the purpose of each

type. Epstein (2010) explained how these types of involvement supported and challenged

school, family, and community partnerships. By identifying these challenges, Epstein

then developed simple practices school leaders can use to increase engagement efforts to

achieve each of the six types of involvement. School leaders who implement engagement

best practices create a systematic approach to engage families (Van Voorhis, 2011; Van

Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, Lloyd, & Leung, 2013). Epstein's simple practices are guides to

assist school leaders in resolving challenges to increase interactions between school

leaders, parents, students, and the community.

The first type of involvement is *parenting*, which implicates helping families create an environment external to school to support their children outside of the classroom. Bryan and Henry (2012) supported Epstein (2010) theory on the importance of families creating a supportive environment for their children to learn and grow outside of the classroom. Students can easily balance their home and school life, experience greater respect for their parents as they become aware of their parents' involvement in their schooling (Bryan & Henry, 2012). School leaders must provide families with information that is honest, precise, functional, and connected to each child's success in school. Parents can bring the information obtained from school leaders into their homes to increase at home support.

Parents involving themselves with their child's learning allows students to become more aware of the importance of school. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) specified that parents become understanding and secure in their parenting and make changes in their home to support their children in school. They are also aware of their difficulties and feel support from school leaders and other parents in the community. Once school leaders become understanding of the needs of the families, leaders increase their support and share information regarding each child's growth and development (Day, 2013). This process allows for open communication between school leaders, parents, and the community.

Communicating is the second type of involvement, as identified by Epstein (2010). Effective communication includes developing a sensible communication system. This system should bridge any gaps between school and home. For example, Epstein

suggested that school leaders conference with parents at least once a year; provide translators for families with primary languages other than English; form regular schedules for any notices, memos, phone calls, and newsletters; and make families aware of all school transitions. The responsibility is then on the students to maintain or improve their grades and provide their parents with information regarding school engagement opportunities such as school activities and events. When leaders improve communication efforts overall, students become aware of their progress and actions (Murray, McFarland-Piazza, & Harrison, 2015). Epstein and Murray et al. (2015) emphasized that school leaders should ensure that students and parents understand school policies and become aware of their part in the communication process. School leaders including students and their parents in the engagement process are vital for an effective communication plan.

The school leader's role begins with a cohesive communication plan to initiate, coordinate, and maintain a relationship with parents. Parents are their child's first teacher; however, some parents do not actively participate in their child's education even if they have positive communication opportunities with school leaders. The school leaders should explain to parents how communication efforts benefit their child and the school and increase opportunities for parents to participate (Loudová, Havigerová, & Haviger, 2015). Epstein (2010) discussed parents' understanding school policies further so that parents can monitor their child's progress, respond to any problems involving their child, and interact with school leaders effortlessly. Epstein described school leaders who implement an effective communication plan can communicate with parents and understand parent views on their child's progress and success. Loudová et al. (2015)

agreed with the importance of school leaders supporting relationships with parents. School leaders creating a positive relationship with parents expand the parent's knowledge of school expectations such as volunteering options.

Volunteering is the third type of involvement; this type of involvement focuses on recruiting and organizing parent support groups. Epstein (2010) emphasized the significance of school leader's developing and monitoring a classroom volunteer program to help leaders, students, and parents become involved in school activities. Perks and Konecny (2015) supported the effects volunteering have on students' awareness, communication, and learning skills. Epstein recognized that when volunteering opportunities are present; parents are confident and comfortable with school leaders. For example, parents can advance specific volunteer skills and understand that they are welcomed and valued at school. Epstein found the effects volunteering has on school leaders including a willingness to involve all families and becoming aware of parents' skills and interests. Effective volunteer opportunities increase parent involvement in their child's education and aids parents in carrying over learned strategies at home.

Learning at home is the fourth type of involvement, which involves school leaders providing families with information to assist their children at home with homework and other curriculum-based activities. Epstein (2010) admitted the need for school leaders to design and organize interactive assignments, which hold students responsible for sharing information to their families. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) explained parents involving themselves in their children's education starts at home. Durisic and Bunijevac also disclosed students who take responsibility of sharing

information to their parents' increase homework completion, have a positive attitude toward homework and increase skills and abilities to be successful. Epstein identified the need for parents to know how to support and encourage their children by understanding and discussing the curriculum to show the importance of knowing what their child is learning. Once school leaders provide information to families, they can motivate students and parents, strengthen student learning, and include parents in the decision-making process.

Decision making is the fifth type of involvement; this type of involvement includes school leaders including parents in the decision-making process. This type of involvement includes school leaders not only involving parents in school decisions but also developing parents as leaders by actively linking parents to parent organizations within the school (Reininger & López, 2017). Şad and Gürbüztürk (2013) explained the importance of school leaders involving parents in their child's education and the positive effects these interactions create. Leaders involving students and parents in the decision-making process allows students and parents to contribute to school policies, recognize their rights, and understand that school leaders and the administration are treating them fairly (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Epstein (2010) noticed when parents are involved in the decision-making process; parents are aware of their voices and share their experiences with other families. As a result, parents can understand how school leaders view parents as equals by providing parents with the opportunity to develop and contribute to the decision-making process.

Collaborating with the community is the sixth type of involvement. This type of involvement includes identifying and implementing resources and services in the community to serve families. Identifying and implementing resources and services in the community provides families and students with opportunities to strengthen the school, family, and student development. Epstein (2010) examined school leaders providing students and their families with information to serve in the community and assisting families with linking these services to student learning skills and talents. Epstein uncovered when leaders provide students with resources and services in the community; students can increase their academic skills, become aware of careers and future options to improve their future. Griffin and Steen (2010) linked the community as an essential part of student learning and development. Griffin, Steen, and Epstein expressed the positive effects of parents being knowledgeable about the use of local resources, once parents gain insight about local resources, they can interact with other families in the community and become aware of the school's position in the community. School leaders who collaborate with the community assist school leaders with becoming knowledgeable about community resources available to link their families to needed services.

The purpose of the six types of involvement is to help school leaders, parents, students, and the community to implement strategies to empower and strengthen the relationships between each other. Epstein (2010) focused on six types of involvement and shared these ideas to assist school leaders, parents, students, and the community in strengthening their partnerships. Epstein's six types of involvement can serve as a model for school leaders to develop a family involvement program. Leaders would be able to

use Epstein's framework to study and understand the different types of involvement, challenges, and positive effects each type has on students, parents, and school leaders. When all types of involvement are used, school leaders, parents, students, and the community are increasing their partnership efforts and assisting with student and school success (Griffin & Steen, 2010). When school leaders, parents, students, and the community work together, they can create a school and home environment of continuous growth.

Types of Parent Involvement

School leaders should encourage increased parent involvement and help parents understand the importance of school and family partnerships. Steyn and Kimu (2013) recognized parent involvement as a vital factor in improving a child's education. The collaboration between school leaders and families affect the quality of student achievement and school success (Reininger & López, 2017). Lindberg (2014) described parent involvement as a continuous and organized approach. School leaders effectively using parent involvement as an approach including activities that provide knowledge by increasing communication efforts and skills to support parents and the community positively influence the partnership.

Parenting. Parenting is a relationship involving school leaders providing parents with support and information regarding their child's development. The information provided by leaders should include health, safety, and student learning (Reininger & López, 2017). Epstein (2010) determined this involvement is a close partnership with parents because of the limited influence school leaders have on a child's home

environment. Elbaum, Blatz, and Rodriguez (2016) suggested school leaders simplifying their means to involve parents in school activities. While school leaders have a responsibility to sustain a relationship with parents; parents are responsible for engaging with their children outside of the school setting to ensure that their children are happy, healthy, and accomplished students.

Parents who understand the importance of working with school leaders shape their child's behavior and performance in school. Chaudhry, Hassan, and Agha (2015) and Luis Poza, Brooks, and Valdés (2014) discovered that when parents focused on their child's academics; their children increased their achievement in school. Boonk, Gijselaers, Ritzen, and Brand-Gruwel (2018) discussed parents who were involved in school meetings or conferences and partnered with school leaders, their children performed at a higher level. C. L. Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler (2007) stated that active parents encourage success and academic growth. Parenting is a significant component of parent involvement, for this relationship to be beneficial and yield positive results, leaders and parents are responsible for consistently engaging with one another. Parenting involves positive interactions between school leaders and parents who participate in the school setting.

Parents who immerse themselves in their children's school activities enhance their children's success in school. Epstein (2010) included workshops, parent education training, and home visits as alternate methods to provide families with information and refining engagement practices. Epstein implied the importance of school leaders and families going beyond the standard techniques of collaborating. For example, Epstein

suggested workshops and training as additional supports for school leaders in providing families with information regarding school policies, procedures, curriculum, and activities. Alameda-Lawson (2014) supported school leaders sharing school-related knowledge to help improve parents' abilities to help their children while at home. School leaders must take the initiative when it comes to increasing parents' knowledge.

School leaders should continuously involve parents in the school's curriculum, and parents must understand the school's mission, support, and execute the instruction at home. Şad and Gürbüztürk (2013) conducted a study to explore the number of involved parents of elementary students and how effective parents are contributing to their child's education by using the parent involvement scale to collect data. Şad and Gürbüztürk discovered parents with high levels of involvement communicated with their children, created, and maintained a home environment supporting the school, helping their child's development, and assisting their children with homework. However, these parents were high in parent involvement but measured low for volunteering. Parenting is a crucial component of child academic achievement (Alameda-Lawson, 2014; Grolnick, 2015). An effective communication plan is a vital component of a cohesive partnership.

Communicating. All means of communication are essential approaches to parent–school partnerships and engagement. School leaders must find ways to interact with families and ensure that the lines of communication are frank, open, and two-way. Epstein (2010) found that leaders could use conferences, take-home folders, regular notices, phone calls, and newsletters to increase communication efforts. McQuiggan, Megra, and Grady (2017) investigated the results from the National Household Education

Survey Program of 2016 (U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). During the 2015-2016 school year, McQuiggan et al. found that 89% of students from K-12 had parents who stated they received regular newsletters, memos, emails, or notices from their child's school. Sixty-two percent of the students had parents who received specific notes or emails from school leaders regarding their child, and 42% of the parents reported the school communicated by telephone with them. Effective communication encompasses school leaders and parents working together to ensure their efforts are constructive.

Communication efforts should go beyond traditional modes of communication to include all families. Epstein (2010) identified the need for school leaders in providing translators to assist those families who speak different languages in reducing communication barriers. Piper (2012) recommended that school leaders develop an informative website for students and parents to access school information beyond regular school hours easily. The school website should include support, outreach and engagement efforts by grabbing the attention of parents and serving as an additional approach to communicate school events, fundraising, and academic reports. Piper supported e-mail as an alternate mode for traditional face-to-face meetings. E-mail provides families with the convenience of contacting school leaders or teachers after school hours.

Leaders must develop and explain to parents the importance of a unified communication plan. The leaders must further explain the benefits of the communication plan and the positive effects on their child and the school's success (Fernández-Alonso, Álvarez-Díaz, Woitschach, Suárez-Álvarez, & Cuesta, 2017). School leaders and parents

have to understand that there may be involvement practices that produce undesirable results. Fernández-Alonso et al. debated that not all involvement has positive effects. The researchers found that communication has several layers and without an effective communication plan, the consequences could be detrimental to the child and school.

An effective communication plan includes parents, children, and school leaders working together to enhance participation efforts. Fernández-Alonso et al. (2017) conducted a series of tests consisting of 342 different subjects and a student survey regarding communication with parents. The researchers' discovered that parents who did not ask their children about homework assignments were parents who did not engage with school leaders. The researchers also discovered that parents who are disengaged are not aware of the happenings in their child's schooling; therefore, their involvement with school leaders is deficient. Alameda-Lawson (2014) stated the importance of school leaders sharing knowledge with parents to enhance the school environment and empower parents. Communication is a vital component of a unified partnership.

School leaders are responsible for creating a friendly environment and encourage families to work together to improve learning experiences. Murray et al. (2015) supported building partnership principles and emphasized the need for school leaders to implement positive and respectful communication strategies to increase engagement with parents. Murray et al. presented the early years learning framework outlining specific principles school leaders and parents used in Australia to enhance children learning in all settings. These principles focused on school leaders respectfully collaborating with families to increase involvement and building a cohesive partnership. School leaders are responsible

for providing parents with opportunities to increase parent engagement. Providing parents with opportunities to increase engagement practices is a way for school leaders to empower parents (Alameda-Lawson, 2014; J. Kim & Bryan, 2017). School leaders are in the position to provide parents with the tools they need to increase parent participation.

Volunteering. Volunteering includes school leaders providing parents with opportunities to assist with school happenings. McQuiggan et al. (2017) examined the findings from the National Household Education Survey Program of 2016 and found that parents participated in general school or parent–teacher organizations or associations the most. Eighty-nine percent of these parents participated, 78% of the parents stated they attended parent–teacher conferences, 79% of the parents joined an event, 43% volunteered on a committee, 59% of the parents participated in school fundraising; and 33% of parents met with school guidance counselors (McQuiggan et al., 2017). Volunteering consists of parents' efforts to be a part of the school and classroom to assist teachers, administrators, students, and other parents. Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, and Khan (2013) indicated that when families volunteer, they increase their knowledge of school programs and become more comfortable with their children's school and leaders. Epstein (2010) discussed the value of parents volunteering to support their child's school goals. Through parent volunteering opportunities, parents can fully understand the teachers' jobs; parents are more successful with carrying over school activities at home and understanding that parents are welcomed and valued at school.

Volunteering is a beneficial component of parent involvement; volunteering allows parents to become a partner with school leaders by participating in school

activities. Perks and Konecny (2015) extended the discussion of the importance of volunteering and investigated the effects parents' volunteering had on their children volunteering attempts. The researchers used questions from the 2010 Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating. The researchers focused on asking parents about their volunteer experience during their children's young years. The researchers found a positive relationship between adult volunteering and the effects of parent involvement has on their children volunteering efforts in adulthood. Epstein (2010) revealed that when volunteers are available to children such as tutoring; the child increases their learning skills because of this individualized attention. Volunteering provides parents with the opportunity to contribute to their child's schooling and becomes aware of their individualized needs. School leaders have a responsibility for ensuring that parents are aware of volunteering opportunities at the school.

School leaders should encourage families to volunteer in school events to increase engagement efforts. Rafiq et al. (2013) supported Perks and Konecny's (2015) volunteering perspective and the positive effects volunteering has on enhancing the connection between school leaders and families. Rafiq et al. suggested school leaders identifying a volunteer coordinator to assist with increasing volunteering efforts and providing families with an individual to contact with questions and concerns regarding volunteer opportunities. School leaders and parents are equally accountable for increasing parent involvement; however, parents should carry over any learned strategies at home.

Learning at home. Learning starts at home creating an environment of continuous learning. Creating an environment for students to learn outside of the

classroom helps the child develop and provides an opportunity for parents to be involved in their child's learning. Tracey and Pam (2015) examined the studies conducted by Sammons et al. (2004) and Melhuish et al. (2008); these researchers showed the positive influence the home learning environment (HLE) had on educational goals and student achievement. School leaders can provide detailed information to parents to assist their children at home with curriculum-related activities such as homework (Epstein, 2010). When parents create an environment of learning at home, they can change their child's perception of school and homework. Parents are supporting the school by opening their doors at home and inviting the school in by encouraging and helping their children with school requirements at home.

Through reinforcement, parents are displaying the importance of home and school collaboration. Students are becoming aware of their role as a learner and viewing their parents as the home teacher, which creates a positive attitude toward their schoolwork because of the support they are receiving at home (Epstein, 2010). Tracey and Pam (2015) supported HLE because of the positive effects HLE has on student and parent-engagement and success. Learning at home requires commitment from parents to ensure that the learning opportunities are limitless.

Parents must provide their children with opportunities to grow outside of the classroom, creating a space for their child in the home to learn beyond the school may produce positive results. McQuiggan et al. (2017) assessed the results from the National Household Education Survey Program of 2016 and found that 94% of students in K-12 did their homework outside of the school, 85% of the students had a specific place at

home to complete their homework, and 66% had an adult in their household who checked their homework. Epstein (2010) emphasized the importance of the parents encouraging, listening, guiding, monitoring, and discussing school assignments; these factors are vital to student success and academic achievement. Parents involving themselves in their children's learning goes beyond learning at home; parents must increase their presence at their children's school and become part of the decision-making process.

Decision making. Decision making is a partnership between leaders and parents sharing their views and working together toward achieving school objectives. Once parents become a part of the decision-making process, they are aware of the school, district, and state policies. Epstein (2010) revealed that when school leaders include parents in the decision-making process, the process helps with developing parents as leaders and representatives. Parents become aware of their voices and the value it brings to the school. Students begin to understand that their parents are protecting them. School leaders begin to view parents as equals and create a lasting relationship with parents (Epstein, 2010). When parents and students are involved in the decision-making process, leaders provide students and their parents with opportunities to understand the importance of collaborating with leaders to support students (Hegna & Smette, 2017). Parents and leaders should work together to guarantee that the decisions they make are beneficial to the students.

Parent involvement is crucial to student success. Reininger and López (2017) examined the reasons parents involve themselves in their child's education. The researchers discovered that when parents involve themselves in the decision-making

process, there is a positive influence on academic performance, student, teacher, and parent outcomes. The researchers found that when leaders understand why parents choose to become involved in school policies, leaders can positively influence parent–school partnerships to shape and strengthen parent involvement and assist with the development of new learning initiatives. Steyn and Kimu (2013) argued that for leaders to make the decision-making process meaningful for parents, leaders should have functioning parent–teacher organizations, governing boards, and advisory committees to increase parent participation and commitment. School leaders involving parents in the decision-making process increase parent participation in school and community activities.

Collaborating with the community. When school leaders provide parents with community activities that relate to learning, students increase their learning skills and talents through community connections. For example, students become aware of their abilities and become interested in future educational opportunities and careers. Nikolova and Andersen (2017) encouraged the integration of community resources with a partnership with parents. McQuiggan et al. (2017) found through the National Household Education Survey Program that 54% of students attended a community, religious, or event in 2016. Skinner-Westat and Chapman (1999) researched a survey completed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) regarding student service learning and community service. This survey was the first-time researchers used a service of its kind to provide a realistic national assessment of the measurement of public elementary, middle, and high schools. The researchers found that 64 of all public schools had students who participated in

community activities, organized by the school including 83% of the high schools. When parents become aware of the role the school plays in the community and the community's influence on the school, parents can increase their presence in community events to better serve their children and support the school.

Linking parents to community resources that benefit the student, the relationship between parent and school leaders strengthens. Skinner-Westat and Chapman (1999) theorized that school leaders who incorporate service learning into their engagement practices assist students with serving their communities. Service learning requires students to serve the community and to integrate their experiences into their schoolwork. Nikolova and Andersen (2017) defined service learning as a particular technique to engage students in activities creating value by addressing the needs of the community and working together to promote education and development. Service learning is a helpful approach for students to develop critical-thinking skills and community responsibility.

Service learning is an effective and meaningful model when all participants work together. Lester, Tomkovick, Wells, Flunker and Kickul (2005) acknowledged leaders who created a service-learning model to meet the needs of the community and helping the community to achieve their identified objectives create real value. There are advantages to service learning, and there are some disadvantages, Madsen and Turnbull (2006) argued that when communicating with community partners regarding available resources in an untimely fashion, students become uninterested. A service learning model depends solely on the interests of the students and community when communication is absent; partners are unable to meet their required objectives.

The importance of parent-engagement. The success of a school and a child's education depends on the engagement practices school leaders implement. Eisner and Meidert (2011) defined parental engagement as a multistage process, which includes several layers of the engagement process. The researchers determined that the focus of parental engagement is mainly on parents' responsibility in the engagement process; the school leaders and the community were considered a small influence in the process. Donovan (1999) revealed that students' academic success increases when parents become partners with school leaders. Donovan contended there are some disagreements amongst some school leaders regarding how much engagement is necessary from parents for successful parent–school partnership practices. School leaders need to implement a model to increase engagement opportunities and strengthen the partnership between parents and school leaders.

There are several sides to parent-engagement; school leaders and parents have a shared responsibility in increasing positive engagement practices. Alameda-Lawson (2014) discussed the importance of school leaders implementing a parent-engagement model to increase parent–school partnerships such as the collective parent-engagement (CPE) model. Using the CPE model, leaders target improvements in individual parent's school knowledge. The purpose of this model is to focus on parent knowledge of parent involvement strategies concerning their children's academic success (Lawson & Alameda-Lawson, 2012). It is important for school leaders to adopt a model that they can implement to encourage and empower parents to increase engagement and parent–school partnerships (Gaetano, 2007). The CPE model differs from traditional parent involvement

models by working with parents directly and providing them with the tools that they need to collaborate successfully with school leaders.

The success of the CPE model depends on school leaders identifying a qualified parent facilitator (PF) who can recruit, organize, assemble, and empower parents to accept leadership roles. Alameda-Lawson (2014) stated the PF recruits and trains parents; parents create and manage programs and services to provide to other parents in the community creating a cycle of continuous engagement. An increase in networking and improved neighborhood partnerships caused stronger family partnerships resulting in excellent child health when the CPE model with PF was implemented (Alameda-Lawson, 2014). School leaders need to focus on creating stronger partnerships with parents to meet objectives (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). Parents are an essential member of the parent–school partnership, and the focus should be on how school leaders can improve these relationships.

In faith-based schools, parents are a vital part of the success of the school. Mullner (2006) described parents as an influential member of the parent–school partnership; parents are essential to the success of these partnerships. Catholic school leaders depend on parent-engagement to identify successes and challenges (Mullner, 2006). Day (2013) discussed a 4-stage framework (explore, focus, plan, review) to understand parents' hopes and concerns and to engage them in a partnership with school leaders to support their children and the school. Day displayed the importance of a framework that caters to the parents by describing the purpose of the 4-stage framework. The strategic objective of the 4-stage framework is to ensure parents' understanding of

the significance of their role in collaborating with school leaders to increase achievement and school success.

Successful parent–school partnerships encompass several levels of engagement. Yaseen, Zaman, and Rasheed (2017) examined the importance of parent–school partnerships and considered factors such as communication, decision-making, approachable behaviors, participation in school activities, and understanding the overall effectiveness of these relationships to contribute to the success of parent–school partnerships. Chaudhry et al. (2015) established that parents who were involved with their child's school activities increased their child's achievements in school. Rafiq et al. (2013) supported Chaudhry et al. by revealing the strength in parents and school leaders' engagement practices and the influence these relationships have on achieving performance outcomes. Parent–school partnerships are vital to the success of student achievement and school objectives; however, without proper communication, the parent–school partnership can encounter adverse effects.

School leaders are responsible for explaining the importance and benefits of parent involvement with parents. Parent involvement with an emphasis on communication has a positive influence on the success of student achievement and school performance (Baker, Wise, Kelley, & Skiba, 2016). Olmstead (2013) researched the effectiveness of technology in facilitating parent involvement. The data were collected through surveys and semistructured focus groups to determine whether technology assisted with parent–teacher communication and parent involvement. Olmstead revealed that parents and teachers are equally responsible for being proactive when it comes to

parent involvement. Olmstead concluded that communication systems would decrease barriers, increase parent involvement, and parent–school partnerships. Goodall (2016) supported technology as a strategy to enhance communication and support families outside of school. As technology continues to grow and access to technology expands, school leaders should invest in websites, phone calling systems, and parent portals, all of which connect the schools to home and parents to the school. These communication methods could potentially help school leaders and parents appropriately connect.

When school leaders provide parents with information regarding school needs and objectives in connection with a system to assist with their child's success an increase of parent involvement is a result. Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) examined school leaders creating a network of support to build partnerships with parents. School leaders must use the parent's voice to identify concerns and provide opportunities to resolve the concerns (Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014). The parent's voice is essential to the success of the school by leaders providing parents with the opportunity to express their views and understanding of their child's educational experiences (McKenna & Millen, 2013). Leaders must find a useful method to communicate with parents and understand that different modes of communication may be helpful for different parents.

Effective communication practices are vital to the success of parent–school partnerships. Thompson and Mazer (2012) researched various ways of communication between leaders and parents. Through research, Thompson and Mazer recommended leaders and parents to use a combination of communication methods to correspond with one another effectively. Westerman, Daniel, and Bowman (2016) supported the positive

connection communication has on organizational commitment and performance. The author further examined the impact of meaningful dialogue. For example, effective communication enlightens and educates all parties involved to support the organization's strategy (Westerman et al., 2016). Holdsworth and Thomas (2016) revealed the importance of school leaders implementing a cohesive communication system to assist with engagement. An effective communication process could encourage and deliver educational essentials in a fair and joint process.

There are several ways that leaders can increase communication and engagement efforts. For example, through technology such as computers and smartphones, leaders and parents can increase the number of available communication opportunities (Alameda-Lawson, 2014). Technology has made it simpler for parents and leaders to connect, the connections extend beyond the classroom and home (Baker et al., 2016). Leaders and parents who are using different modes of communication are voluntarily committing to increasing engagement. The quality of communication depends on the school leader's ability to provide parents with necessary information through different modes and to ensure that the information is clear and timely.

E-mail communications. Evolving technology plays a vital role in leader and parent communication efforts. School leaders and teachers use technology in the classroom as a learning tool. However, school leaders are using these methods such as e-mail, and social media to interact, inform, and engage parents about school-related activities (Olofsson, Fransson, & Lindberg, 2019). Philip and Garcia (2015) supported using technology in school as a learning mechanism and tool to communicate with

parents. Philip and Garcia supported e-mail communications between parents and leaders as the primary communication tool. Thompson and Mazer (2012) argued that a decline in face-to-face contact occurred because of the opportunities for parents to connect with leaders via e-mail messages. As technology advances, school leaders and parents will see an increase in e-mail communication as one of the primary methods to connect.

E-mail is a convenient approach for school leaders and parents to converse beyond school hours. Thompson and Mazer (2012) supported e-mail communications as one form of computer-mediated communication which has shown to be dominant at primary and secondary schools; however, this mode of communication should not be the only means to interact with parents. Thompson and Mazer discovered through previous educational literature (Epstein et al., 2002; Jennings & Wartella, 2004) commended e-mail communication as an effective method of communication to engage parents due to the accessibility. E-mail communications have an advantage over traditional face-to-face meetings such as parent–teacher conferences due to the convenience and ease of this communication method. School leaders must be mindful that they will have to use several methods of communication to engage with different types of families.

Social media. Social media has influenced the way leaders and parents engage with one another. Social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have made it easier for leaders to convey essential messages and provide parents with updates regarding school events (Badea, 2014). Burbules (2016) argued that while social media is prevalent, it has some disadvantages such as decreasing face-to-face communication. Burbules also mentioned that social media had changed the way leaders and parents

communicate because of convenience. Social media outlets have provided parents with opportunities to stay abreast of school events and has increased engagement between leaders and parents.

Parents can support their children by participating with leaders through social media websites to stay current on schoolwork and success. Patrikakou (2016) supported social media as an avenue to maximize parent and leader communications. For example, through school websites, leaders can provide real-time information regarding school activities, academic progress, assessment, grades, and parent engagement opportunities. Burbules (2016) also supported social media as a means to communicate with parents as this method increases parent involvement at home and school. School leaders need to ensure websites are up-to-date, along with ensuring that there is a second method used for parents who do not have access to technology. Patrikakou suggested leaders providing parents access to public libraries or implementing programs for parents to borrow tablets or laptops for those who do not have access to technology at home. Social media provides parents with the opportunity to obtain information about school activities and volunteer opportunities when face-to-face communication is not available.

Face-to-face communication. Face-to-face communication is the conventional mode and preferred way for leaders to communicate with parents. Thompson and Mazer (2012) supported traditional face-to-face (FTF) communication in connection with e-mail and social media communications. The researchers declared that when leaders and parents have FTF communication opportunities leaders and parents can obtain immediate feedback and parents can have one-on-one time with leadership. Leonardi, Huysman, and

Steinfield (2013) explained the negative impact social media played in the decrease of FTF communication. Westerman et al. (2016) supported Thomas and Mazer by explaining the importance of meaningful FTF communication on all levels. Meaningful communication such as FTF communication efforts can be a positive method to implement change and overcome barriers.

Leaders take a risk by eliminating FTF communication when resorting to technology only approach. School leaders and parents must make an effort to ensure that they are utilizing FTF communication as much as they can. The FTF communication method helps school leaders encourage parent participation by taking out the time to sit with parents and discuss school happenings (Murray et al., 2015). FTF communication allows parents and leaders to discuss concerns and progress without any communicative barriers. Westerman et al. (2016) explored student attitudes and perceptions toward communication methods such as FTF and social media. While the studied population of 545 students surveyed online, the results determined that these students had a positive attitude toward social media and FTF. The scholars also identified that FTF communication is the best mode of communication to use to engage with individuals. Westerman et al. suggested that leaders using multiple channels to provide several opportunities to engage. FTF communication allows leaders and parents to clarify any misunderstandings and possibly prevent communication barriers.

Barriers to Parent-Engagement

School leaders and parents are working together to create a cohesive partnership to build a foundation of trust and possibly avoid impediments. School leaders and parents

must be aware of their responsibility to reduce barriers to increase engagement efforts

(Schueler, McIntyre, & Gehlbach, 2017). Baxter et al. (2016) discussed barriers to

parent-engagement and highlighted that parents and school leaders agree that there are

barriers but offer different solutions. Baker et al. examined these solutions and noted that

parents addressed the barriers directly and supported parent-engagement while school

staff restated the need for parents to be present to avoid the obstacles. When school

leaders and parents build a foundation of trust, they can potentially resolve identified

barriers (Baker et al., 2016). Mytton, Ingram, Manns, and Thomas (2014) supported

school leaders creating a parenting program focusing on increasing engagement by

providing parents with knowledge and solutions for reducing barriers. Parent knowledge

of engagement expectations, parent work commitments, and the availability of resources

are the main barriers to parent–school partnerships.

   Parent knowledge of engagement expectations. School leaders must ensure

that they are shaping parents' views by explaining the importance of their role in parent-

engagement and parent–school partnerships. Harris and Goodall (2008) explored the role

parents have in engagement efforts and how school leaders can respectfully explain to

parents how their involvement can support their child's school achievement and the

school's overall viability. Watt (2016) examined the partnership between school leaders

and families obtaining data from five schools in Britain whose leaders successfully

engaged their families. Watt uncovered school leaders' position and found that leaders

who provided opportunities at school to educate and encourage parents to engage with

their child at home and with the leaders at school were successful in increasing parent–

school partnerships. There needs to be a balance of expectations and knowledge in the school and home environment. School leaders need to understand the dynamics of the home environment just as parents need to understand what is happening at school (Berger & Umaschi, 2011). When the expectations are clear, school leaders and parents will be able to work together to ensure there is a proper balance of engagement in both environments.

A partnership between parents and school leaders is vital to student success. School leaders and parents must understand the importance of their partnership and understand the benefits of working together as a team. Gokturk and Dinckal (2018) examined the reasons behind the importance of parents understanding parent involvement as it relates to building partnerships with school leaders. However, Gokturk and Dinckal found there was minimum literature revealing parents and leaders' depth of involvement, which the leaders believed, was due to the difference of opinion on the views of parent involvement. It was determined through a collective case study the difference of opinion between parents and leaders based on the roles each played in the partnership. Leaders described the parents' educational role being restricted to the home environment causing a decrease in parent–school partnerships. Leaders should use a positive, cooperative approach for leaders to ensure that parents understand the expectations of their position in the parent–school partnership and the importance of having a positive partnership to increase engagement (Murray et al., 2015). Leaders must understand the level of involvement from parents relies on the time parents have to commit to engagement efforts and building partnerships.

Parent work commitments. Parents cannot always participate in school activities due to work schedules and previous commitments. Harris and Goodall (2008) discovered that one of the significant barriers to parent-engagement is parent work commitments. These work commitments leave parents with minimum time to collaborate with school leaders. Alternatively, parents believe the main obstacle to engagement is the demands of their time and being unable to leave work to attend engagement opportunities. Carey, Lewis, Farris, and Burns (1998) researched barriers to parent involvement. He uncovered that time, and parents' attitudes toward the school were a key factor related to why parents could not commit to engagement opportunities. School leaders should provide families with alternate ways to engage in school activities to decrease barriers such as parent work commitments.

Parent work commitments are not the only barriers to parent engagement. Carey et al. (1998) discovered the time teachers have available as another barrier to parent engagement. Carey et al. found that 48% of the teachers did not have time to commit outside regular school hours. Carey et al. discussed barriers of parent engagement were not only due to parent commitments but also due to the school leader's commitments. School leaders should communicate the importance of parents making time to increase their involvement with the school. However, it is also essential for school leaders to have the same level of commitment as required for parents (Carey et al., 1998; Patel & Corter, 2013). Additional factors emerged as barriers to parent involvement. These factors include lack of parents' education to assist with their child's homework, cultural or socioeconomic differences, language barriers, and parent attitudes regarding the school,

staff attitudes toward parents, and concerns about safety after school hours. While these barriers are evident, Carey et al. found that parents are trying to increase their involvement and not let these barriers prevent them from continuing their efforts to build positive relationships with leaders and increase their participation in engagement opportunities. School leaders and parents have to show the same level of commitment for an effective partnership to be successful (Okeke, 2014). Providing parents with additional resources in the community or providing them with alternate ways to increase their chances to engage in school events could assist with strengthening the partnership between leaders and parents.

Availability of resources. Leaders should create several opportunities for parents to engage in school activities. School leaders and parents must work together to identify events in which parents can support from home when they cannot attend. Strier and Katz (2016) found that school leaders and parents must establish common goals and create activities that extend beyond school hours. Goodall and Montgomery (2014) considered school leaders implementing a 3-point system. This system involved (1) parent involvement, leading to (2) parent involvement with schooling, and ending with (3) parent-engagement with children learning. Hornby and Blackwell (2018) also supported school leaders implementing a system to assist with providing parents with resources to improve parent–school partnerships and engagement opportunities. School leaders using a continual process to assess and strategize the approach that school leaders take to engage and collaborate with parents would be beneficial to the parent–school partnership.

Lack of funding and the ability to access transportation for parents to get to school events and activities has an adverse effect on parent–school partnerships and create barriers for parents to collaborate with school leaders. Alexander, Larzelere, Cox, and Behnke (2017) examined the role decreased economic resources played as a barrier to parent–school partnerships and parent engagement. This barrier relates to a lack of funding and the ability to access transportation for parents to get to school events and activities (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). Solari and Mare (2012) inquired about the contrary view and responsibility of parents because of the lack of resources. School leaders should not hold these factors against parent-engagement efforts on the part of the parents due to financial issues that extend beyond the parent's control. Solari and Mare further suggested that school leaders sympathize with parents by creating alternate means for parents to engage and strengthen their partnerships with parents.

Leaders must be willing to understand all factors that cause involuntary barriers and work with parents to discuss alternative options. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) identified parents' beliefs as another barrier to effective parent involvement. The way parents view their position in their child's education is crucial. Hornby and Lafaele further examined parents who take responsibility for their child's education beyond getting their child to school will be actively involved in their child's schooling and build partnerships with school leaders' thus decreasing barriers. School leaders must identify activities that they can use to encourage parent–school partnerships and parent engagement (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). Although there are some barriers to parent-

engagement, which can affect the way parents, and school leaders collaborate, some positive outcomes emerged through positive parent–school partnerships.

Outcomes of Positive Parent–School Partnerships

Profitability. Private schools face a decrease in enrollment due to several factors, leaving school leaders responsible for finding ways to increase funding while supporting parents, students, and the community. Davies and Davies (2014) mentioned that as private school's profits grow, additional resources could assist with increasing parent involvement and parent–school partnerships. Hargreaves (2014) supported school leaders learning how to deal with parents to set and achieve objectives. School leaders should plan, create appropriate environments to achieve objectives, motivate employees, monitor performance, create solutions to identified problems, modify, and make changes to objectives to meet organizational goals to sustain engagement and increase parent–school partnerships.

Assessing the financial viability of services and programs incorporates revenue and cost and allows leaders to understand their financial position. Swift (2012), López-Bazo and Moreno (2012), and M. Kim (2016) examined the importance of the leader's knowing the expense of services and programs offered to assess the financial viability of these services and programs. Swift defined a sustainable program as a system where revenue is more than the expenses of the program. Davies and Davies (2014) discussed the importance of school leaders being aware of their finances so they can provide parents and students with programs to meet and exceed engagement outcomes. Reilly (2016) mentioned the importance of leaders seeking out new and uncommon ways to

secure additional funding. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that they are in a financial position to maintain their programming and services and can offer new services and programming to students and parents to increase engagement opportunities and improve parent–school partnerships.

      Sustainability. School leaders should include sustainable practices when developing yearly objectives. Holdsworth and Thomas (2016) examined the importance of leaders including sustainable principles into their strategic plan. The researchers explored what an academic sustainability development program for education would look like and how leaders can be successful. The theoretical framework Holdsworth and Thomas investigated was the sustainable education and academic development (SEAD) framework. SEAD focuses on three key areas (1) sustainable education, (2) educational development, and (3) organizational change; without understanding these three elements, leaders would have a difficult time attaining long-term sustainability. Foot, Howe, Cheyne, Terras, and Rattray (2000) defined partnerships as a shared commitment where leaders and parents can celebrate positive exchanges and empowerment. Open communication practices can create effective parent–school partnerships that assist with the school's sustainability.

      Parents and school leaders can make a difference by the way they engage with each other. Hargreaves (2014) favored quality leadership and collaborative partnerships between leaders and parents and how these collaborative partnerships influence and support sustainability in schools. The researcher found that parent–school partnerships are responsible for school improvement; the positive partnership encourages engagement

and open communication. J. M. T. Walker (2016) highlighted the need for parents and leaders to understand the quality of parent–partnerships considered necessary to increase interactions and improve school outcomes. School leaders and parents must recognize the value of an effective partnership (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). This partnership can positively influence school leaders, parents, the school and home environment, and the community.

Enhancing teaching and learning. The collaboration between leaders and students can create supportive partnerships within the classroom and outside of the classroom. Jensen and Bennett (2016) discussed Kay, Dunne, and Hutchinson's (2010) idea of including students in decision-making and internal performance reviews to explore creative ways to engage students in their education. The researchers revealed that when students are involved in their learning, leaders have created opportunities to enhance teaching and learning experiences (Jensen & Bennett, 2016). Jensen and Bennett analyzed Crawford's (2009, 2012) project conducted at the University of Lincoln; the project included students taking a position as consultants to assist with teaching practices. The researchers used the Crawford project as a model to involve students in the discussion of improving classroom practices with school leaders.

School leaders must include students in the parent–school partnership giving students an essential role in increasing teaching and learning experiences. Baron and Corbin (2012) agreed including students in engagement efforts because of the positive effects on school success. The researchers proposed that student engagement continues to be an essential factor in student achievement and the student's overall educational

experience. Parents, students, and school leaders collaborating to create a cohesive partnership, giving everyone a vital role and opportunity to voice their opinion and assist with school programs and services (Jensen & Bennett, 2016). Communication plays a vital role in encouraging parents and students to collaborate with school leaders and providing school leaders with the opportunity to include parents and students in the decision-making process.

 Communication. Effective communication is vital to the success of parent–school partnerships. Pérez White and López Levers (2017) explored the experiences of eight teachers and nine parents in an elementary school in Pennsylvania. The data obtained through structured interviews to uncover parent and teacher expectations regarding communication and parent–school partnerships. The data collected identified communication as an area of need. The need for quality and frequent discussion with leaders is a factor in increasing positive parent–school partnerships. Teachers expressed the need to have regular communication with parents, not limited to, discussing negative behaviors and the need for continuous contact to assist students and families. The data acquired uncovered the importance of communication and the correlation between communication and parent–school partnerships. School leaders have a significant role in encouraging communication with parents (M. M. Kraft, 2017). School leaders need to actively reach out to parents and give precedence to these efforts.

 Leaders and parents need communication to connect; leaders and parents must use different modes of communication to voice their concerns with one another. Erdener and Knoeppel (2018) supported communication and linked these efforts to positive outcomes.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory indicated that a person's environment fuels their development. Bronfenbrenner explained that effective two-way communication between school leaders and parents has positive effects on students' achievements. Effective communication can assist with finding solutions to educational concerns identified by parents and leaders (Erdener & Knoeppel, 2018; M. A. Kraft & Rogers, 2015). Fan and Chen (2001) supported quality communication as an appropriate method to increase parent involvement. School leaders and parents must be receptive to each other's ideas, recognize concerns, and use efficient communication tools to share information to resolve matters while maintaining a positive partnership.

Transition

The existing body of literature on parent involvement and strategies to improve parent–school partnerships to enhance private schools' profitability has mixed analyses. There is an extensive amount of research on parent involvement and strategies to improve parent–school partnerships. Researchers who studied parent involvement and parent–school partnerships presented school leaders with limited confirmation on the enhancement of private schools' profitability. Through my analysis of the literature review findings, I was able to determine the need for school leaders to identify and implement parent–school partnership strategies to increase profitability. This review of professional and academic literature included articles related to the topic of parent-involvement, parent–school partnership strategies as forces behind financial viability in schools, including standards and assumptions that current and future leaders of private schools may use to develop and implement parent–school partnership strategies. Section

2 will include a comprehensive interpretation of the research methodology and design, population and sampling, data collection instruments, and techniques used in the study. In addition, this section includes a thorough examination of the data collection and organization techniques, data analysis techniques, reliability, and validity.

Section 3 will include a comprehensive description of the research guided by the DBA Consulting Capstone. I will use the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (2015) criteria to conduct in-depth research for and about my client organization. The goal of this study is to aid my client leaders with improving engagement, lessening challenges, and increasing finances. I will describe the research in Section 3 by using a holistic, systems-based approach to explore leadership; strategy; customers; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; workforce; operations; and performance outcomes.

Section 2: The Project

This section of the study includes a summary of the purpose of the research topic, the research methodology, and design intended to respond to the research question. I will describe the data collection and organization technique, the data analysis process, and the reliability and validity of the study. I will also address the researcher's role and ethical research principles.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies leaders of K-12 private schools use to enhance parent-school partnerships to increase profitability. The target population consisted of three leaders of a private faith-based elementary school in Maryland with successful experience in enhancing parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide school leaders with strategies to enhance parent-school partnerships to increase profitability. Meaningful parent-school partnerships improve the success of a school (Nitecki, 2015). Effective parent-school partnerships are beneficial to student learning (Povey et al., 2016). Increased student learning translates into an increase in educational preparation of students, which may translate into students making important contributions to the local community and beyond.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in data collection includes securing a group of study participants, developing a discussion, organizing the research process, carrying out the research, collecting the data, and analyzing the findings (Kyvik, 2013). I collected data

on different views to gain a fundamental understanding of parent-school partnerships strategies used by XYZ leaders to enhance profitability. As the primary research instrument, I controlled all aspects of the study, including definiting concepts, collecting multiple-source data, conducting interviews, transcribing interviews, analyzing data, and developing codes and themes. Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, and Cheraghi (2014) discussed the importance of qualitative researchers, explaining their role as the primary research instrument. I used additional sources of data as suggested by Yin (2018), including the review of organizational documents. I worked with leaders of XYZ to develop a recommendation list of qualified prospects to invite candidates to participate in interviews. I conducted and recorded interviews; transcribed the audio responses; analyzed the sensitive data for emergent themes, independent variables, and significant insights; and ensured saturation using the finalized version of this study design and interview questions.

My prior experience as a staff assistant and service coordinator for over 10 years developed my skills and knowledge of family partnerships and engagement practices. My experience working with families, the community, and school leaders to link children and families to services within the community and educational system helped me to frame interview questions capable of uncovering a phenomenon that could explain varied experiences of participants. Understanding the viewpoints of the participants also helped me assemble a qualified, purposeful sample population of participants willing to share experiences and confidential data. The school leaders in this study were unfamiliar to me,

as I was to them. While working with school leaders, I demonstrated honesty, scholarship, and valuable positive change in my interactions.

Ethical considerations that researchers should take into account when conducting social research are readily available in the form of guidelines, codes, and regulations enforced by professional associations and review boards (Sanjari et al., 2014). Researchers are under a moral obligation to conduct their research in an ethical manner (Tanggaard, 2013), and in line with the guidelines provided by *The Belmont Report* protocol (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979). The three basic ethical principles of research involving humans are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979). Researchers honoring the respect for persons principle acknowledge participants' autonomy; researchers must also recognize that some participants may have diminished autonomy and should then act accordingly (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979). Under the beneficence principle, researchers strive to bring no harm to participants while maximizing benefits (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979). Applying the justice principle requires researchers to treat participants fairly regarding potential benefits and burdens brought about by the research (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979).

The Belmont Report protocol includes information on the application of ethical principles. This application of principles relates to the securement of informed consent, assessment of risks and benefits, and selection of subjects. Informed consent involves the disclosure of information, the comprehension of such information, and the voluntariness

of participation (U. S. Department of Health, Education, & Welfare, 1979). It was my

responsibility to follow (a) the ethical principles of *The Belmont Report* protocol, (b) any

requirements of their IRB, and (c) any additional ethical requirements of the participating

organization. I did not begin with the research study before obtaining permission from the

IRB. Explaining the informed consent principle to participants and obtaining participants'

signed consent forms before conducting my research was one way of ensuring the

ethicality of the research study. Additionally, I treated all participants fairly, reminded

participants that participation is voluntary, allowed participants to withdraw at any stage

of the study, and ensured confidentiality of information.

Avoiding bias in the research process is difficult (Opdenakker, 2006) because

researchers may be inclined to favor evidence supporting their underlying beliefs (Toews

et al., 2017). Confirmation bias occurs when researchers provide proof that supports their

underlying beliefs over evidence contrary to their underlying beliefs (Fforde, 2017).

Researchers have been warned to guard against introducing another form of bias in an

attempt to eliminate a specific preference. To mitigate bias, qualitative researchers

include member checking in their research design (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, &

Walter, 2016). Using member checking allows participants to review the researcher's

description of the participant's experiences (Harvey, 2015). I gave participants my

interpretations of their answers to interview questions and asked them to verify the

accuracy of such interpretations. Through the accurate recording of the assumptions and

limitations of this study, I provided the reader with information to evaluate the reliability

and validity of this study.

An interview protocol includes information such as interview procedures, a script of the introduction and the conclusion, prompts for obtaining consent from participants, and interview questions (Van de Wiel, 2017). Researchers use the interview protocol as a procedural guide (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B) to assist me during the interview process. I also used the interview protocol to ensure that I consistently shared the same information with all participants.

Participants

Selecting the appropriate participants in qualitative research is vital for data collection (Reybold, Lammert, & Stribling, 2012). The Walden University administration and faculty assessed organizations for the DBA Consulting Capstone and delegated the organization to scholar-consultants. The selected participants are from XYZ organization designated to me by Walden University administration and faculty following the protocol of Walden University's DBA Consulting Capstone. Qualitative research participants are selected based on their ability to provide accurate information to the study questions and enhance the understanding of the purpose of the study, mainly because of their familiarity with the research topic (Sargeant, 2012). The eligibility criteria for the participants selected are senior leaders with more than 5 years of experience in the education sector including XYZ's board of directors (BOD) and parent advisory board. All three leaders selected met the criteria for this study. An effective collaboration between participants and researchers require participants to be open, honest, and willing to provide information to equip their partners with accurate data (Klotz, Da Motta Veiga, Buckley, & Gavin, 2013).

In qualitative research, gaining access to participants who can fulfill the eligibility requirements of the study and provide the best information improve the understanding of the study (Sargeant, 2012). I gained access to participants through an introduction e-mail from my doctoral study chair. I then connected with the chairman of the board via e-mail to set up a time and date to identify key stakeholders who would provide information for this study and began conference calls. I expected to have unrestricted access via e-mail communications and conference calls.

The strategies used for developing a partnership with the leaders of XYZ were vital. Effective client-consultant partnerships rely on trust (Ko, 2010; Nikolova, Möllering, & Reihlen, 2015). To develop a trusting relationship, I initially contacted the leaders biweekly via e-mail and conference calls. As the relationship grew, I continued to make XYZ leaders a priority by connecting with them to answer any questions that may arise. To keep building a lasting relationship, consultants must make their clients comfortable by ensuring that all information collected will be secure (Solomonson, 2012). Throughout the study, I implemented the Belmont principles and maintained accordance with IRB and the DBA Research Agreement.

The selected participants' qualities align with this study's overarching research question. Sargeant (2012) mentioned the importance of qualitative researchers, ensuring the selected participants have the knowledge and experience to gather information related to the study. The participants whom I interviewed have diverse backgrounds and experiences with parent-school partnerships and XYZ's mission, vision, values, and objectives. Qualitative researchers must ensure that the research question aligns and

validates the participant's experiences (Wolgemuth et al., 2015). Selecting the three leaders of XYZ provided the opportunity for triangulation and validation of data presented from interviews. Using interviews for a case study may identify strategies leaders can implement throughout their organization to encourage effective change (Cairney & St Denny, 2015).

I used the 2015-2016 Baldrige Excellence Framework to obtain data and support my interview questions. The selected participants have been part of XYZ for more than 5 years and are involved in fundraising, decision-making, and parent involvement efforts. The information that I obtained from participants was the driving force to the overall study and its findings.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I used the qualitative research method for this study. A qualitative approach helps to increase the connection and exchange between participants and the researcher by giving researchers the opportunity to answer questions (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Yin (2018) stated that the advantage of selecting a qualitative method over the other methods is the ease of gathering appropriate data and information from participants. By using the qualitative method, I explored the actual lived experiences of participants of XYZ by using semistructured interview questions to promote a thorough discussion with participates concerning their lived experiences. The advantage of selecting a qualitative method over quantitative or mixed-methods research is that an individual researcher can analyze data that can have numerous interpretations

based on the participants' experience (Harland, 2014). By using the qualitative method, I explored the real experiences of the leaders of the faith-based school by conducting semistructured interviews with open-ended questions.

Researchers who use the qualitative method instead of the quantitative or mixed-method allow study participants to tell their story, giving the researcher the ability to use both data and descriptions (Rubio-Tamayo, Gertrudix-Barrio, & Garcia-Garcia, 2018). Researchers use the quantitative research method when needing to substantiate statistical analysis to test hypotheses gather by using a 5-point Likert-type scale technique (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Slevitch (2011) argued that researchers who use a quantitative research method are determining the validity of the identified assumptions. The sample size is vital in quantitative research; the larger the sample size, the more significant the influence. Researchers do not choose the quantitative method to explore participants' individual experiences; researchers use the quantitative method as an experimental approach. In quantitative research, questions and hypotheses are projected, investigated, and confirmed while preventing results from being biased (Slevitch, 2011). Quantitative researchers do not include open-ended interview questions to explore strategies (Taguchi, 2018).

A researcher would not use the mixed-method research methodology to explore different strategies within a particular study (Srivastava, 2014). Researchers obtain data in quantitative and mixed-method methodology by including a statistical component (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). Quantitative and mixed-method are not appropriate for this study because there will be no statistical component process. The purpose of this single

case study was not to test a hypothesis but to uncover parent–school partnership strategies that school leaders of a faith-based private school can use to enhance financial viability. The qualitative method is suitable for this research study.

Research Design

A single case study is appropriate for this research because I explored the strategies needed to increase parent involvement. A case study methodology is the use of numerous sources of data based on real-life situations (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013). A case study includes the collection of information using several data collection methods (Yin, 2018). Researchers also use a single case study design to collect data from participants directly linking to the problem. I used a single case study design for this study to increase awareness of existing theories related to the research topic. Single case studies combine existing speculative information with new experimental understanding (Vissak, 2010).

Researchers use the phenomenological design to focus on participants' lived experiences (Chan et al., 2013). Researchers use the phenomenological design to explore participant's lived experiences but also to obtain participants insights regarding a phenomenon (Ruzzene, 2015). Research questions on a phenomenological design are not predetermined; instead, the researcher follows the lead of the participants to avoid bias from the researcher. The researcher of a phenomenological study uses semistructured interviews to focus on the topic, being careful to listen and not to lead the questions (Chan et al., 2013). The data analyzed using the phenomenological design are detailed descriptions articulated by participants (Cloonan, 2012). I did not use phenomenological

design because I used prearranged research questions to collect data from the participants and did not focus on the meanings of individuals' lived experiences.

Researchers use the ethnographic design to study an entire culture and provide a detailed explanation of common life practices (Alcadipani & Hodgson, 2009). The researcher conducts participant observations with the intent to listen and observe the beliefs, values, and environment that are responsible for human behaviors and the meanings of these elements (Forsey, 2010). Ethnography is a kind of fieldwork activity, an academic model or as a narrative design (Alcadipani & Hodgson, 2009). I did not use the ethnographic design in this study because I did not collect data about the lives of a group of participants involving observation activities over an extensive period.

Data saturation is a vital component of qualitative research (Lowe, Norris, Farris, & Babbage, 2018). Data saturation is reached through the gathering of relevant resources to support the credibility, reliability, and validity of the research (Boblin et al., 2013). I used semistructured interview questions to obtain specific information as it relates to the research and safeguard guiding the interviewees in one particular direction; this process, along with the review of organizational documents assist with reaching data saturation. Failure to reach data saturation affects the research and interferes with the legitimacy of the subject matter (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Semistructured interviews are used as a guide for researchers to remain on the topic while giving participants a choice to voice their opinions in their own words (Mealer & Jones, 2014). Researchers also use semistructured interviews to follow up with questions that will clear up any gaps in previously obtained information (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I continued to interview participants until I attained

data saturation. To reach data saturation, sufficient information to reproduce the study by gathering new information must be present (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012). There also needs to be confirmation that further coding is no longer achievable (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Population and Sampling

The data collected in this single case study was from three leaders of a faith-based private school in Maryland. The participants are English speaking and work directly with students and their families. These leaders have more than 5 years of experience in the education sector, they have varied professional backgrounds, and they are responsible for making decisions on strategies to achieve parent-engagement, parent–school partnerships, student retention, and financial goals.

The purposeful selection of participants allows a researcher to select participants who have experienced the topic first-hand and can answer the overarching research question (Olsen, Orr, Bell, & Stuart, 2013). When exploring the characteristics of a population, purposeful sampling is the appropriate method to implement. Qualitative researchers who use purposeful sampling select participates who bring rich information to the study (Suri, 2011). When using purposeful sampling, the researcher controls who will engage in the study and identifies the type of sampling utilized, such as purposive, snowball, convenience, intensity, and homogeneity (Palinkas et al., 2015). Selected participants should be knowledgeable or have experience in the research matter (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). When choosing participants, researchers should keep the

sample size small, should be purposeful, conceptually focused, progressive, and have a

clear justification (Cleary et al., 2014).

Cleary et al. (2014) explained the importance of researchers planning and defining

the study population. The school leaders were selected because they are reliable sources

to gather information about the faith-based private school. For this study, I used

semistructured telephone interviews with the chosen participants to ensure data

saturation. Data saturation in qualitative research is attained through a balance of rich and

thick data (Dibley, 2011). When there are no new themes, data, and coding, a researcher

has achieved data saturation (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). I continued to interview

participants, ensuring that all participants are asked the same questions to ensure data

saturation is reached. Fusch and Ness (2015) have identified interviews as a way for

researchers to reach data saturation by collecting quality data. Mealer and Jones (2014)

identified telephone interviews as a method to decrease participant anxiety. Cachia and

Millward (2011) mentioned that telephone interviews are a natural way to obtain rich

data due to the relaxed environment. Researchers who use telephone interviews create an

environment of comfort for the participant enhancing data collection.

Ethical Research

Before contacting participants, I received approval from Walden University's IRB

(Approval No. 09-16-16-0581650). When research incorporates human subjects, the

researcher must receive IRB approval to ensure there are minimum risks and possible

benefits for the participants (Ahern, 2012). Before conducting the research, I ensured the

client leader signed a DBA Research Agreement (see Appendix A), which describes the

terms of the client-consultant collaboration between Walden University and the organization. To confirm commitment to Walden's ethical criteria, the chairman of the board of directors signed the informed consent. I sent an e-mail message to the chairman of the board of directors, inviting senior leaders of the organization to participate. All consented documents will be listed as appendices in the Table of Contents. Alby, Zucchermaglio, and Fatigante (2014) explained the importance for researchers to inform participants regarding all planned research activities. Before conducting research, researchers provide participants with an informed consent outlining the purpose and nature of the study ensuring participants understand the research idea, their voluntary position, and rights to withdraw from the study at any time during the research process (Bromwich & Rid, 2015).

I outlined the procedure for all participants to withdraw from the study within the consent agreement e-mail. Hadidi, Lindquist, Treat-Jacobson, and Swanson (2013) stated that researchers create an ethically sound study by presenting participants with the procedure to withdraw from the study. I informed participants that participating in the study is voluntary, they can decline to answer any of the interview questions, and they can withdraw from participating at any time during the study. To withdraw from the study, the study participants can contact me directly by phone or e-mail at any stage of the study. If a participant decides to withdraw even after the data collection process, I will delete all of his or her recordings and interview notes. I will ensure to shred all printed materials.

The research participants did not receive compensation nor did I provide any incentives to encourage their participation in this study. Schaefer, Kahane, and Savulescu (2014) mentioned the importance of appropriate ethical conduct while researching to maintain the honesty of the researcher and participants. The selected participants in the study understand that the study is being conducted to contribute to social change and contribute to the mission, vision, and core values of XYZ. Pérez White and López Levers (2017) mentioned the importance of trust and honesty between the research and the participant, ensuring that each participant understands there will be no incentives to participate and that the focus of the research is to assist participants with a cause that affects them directly.

Saunders, Kitzinger, and Kitzinger (2015) emphasized researchers protecting the identity and rights of research participants. Saunders et al. examined the steps that researchers should take to safeguard participants such as changing client names, using pseudonyms, and ensuring that the exact location of clients is not identifiable. I concealed all identifying information from interview transcripts, performance results, and collected data to protect the identity of the participants. Researchers are responsible for ensuring all documents obtained during data collection are protected (Yin, 2018). I am the only person who will have access to this information. All information will remain in a locked, secure cabinet in my home office for 5 years and then destroyed to maintain confidentiality.

Data Collection Instruments

As the qualitative researcher, I am the primary instrument for collecting data for this case study. Researcher's conducting qualitative research functions as the data collection instrument (Fusch & Ness, 2015). My primary objective as the research instrument was to gather enough information to ensure data saturation. J. L. Walker (2012) mentioned that researchers achieve data saturation when no new information is attained. McIntosh and Morse (2015) stated that qualitative researchers use semistructured interviews as part of the data collection process and research method. Semistructured interviews are formatted to learn the participants' views and experiences relating to the research topic (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

In a case study, researchers are the primary data collection instrument and can use different sources to collect data (R. Singh, 2014). The data collection process consisted of five open-ended questions to guide the interviews with the participants. In qualitative research, there are several types of data collection methods, including interviews, focus groups, observations, questionnaires, and documents (Cleary et al., 2014; Kirilova & Karcher, 2017). The data collection process for this study included one-on-one telephone interviews using open-ended questions that align with the qualitative case study design along with documents to validate methodological triangulation. An appropriate approach and a reliable interview technique are telephone-based interviews (Lord, Bolton, Fleming, & Anderson, 2015). Data and information gathered in the phone interviews included real-life experiences of parent-engagement, student retention, and financial sustainability.

To increase the reliability of data, I took notes linked to the interview procedure during the actual interviews. I recorded the responses for member checking and validity to ensure the information is accurate. Member checking involves the researchers taking interpreted data back to participants to confirm the validity of the collected data (Harvey, 2015). I gave participants my interpretations of their answers to interview questions and asked them to verify the accuracy of such interpretations. Member checking is a technique researchers use to check for accuracy of participant data (Birt et al., 2016). Researchers depend on member checking to confirm data with participants (Harvey, 2015). Naidu and Prose (2018) recognized member checking as a single event giving participants the opportunity to approve specific viewpoints of the analysis of the data they provided. I included a copy of the interview protocol in Appendix B and the interview questions in Appendix C. In compliance with Walden University policy, I will destroy all documents after 5 years.

Data Collection Techniques

I conducted telephone interviews with participants using open-ended questions. I also reviewed organizational documents. Since the primary data collection techniques are interviews and organizational document analysis, I did not conduct a pilot study. A telephone interview provides the participants with flexibility in scheduling the interview for a specific date, time, and location that works for the participant (Lord et al., 2015). Creating the interview protocol (see Appendix B) involves two principal components, which are the interviewer's introduction to the interviewees and the questions the interviewer will ask (Rabionet, 2011). Yin (2018) also mentioned the importance of

researchers implementing an interview protocol before conducting interviews. I followed this protocol when collecting data during interviews:

1. Find prospective participants via Walden University selection through identified client organizations.

2. I will request participation from participants via an initial e-mail.

3. I will send an e-mail to the participants providing a summary of the study, including the semistructured interview questions and Walden University consent form.

4. I will confirm a date, time for interviews by either phone or e-mail, and respond to any follow-up questions about the research question.

5. I will use semistructured interview questions for the study and record responses.

6. I will follow up with a thank you e-mail to all participants to express my appreciation for their part in the study.

7. I will transcribe each interview.

8. I will provide participants with the opportunity to review the transcripts for accuracy. I will follow this protocol process to ensure all interviews follow the same practice.

Researchers conducting interviews as a data-collection technique should consider disadvantages such as obtaining information that is not relevant to the research (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). An additional downside mentioned by Bell (2014) is that new researchers are developing their abilities to conduct qualitative

interview skills. When researchers use semistructured interviews as part of the data collection process, the researcher and the participants can engage in real-time dialogue (Bell, 2014). Robinson (2014) noted that simultaneous analysis allows the researcher to determine if further data collection is required. The benefit of using semistructured interviews is that the transcripts obtained through the interview are rich in recorded data and can be analyzed afterward utilizing a variety of data analysis methods.

I received IRB preapproval to conduct this study (IRB# 09-16-16-0581650); this process gives permission to begin the data collection process. I did not conduct a pilot study with XYZ organization because the primary data collection techniques were open-ended interview questions and organizational documentary analysis. Y. Kim (2011) discussed a researcher completing a pilot study to prepare for the main study to guarantee the data collections and techniques would work. Cope (2015) mentioned the shortfalls of completing a pilot study. Cope discussed participants not being as willing to participate in the main study because they were already involved in pilot study. While completing a pilot study may help with participant recruitment if there are issues with the methodology, data can be inconsistent and present issues in the main study (Cope, 2015).

Kallio et al. (2016) explained the advantages and disadvantages of conducting interviews in qualitative research. One of the main advantages of the semistructured interview method is the success of empowering exchanges between the interviewer and the participant (Bell, 2014; Kallio et al., 2016). When researchers use the semistructured interview method, the interviewer can create follow up questions based on the responses obtained by the participants. Irvine, Drew, and Sainbury (2012) presented the advantages

of using telephone interviews, such as saving in time and travel costs and ensuring

privacy for sensitive topics.

I also analyzed organizational documents as part of the data collection process. I

worked with the leaders of my client organization to acquire documents I needed to

analyze. Bryan and Henry (2012) stated that an advantage of document analysis is the

simplicity and cost effectiveness of using documentary data. Another advantage

discussed by Cardno (2018) is the ease and availability of obtaining organizational

documents. Baxter et al. (2016) agreed that the ease and availability of organizational

documents is a major advantage because of the convenience of obtaining data previously

collected by the organization's leaders. While there are several advantages, there are

some disadvantages to reviewing organizational documentation.

Cardno (2018) stated researcher's need to be aware of the disadvantages of

depending on documents as a source of data collection. Researchers must understand that

sometimes it is not possible to obtain a document due to organizational security measures

or geographical reasons. Another disadvantage is that the provided documents may

contain a lack of data because organizational documents are not generated specifically for

research purposes (Bowen, 2009). Merriam (1998) mentioned researchers needing to be

mindful of time, different events, and different strategies these documents can cover. It is

up to the researcher to decipher the organizational documents to acquire the relevant

information as it pertains to the subject matter.

I used an interview protocol and follow up member checking process to confirm

the information collected during interviews. Member checking is the process of taking

back the data collected and the researcher's interpretation of the interviews back to the

participants to ensure that the results are accurate (Harvey, 2015). I used member

checking as a way to enhance reliability. The member checking process ensures my

interpretation and review of organizational documents are reliable. Once I completed the

interviews, I analyzed the participant responses. After analyzing the interviews, I

provided the interview participants with my interpretation of their answers to interview

questions and asked participants to verify the accuracy of my interpretations. The

member checking process includes participants providing feedback regarding any needed

changes. Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, and Rees (2017) discussed using member

checking to validate the participant's experiences. Birt et al. (2016) specified that

member checking is a trustworthy process used by qualitative researchers to assist with

creditability and obtain data saturation. Member checking and triangulation increase the

validity of the study findings (Hussein, 2015).

Data Organization Techniques

Zori (2016) identified journaling as one of the accepted methods of data collection

because it delivers rich data. I documented the data by using a journal, which included

the interview questions and responses by the interviewees. Leko (2014) indicated that

journals are an excellent way for researchers to keep a log of participant experiences,

which also allows the researcher to analyze the data later. I used a recording device as

well as a journal for notes and reflections to assist with the recording of information.

Christie, Bemister, and Dobson (2015) stated that notetaking improves the researcher's

memory and decreases the chances of research bias.

I transcribed the interviews from recordings and created separate files for each participant to organize data. I used a color-coding system to categorize specific information as it relates to the study. I reviewed and synthesized the data that I used for analysis. Saldaña (2015) discussed codes emerging from properly analyzing interview transcripts. Probst and Berenson (2014) supported qualitative researchers using a process to assist with organizing data by categorizing data into groups to uncover codes. Jonsen and Jehn (2009) addressed qualitative researchers using the appropriate methodology that best fits the researcher's needs. Using a single case study design, a researcher will identify the proper system to use for coding. The coding process will help a researcher create sections and categories to validate the data and reduce any risks (Saldaña, 2015). I used a color-coding system to generate and provide significant themes of the study.

Turcotte-Tremblay and Mc Sween-Cadieux (2018) advised researchers to ensure participants and data are protected throughout the research process. I will retain and secure a journal consisting of data collected from interviews. All electronic data and organizational records will be preserved in an encrypted and password-protected electronic system; all other documents will be stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. All materials collected from the research should be destroyed (Surmiak, 2018). All data and organization documentation will be kept for 5 years and then will be destroyed, as required by Walden University (Walden University, 2016).

Data Analysis

Conducting data analysis in qualitative research is a continuous process, and coding data is part of this constant process (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Participant interviews will allow for the collection of data based on participant experiences and viewpoints on these experiences. Clark and Vealé (2018) stated that data analysis in qualitative research is used to record data without a numerical portion such as participant views, feelings, and experiences. Sandvik and McCormack (2018) described interviews as the primary method of data collection in qualitative research.

    The logical and sequential process for data analysis of this study is member checking with interviewees to confirm my understanding of the data is correct. For this case study, I used methodological triangulation to analyze interviews and organizational documentation collected from participants during the interview process. Researchers use methodological triangulation to understand the data obtained from participants (Heale & Forbes, 2013). Yin (2018) concluded that researchers use methodological triangulation to increase the creditability of the research study because of the multiple sources in the case study. I listened to each interview recording and carefully documented each participant's responses and compared those responses to the organization's documentation. I transcribed the interviews and examined the data. Member checking with participants occurred after interviews by phone to ensure the validity of data. Member checking is the process of taking back information to participants gathered through interviews for their confirmation and gather more information to expand on specific focuses (Harvey, 2015). Birt et al. (2016) referred to member checking as member validation as this process searches for the views of participants for the accuracy of previously collected data and clarifications. I conducted member checking to affirm that research participants agree that I have captured the core of the data and information shared in interviews.

The conceptual plan included data collected from financial records, XYZ strategic plan, workflow documents, and XYZ's handbook. To recognize and handle bias, I kept detailed handwritten and electronic notes. I manually recorded data during participant interviews to decrease any errors or deception. I reviewed the interview notes before coding the data collected to certify the accuracy of the data received from interviewees. I used a Microsoft Excel database to support creating codes from the correlating data. Using software to assist with data analysis can help a researcher in making the research process clear to ensure credibility (Ryan, 2009). I conducted coding of data by organizing data into categories aligning with the research question. Blair (2015) explained separating data into meaningful groups and labeling the analyzed data and then translating the data. Gläser and Laudel (2013) discussed coding and content analysis as the process of maintaining and organizing the data.

Participant interviews and the collection of documents were useful for finding correlated key themes as they relate to the conceptual framework used in this study. I used Epstein's (2010) parent involvement partnership model as the conceptual framework and as a lens to understand specific strategies leaders of K-12 private schools use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. J. Campbell, Quincy, Osserman, and Pedersen (2013) discussed researchers using an in-depth coding method to interpret data from semistructured interview transcripts. I used the information provided through interviews with the selected participants and from organizational documents to concentrate on identifying key themes related to the conceptual framework. Blair (2015)

noted that a researcher using a qualitative method analyzes raw data to uncover key themes.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research requires researchers to make decisions concerning the application and relevance of the methods used and the honesty of the assumptions (Noble & Smith, 2015). Leung (2015) stated that qualitative researchers must verify their accuracy of data using triangulation, which involves the researcher pulling from the original data with constant evaluation. Reliability in qualitative research depends on the consistency of data collection (Leung, 2015). The consistency of analysis forms the idea of reliability in qualitative research among research participants (Spiers, Morse, Olson, Mayan, & Barrett, 2018).

Dependability is the consistency of data completed in similar circumstances (Cope, 2014). In this study, I addressed the dependability of results by comparing the results of previous qualitative studies. By comparing results from previous comparable research studies (Alameda-Lawson, 2014; Demircan & Erden, 2015; He & Oxendine, 2019), I was able to identify and compare the best business practices. Researchers develop a specific protocol and procedure to enhance the reliability of qualitative results (Lub, 2015). I also reviewed the interview transcripts and performed the member checking process subsequently to allow participants to approve or contest my analysis of data. Qualitative researchers use member checking to check data with research participants to increase the dependability of the data (Cypress, 2017). I continued to

collect data through participant interviews until I am unable to obtain new information. As qualitative researchers conduct additional research, they will be able to recognize contradictions that can influence the reliability of the research outcomes (Leung, 2015).

Validity

Leung (2015) stated that a study's validity involves the suitability of the tools, process, and data. I performed member checking after each interview to ensure that I recorded data accurately. Researchers increase credibility in their study by establishing the appropriate techniques such as member checking to allow participants to verify the truthfulness of the data analysis (Connelly, 2016). By collecting data from interviews and organizational documents, I was able to obtain a full understanding of experiences and carry out a comprehensive analysis of the results. Credibility refers to the accuracy of data and the understanding of the participant's views (Cope, 2014).

I used several approaches and tools in this study to increase transferability. Transferability refers to the researcher's providing thick descriptions of the research processes (Burchett, Mayhew, Lavis, & Dobrow, 2013). Researchers who provide thick descriptions assist other researchers with duplicating the study in comparable situations in other settings (Anney, 2014). In this study, I ensured that I provided a thorough description of my data analysis process. I ensured that I provided an explanation for participant selections and explained the importance of each decision made throughout the study. First, I reviewed all documents and compared them to my journal notes from interviews to ensure validity. Cope (2014) stated that researchers conduct reviews at the end of the interview process to increase the validity of the research results. I addressed

the assumptions and limitations of the study by describing the background of the research and address the topic of transferability.

To ensure the confirmability of this study, I described the research process and summarized how I developed the study. Confirmability is enriched by the study's findings based on the analysis of the collected data that are comprehensively checked over an extensive process to confirm data (Noble & Smith, 2015). Confirmability relates to the study's findings being analyzed through a checking process. This process includes the researcher confirming that the study's findings are supported by data (Yilmaz, 2013). Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, and Blackman (2016) examined the importance of researchers clearly expressing the limit to which the study findings may or may not be applicable in other settings.

Data saturation is attained when there is no new information to obtain, and future researchers can duplicate the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Readers of this study may be able to use this study's findings to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability in educational institutions. Readers can also take from this study the importance of parent–school partnerships to achieve performance outcomes. O'Reilly and Parker (2013) stated that data saturation is important to the study's validity. I reached data saturation by conducting semistructured interviews with the participants and reviewing the organization's documents. Data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research, and if data saturation is not reached, it can impede on the quality of the research (DeFeo, 2013).

Transition and Summary

Section 2 of this study included the purpose of the research topic, the research methodology, and design, the role of the researcher, and the data collection methods and techniques. I conducted semistructured telephone interviews with three school leaders of a faith-based private school in Maryland to explore the strategies leaders of K-12 schools use to enhance parent–school partnerships to increase profitability. I expected to be provided with full access to organizational documents by XYZ leaders. I continued to conduct interviews and review organizational documents until data saturation was obtained. By gathering performance data from a variety of sources such as organizational documents and AdvancED standards, I was able to be fair to ensure that all factors that affect performance were reflected. To organize data collected, electronic data files were generated. Once the data was analyzed, I shared the results with senior leaders to administer member checking and ensured validity.

I used the 2015-2016 Baldrige Excellence Framework and my interview questions to collect data for this research study. The Baldrige criteria from the 2015-2016 Baldrige Excellence Framework were used as a tool to conduct a holistic assessment. Section 3 includes XYZ company's organizational profile and will encompass a detailed analysis. Section 3 also includes study findings, an executive summary of key themes, project summary, contributions and recommendations, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, and recommendations for further research, reflections, and conclusion.

Section 3: Organizational Profile

The implementation of the organizational profile is vital to an organization's performance (Vinyard, 2017). The performance system contains six categories, which integrate into a structure supported by an organization's core values and beliefs. Organizational leaders can use the six categories to assist with identifying work processes and improving performance results. Individually, the categories highlight the vital connection between leadership and results.

XYZ organization is an award-winning, faith-based school that empowers children to reach their fullest potential. XYZ senior leaders focus on engaging parents in the development of their students. XYZ was recognized as a top organization by The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth, which recognizes schools with remarkable academics, student and teacher talent, and superior leadership. XYZ leaders strive to improve continually while encouraging students to elevate their performance.

Key Factors Worksheet

Organizational Description

XYZ is a faith-based private school in Maryland devoted to educating students in an encouraging and challenging environment. At XYZ, leaders ensure that the students are a priority. The leaders of XYZ encourage families and the community to participate in the growth of the learners. XYZ leaders strive to inspire students by encouraging them to live with faith and integrity, appreciate human dignity and diversity, and share their unique talents in service to others. XYZ dedicated leaders aim to maintain a positive

relationship with students and students' parents. XYZ leaders can do so by continuously improving the strategies used to increase parent involvement.

Organizational Environment

The organizational environment describes the internal position of an organization (Vinyard, 2017). The organizational environment consists of the organization's product offerings, mission, vision, and values. These key areas shape the organization and can assist leaders in elevating the organization. Leaders can use the Baldrige Framework as a guide to enhance performance outcomes, establish practical objectives, and focus on customer needs (Baldrige, 2017).

Mission, vision, and core values. The larger environment in which an organization operates is a vital component of its internal environment (Vinyard, 2017). Organizational leaders create the mission, vision, and core values to define the organization's purpose, establish the future of the organization, and establish principles that guide the organization (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ leaders developed the mission, vision, and core values of XYZ. XYZ leaders created these principles to influence the culture and define the purpose of the organization. XYZ leaders represent the mission, vision, and values of XYZ when interacting with students, parents, stakeholders, and the community.

XYZ Mission and Vision

1. XYZ leaders are dedicated to educating the whole child in a nurturing and challenging environment in partnership with parents and the parish community. XYZ faculty and staff

provide students with opportunities to develop spiritually, intellectually, morally, and enlightened by the teachings of Christ. XYZ leaders strive to inspire XYZ students to live with faith and integrity, to appreciate human dignity and diversity, and to share their unique gifts and talents in service to others.

XYZ Core Values

1. XYZ leaders believe XYZ has a long and successful history because its constituents share common values and a commitment to the education of our children.

2. XYZ leaders believe XYZ holds its central mission to teach as Jesus did, making manifest the Kingdom of God in word and deed.

3. XYZ leaders believe XYZ has a caring community whose members are committed to providing quality education and setting high expectations for each student.

4. XYZ leaders believe XYZ provides a multitude of resources and services to support student learning, recognizing individual talents, abilities, and needs.

5. XYZ leaders believe XYZ welcomes, appreciates, and is enriched by the diversity of its students and families.

6. XYZ leaders believe XYZ strives to develop the whole child – spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially in a safe and orderly environment.

7. XYZ leaders believe XYZ strives to develop a love of learning in its students, faculty, and parents.

8. XYZ leaders believe XYZ encourages staff development and collaboration that promote high levels of student achievement.

9. XYZ leaders believe XYZ families are valuable partners in the education of their children; therefore, clear and effective communication between home and school is essential.

10. XYZ leaders believe XYZ strives to adapt and educate its staff and students for an ever-changing, technologically advanced world.

11. XYZ leaders believe XYZ is a student-centered school. Decisions made are after careful reflection upon this principle.

Workforce profile. Student enrollment at XYZ was 325 for the 2017 to 2018 school year. XYZ has 18 full-time teachers, six full-time aides, a resource specialist, three part-time secretaries, one principal, no vice principal, and several parent volunteers. Each teacher meets the Maryland accreditation by holding an early childhood certification/licensure. In addition to certifications/licensure, all teachers hold either a bachelor's or master's degree. Each teacher has passed a general knowledge test and National Boards. The teachers are required to obtain six credits every 5 years to maintain their certificates and abide by the National Board renewal requirements. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards requires teachers nationwide to renew their teaching certificates every 5 years to ensure teachers are up-to-date on their knowledge about best teaching practices. Aides are present in the classrooms to help with daily tasks and are not required to have specified certificates. All administrators of XYZ must have a master's degree. The full-time resource specialist holds a doctoral degree not required for this position.

Assets. The vital asset for XYZ is the leadership team and its competency, experience, and dedication to the work that it provides and the value it places on building lasting relationships with parents. XYZ is a faith-based Roman Catholic elementary and middle school in Maryland. XYZ is part of a 3,500-member parish. XYZ leaders provide

a nurturing environment to meet the needs of the children, staff, community members, and stakeholders. XYZ facilities include classrooms, offices, and storage spaces. XYZ technology includes smart boards and a rolling IPad/Laptop.

Regulatory requirements. XYZ leaders adhere to rules and regulations developed by the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic School and has full accreditation by AdvancED. XYZ is responsible for upholding all requirements to meet the AdvancED standards and accreditation policies. As part of the accreditation process, XYZ leaders host an external review team once every 5 years, engage in continuous improvement, submit all required accreditation documentation, and pay all the necessary accreditation fees.

Organizational relationships. The organizational relationship between leaders and stakeholders is crucial to the internal environment of an organization to achieve its mission (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ's leaders maintain organizational relationships with the use of an effective organizational structure. Organizational leaders should implement a governance system with precise reporting requirements and a communication arrangement or system used among BOD and stakeholders (Baldrige, 2017).

Organizational structure. XYZ leaders are rooted in their vision, mission, and core values. XYZ leaders take pride in sharing these standards with their partners. XYZ has an organizational structure and governance body to monitor, guide, and apply work processes. XYZ leaders implement a strategy of continuous communication to ensure information is shared amongst the workforce and stakeholders throughout the

organization. The BOD provides leadership and strategic planning to work together to lead XYZ toward achieving the school's vision and mission.

Customers and stakeholders*.* Organizational leaders must prioritize the wants, needs, and concerns of their customers. XYZ's key customers are the students, parents, and teachers of XYZ. These customers are essential to the success of the school. XYZ's leadership focus is on including key customers and stakeholders in the strategic plan; each key customer and stakeholder has specific essential requirements that align with the strategic plan (see Table 2).

Table 2

Key Customers and Stakeholder's Requirements

Key customers	Key requirements	Alignment
Students preschool-8th grade	To strive toward excellence based on a thorough educational curriculum centered in love, justice, compassion, hope, and forgiveness.	As a part of the strategic planning process (SPP), Key customer requirements are reviewed periodically by XYZ leaders.
Parents	For their children to learn and grow in a safe, fun, and supportive environment.	Survey results are analyzed annually and included in the annual safety and strategic plans.
BOD	Development of budget, fiscal reports, and strategic planning. Adherence to mission, vision, and core values	As part of the SPP, essential stakeholder requirements are analyzed and included in strategic plans.
Workforce	Encouraging, supportive, flexible, and safe environment.	As part of the SPP, the workforce provides feedback to leaders to assist with strategic planning.

Suppliers and partners. XYZ's key suppliers and partner's relationship keeps the school innovative and competitive. XYZ leaders collaborate with organizations providing parents with the opportunity to save money and contribute to the financial viability of the school by shopping and buying everyday items (see Table 3). Each time a parent uses the school code while shopping at participating stores, a percentage of the money spent goes to the school to help with funding and supplies. XYZ leaders take pride in offering these benefits to families without increasing the cost of tuition.

Table 3

Key Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators

Free money partnerships	Influence on XYZ	Influence on innovation and competitiveness
Amazon Smile	0.5% of the cost of subsequent purchases are donated to XYZ	All of the free money partnerships provide funding to XYZ for additional organizational upgrades and supplies.
Box Tops	10 cent per box top given to XYZ	
Giant and Food Lion Rewards Program	XYZ earns a percentage of purchases when participants use XYZ's code.	
Safeway	XYZ earns box tops when participants shop.	
Local cleaners	10% of the total bill is provided to XYZ as a donation.	
Local restaurants	A percentage of the bill is donated to XYZ.	
Target	Target will donate up to 1% of a purchase.	

Organizational Situation

Leaders must understand the competitive nature of their organization, which includes knowing the key strategic advantages and challenges. The responsibility in identifying the appropriate performance improvement system is on the organization's leadership team (Baldrige, 2017). I found by conducting this study that leaders who implement a performance improvement system can identify areas in need of improvement and areas of strength. Therefore, school leaders could use an effective

performance improvement system to move the organization into a favorable competitive position.

Competitive environment. Leaders must compete with similar organizations for visibility in their community by standing out amongst their competitors (Vinyard, 2017). The way an organization operates helps leaders to learn and continually evolve. The findings of this research study support leaders identifying challenges and advantages to help with improving their organization's performance to remain competitive.

Competitive position. XYZ's competitors include other private and public schools. XYZ leaders' relationships with partners and suppliers give school leaders the capability to identify challenges, meet the needs of their customers, implement effective parent–school involvement strategies, and focus on issues that affect the school community. XYZ's leaders are taking the initiative by ensuring the needs of parents are met by implementing a communication system through the school's website, social media accounts, and meetings. XYZ's leaders are working together in identifying areas of need and how these areas can be strengthened.

Competitiveness changes. Significant changes that influence XYZ's competitive position are the lack of parent–school partnerships and the possible deficiency in funding due to lack of parent-engagement. XYZ leaders provide families with opportunities to engage in the daily operations and activities of XYZ. Volunteer opportunities also include a financial component when parents are unable to complete the required 20 hours of volunteer work. The primary strategy XYZ leaders implement is general knowledge to

improve engagement efforts by supporting and providing parents with straightforward information regarding XYZ events.

Comparative data. There were some challenges when obtaining comparative data. The primary concern is that XYZ leaders do not have access to competitors' information, making it a problem to collect appropriate comparative data. Organizational comparisons were made by reviewing The Charter School of San Diego's award application from Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA), the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic School, AdvancED, and NICHE (a web-based system that analyses material to highlight the best schools, companies, and neighborhoods).

Strategic context. XYZ board members developed a 5-year strategic plan, which began during the 2018-2019 school year. The board members identified key areas and discussed the strategic advantages and challenges of each key area (see Table 4). XYZ board members analyze findings monthly to evaluate XYZ's competence to benefit from gains and improve problems. Strategic challenges relate to XYZ's organizational structure, fundraising, retention, technology, engagement, and parish school collaboration. Strategic advantages include services, location, curriculum, and reputation.

Table 4

Strategic Context

Area	Key strategic challenges
Fundraising	Improving participation
Operations/Technology	Lack of funding; decreased retention rates
Workforce	Improving collaboration with the parish community

Area	Key Strategic Advantages
Fundraising	Available throughout the year, not mandatory.
Operations/Technology	Consistent "free money" partnerships
Workforce	Dedicated Staff who support the mission, vision, and values.

Performance improvement system. XYZ's performance improvement system is one of continuous improvement and adopts Deming's (1982) cycle of continuous improvement. The plan, do, study, and act (PDSA) cycle is a model for learning and change. The cycle begins with setting an objective based on the needs of the consumers, implementing the plan, analyzing the identified results, and ensuring the application of enhancements. XYZ leaders continue to review identified concerns, which help determine the strategic objectives for its strategic plan. XYZ leaders ensure leaders address the concerns of parents and staff to bridge any gaps.

Leadership Triad: Leadership, Strategy, and Customers

Leadership

Senior leaders consist of the principal and 11 board members. The mission, vision, and core values are part of XYZ's mission of continuous improvement while nurturing and enabling students to perform their best. Leaders continuously evaluate these standards to assure commitment to stakeholder expectations and requirements. XYZ leaders recognize value when all stakeholder members are following the vision and mission of the school through their actions.

Setting vision and values. Leaders must know where their organization is going and represent the actions that they would like to see in the organization (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ incorporates the vision and core values in the strategic planning process and reviews the strategic plan to assist with individual goal setting. XYZ's leaders ensure leaders address the needs of their customers while being aligned with the vision and values of the organization.

Promoting legal and ethical behavior. The organizational environment should include legal, regulatory, and ethical obedience from leaders and employees (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ leaders handle organizational activities to ensure leaders are carrying out the vision, mission, and values of the organization. Leaders are responsible for setting the direction of the organization, communicating these goals throughout the organization, and making the information accessible. The integrity of the organization is a vital part of the organization's environment. XYZ leaders use an open and honest technique with employees, the parish, and parents to ensure the integrity of the organization is intact.

XYZ leaders take pride in ensuring the lines of communication are two-way, and the environment is one of respect, honesty, compassion, and honor.

Communication. XYZ leaders use XYZ's website and social media accounts to communicate with parents and the community. The communication approach includes email, newsletters, and social media accounts. XYZ leaders communicate with parents and staff on a schedule, which consists of either weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or annual timelines with specific processes. As part of knowledge management, leaders share significant decisions and information from the BOD with parents and the community.

Mission and organizational performance. An organization's environment is vital to achieving success (Vinyard, 2017). Leaders should focus and implement short- and long-term action plans to ensure employees understand the importance of improving current processes, increasing innovation, and organizational learning (Obermayer & Toth, 2019). XYZ leaders are responsible for knowledge sharing and modeling the behaviors that they would like to observe throughout the organization.

Creating an environment for success. The BOD implements an environment for success by ensuring the proper processes are in place. These processes align with the mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives. XYZ leaders lead the organization with innovating thinking and enthusiastically supporting the strength of its employees.

Creating a focus on action. Leaders should understand the steps needed to achieve their strategic objectives (Baldrige, 2017). XYZ leaders use board meetings to discuss strategies to enhance relationships with parents, volunteer opportunities, workforce development, work processes, and assets. XYZ leaders set expectations and

are committed to the success of the organization and meeting the needs of the customers.
XYZ leaders provide several opportunities for parents to become involved in the
organization. The leaders ensure there are multiple chances throughout the school year
for parents to participate in events and the financial viability of the organization.

Governance and societal responsibilities. Denecker (2019) mentioned the
change of the school leader's roles due to the implementation of school governance
reforms. These reforms place additional stressors on school leaders due to time restraints.
XYZ leaders are conscious of their roles to minimize any risks by implementing best
practice strategies to reduce or prevent conflict.

Governance system. XYZ's governance model (see Table 2) includes the
organization's key qualities and the responsible entities. As a private school governing
board, XYZ BOD accepts full responsibility for policy development, strategies,
implementation, and outcomes. The BOD is responsible for contributing to the
organization's annual budget. XYZ's principal oversees XYZ's budget and reviews it
monthly. XYZ's principal works with the parish bookkeeper twice a week to discuss
expenses in preparation for expenditures processed by the church. External auditors from
AdvancED perform reviews on the operational areas. An external contractor completes a
free security assessment once every other year at a minimum.

Table 5

Organizational Responsibilities

Key qualities	XYZ BOD	Internal auditors	External auditors
Responsibility for Senior Leader Actions	X		
Accountability for Strategic Plans	X		
Fiscal Responsibility	X	X	
Security Plans	X		X
Operational Reviews	X		X

Societal responsibilities. XYZ leaders consider societal well-being as part of the

organization's daily operations in support of the vision, mission, and core values. XYZ

leaders are dedicated to educating the whole child in a nurturing and challenging

environment in partnership with parents and the parish community. XYZ leaders ensure

they are meeting the needs of the customers through products and services offered at

XYZ. In addition, XYZ leaders provide the community and parents with opportunities to

communicate their needs. XYZ leaders address the needs identified by parents and the

community by implementing strategies related to best practices.

Strategy

Leaders are responsible for developing the best approach to assist with the

direction of the organization (Yikici & Altinay, 2018). Leaders need to be aware of how

to develop a strategic plan outlining their objectives, implement the idea, and

continuously monitor the purpose to prepare for unplanned shifts (Baldrige, 2017).

Leaders are encouraged to understand the importance of the strategic planning process

and strategy development (He & Oxendine, 2019) because this awareness will help

leaders execute the strategic plan successfully.

XYZ's principal and board members have developed a 5-year strategic plan,

which began in 2019. XYZ leaders developed the objectives and strategies based upon

feedback provided through parent surveys, conferences, and meetings with staff. The

intent was to address the concerns of the customer and workforce to align with XYZ's

mission, vision, and core values. XYZ leaders completed an analysis of strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) and revisited the previous reviews at

every BOD meeting, where it is determined if a new examination is needed or if there are

areas of improvement that need refinement.

Strategic planning process. XYZ's leaders implemented the strategic plan in

2019 (see Table 6). XYZ leaders share the strategic plan and outlined objectives with

parents and staff to discuss alignment with XYZ's mission, vision, and core values. XYZ

collects surveys from parents through an online survey system; the BOD then analyzes

the data and aligns the data with specific goals. For the next 5 years, XYZ will implement

strategies to improve retention, parent engagement, technology, fundraising, and

collaboration with the Parish. XYZ leaders plan to deploy goals to all workforce

members at staff meetings. Frequent feedback to all workforce members will be constant

to ensure all members are aware of any modifications.

Table 6

Goals, Strategic Initiative, Action Plans

Key goals	Action plans	Responsible contributors	Performance measures
		Strategic Initiative 1	
Goal: Ensure that XYZ retains families	Investigate busing options for families who live outside of the school's location	XYZ leadership	Budgetary and internal financial reviews
		Strategic Initiative 2	
Goal: Ensure that XYZ has sufficient funding to support organizational goals and initiatives.	Consider fundraising opportunities which appeal to parents	XYZ leadership and parents	Annual surveys
		Strategic Initiative 3	
Goal: Improve Technology	Investigate new ways to improve technology	XYZ Senior Leaders and Board of Directors	Financial and budgetary reviews
		Strategic Initiative 4	
Goal: Improve engagement practices with parents	Work closely with parents to understand and bridge the gap between school and family	XYZ SL	Parent Surveys, parent engagement and satisfaction results
		Strategic Initiative 5	
Goal: Parish school collaboration	Work with the Parish community to ensure that XYZ services are aligned with the church	XYZ SL, BOD	Surveys, continuous meetings with Parish leadership

Customers

Communication is vital to the success of an organization. Leaders should listen

and understand the needs, wants, and desires of their customers (Vinyard, 2017). Leaders

must use the actionable information obtained by their customers to link to key product

offerings and business processes (Baldrige, 2017). XYZ leaders use the voice of the

customer to create realistic objectives.

Voice of the customer. XYZ leaders interact with participants and gather

information through parent surveys and meetings as needed. XYZ leaders use various

methods to listen to their customers (see Table 7). For example, XYZ leaders offer open

houses without registration and orientations, allowing XYZ leaders to obtain feedback

from participants and parents on XYZ's mission, vision, core values, curriculum, and

other services. Parents are also able to provide input through XYZ's social media

accounts, websites, and surveys.

Table 7

Voice of the Customer

Methods	Stakeholder	Frequency
Surveys	P	N
Conferences	P, WO	A, N
School Speak	P, WO	D, W, N
Social Media Accounts	ALL	D, W, N
BOD Meetings	BOD	M
Staff Meetings	WO	W, M
Fundraisers	All	Q

Stakeholders: P=Parents, WO-Workforce, BOD=Board of Directors, S=Students,

C=Community, CO-Collaborators, A=All

Frequency: A=Annual, Q=Quarterly, M=Monthly, W=Weekly, D=Daily; N=As

needed

Current and potential customers. XYZ leaders understand the importance of
listening to their customers. When leaders are mindful of their customer's wants and
needs, leaders will be able to use the information provided by their customers to develop
and expand products and services (Melander, 2019). XYZ administrators offer
membership for the BOD and parent advisory board. These boards help with the
everyday functions of XYZ. The services provided include: (a) before and after school
care, (b) Catholic Youth Organization/Athletic (CYO), (c) choir, (d) youth ministry, (e)
extracurricular activities, (f) early learning center, (g) summer camp, and (h) fundraising.

XYZ offers these services to provide parents and students with additional means for parents and students to increase involvement.

Satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. Organizational leaders are responsible for determining a process that will assist in providing their customers with vital information related to the organization (Melander, 2019). This process can help leaders create actions linked to customer values, along with identifying products and services customers will use (Vinyard, 2017). Leaders must be customer-focused and driven to satisfy and engage customers (Mossi, Ingusci, Tonti, & Salvatore, 2019). XYZ leaders meet regularly with stakeholders and the community to maintain open and honest communication. XYZ's principal and the parent advisory board president coordinate volunteer opportunities and presents these opportunities to families. XYZ's principal addresses volunteer expectations and concerns by meeting regularly with the BOD, parent advisory board, staff, and parents. XYZ's leaders use social media accounts and XYZ's website as an additional method to communicate with parents and the community.

Additionally, XYZ leaders use email and newsletters to ensure all platforms have the same information to provide to stakeholders. XYZ leaders guarantee to conduct meetings with parents and the community at least once weekly and monthly to network and attend to any concerns. XYZ leaders take the information obtained from these interactions to gain a new perspective on identified concerns. The meetings with the leadership team are a way for participants to voice their concerns, provide feedback, and attain information regarding previous concerns.

Customer engagement. XYZ leaders actively and regularly seek input from key

customers to determine and discuss customer needs. XYZ leaders ensure that the lines of communication are open and fluid, providing customers with continual opportunities to engage. XYZ leaders and workforce members are available to conduct parent–teacher conferences and meetings with families outside of the regular school schedule. XYZ leaders advise families to contact XYZ's principal or school staff with any concerns that require immediate attention.

Product offerings and customer support. Product offerings are services and goods available to the customer (Vinyard, 2017). Leaders must identify the way their product offerings will benefit the organization, along with meeting and exceeding the needs of the customers (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders should create a customer-driven environment to improve services and create new products (Zhan, Tan, & Huo, 2019). A customer-focused climate has the potential to increase customer loyalty, develop new products, services, and potentially prevent complaints (Zhan et al., 2019).

Product offerings. XYZ's product offerings include: (a) before- and after-school care, (b) CYO, (c) choir, (d) youth ministry, (e) extracurricular activities, (f) early learning center, and (g) summer camp. XYZ's principal and the president of the parent advisory board coordinate volunteer opportunities throughout the year for parents to engage with school leaders. XYZ leaders expect parents to volunteer 20 hours throughout the school year. The completed volunteer hours are self-reported by parents through an online system; if a parent does not report completed hours, each parent is sent an invoice for uncompleted volunteer hours to be paid directly to XYZ.

Customer support. XYZ's leaders plan conferences, conduct surveys, operates the XYZ communication system, monitors social media accounts, manages fundraisers, and the daily operations of XYZ. These supports are in place to keep parents well informed regarding on-going activities, challenges, new initiatives, and improvements. XYZ leaders focus on ensuring that parents feel as if they are part of a team and know the role they play is a vital component to the success of the organization. XYZ's leaders take pride in supporting parents and students and understanding the importance of having a cohesive relationship with external customers.

Customer segmentation. XYZ's leaders provide weekly, monthly, and as needed meetings to enhance parent involvement. The purpose of these leadership meetings is to meet with the workforce and the BOD to discuss new initiatives and to refresh the stakeholders on the focus, mission, vision, and values of the organization. XYZ's leaders review accomplishments and acknowledge the actions leaders take to expand parent involvement. The meetings also focus on reviewing current and future objectives, measuring objectives, and determining if adjustments are required to achieve these objectives.

Relationship management. XYZ's leaders' determination and dedication are part of the strategy to increase parent involvement. XYZ leaders are determined to increase parent involvement and maintain positive relationships with parents. XYZ's leaders have prioritized increasing parent involvement and maintaining a long-standing relationship.

Complaint management. Organizational leaders must be aware of customer complaints and have the ability to address them quickly and efficiently (V. Singh, Jain, & Choraria, 2016). The leaders of XYZ understand that complaints are inevitable; however, the way leaders handle these complaints is crucial to the organization. XYZ's leaders require that complaints go directly to the principal. The goal is for XYZ's principal to address any complaint timely to ensure the proper resources are in place to resolve the complaint efficiently and effectively. Vinyard (2017) stated that leaders who are resolving complaints quickly and effectively increase customer loyalty by 40%. XYZ's leaders address complaints timely, showing customers the value of the customers' voice and position within the organization.

<div align="center">Results Triad: Workforce, Operations, and Results</div>

Workforce

Leaders must value and respect their workforce for employees to be able to commit to the organization (Lam, Loi, Chan, & Liu, 2016). An organization's success depends on the knowledge and work ethic of its workforce (Akehurst, Giles, & Stronge, 2017). Leaders must prepare for the future while understanding workforce needs for professional development, communication, and transitions.

Workforce capability and capacity. Leaders need to identify the skill sets required to operate an organization and determine the skill levels these capabilities require (Alagaraja & Githens, 2016). XYZ's leaders evaluate the capability and capacity needs by ensuring the mission, vision, and values align with the strategic plan and motivate workforce members to follow through. XYZ's workforce members understand

the importance of being well informed regarding the standards and knowledge needed to perform their job. In addition to certifications or licensures, all XYZ's teachers hold either a bachelor's or master's degree. Each teacher has passed a general knowledge test and earned National Board Certification. XYZ's teachers are required to obtain six credits every 5 years to maintain their certificates and abide by the National Board's renewal requirements. Aides are in the classrooms to help with daily transitions and are not required to have specific certificates. All administrators of XYZ must have a master's degree.

New workforce members and change management. XYZ's leaders recruit, hire, and retain workforce members by following the guidelines the Archdiocese of Washington provided (see Figure 1). The hiring process begins with the guidelines the Archdiocese of Washington established. XYZ's leaders use these guidelines to recruit, select, and hire qualified candidates. The instructions the Archdiocese of Washington identified are in place to hire the most qualified candidates. XYZ's principal provides information to the workforce regarding any changes that occur within the organization. XYZ's principal understands the need to communicate necessary changes and prepares workforce members for those transitions.
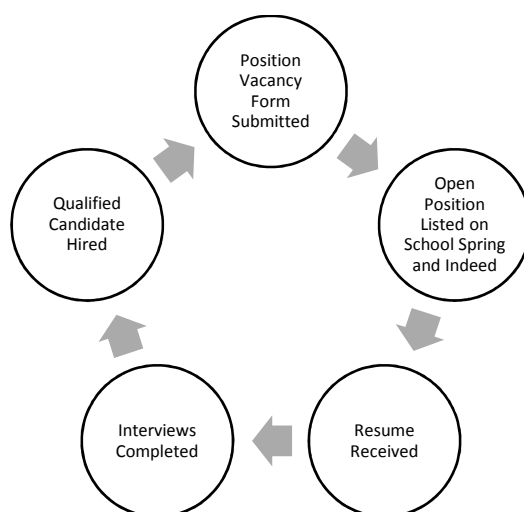
Figure 1. Hiring process.

Work accomplishment. Once leaders have identified and selected qualified

candidates, the focus is on the way the organization's work will be accomplished

(Vinyard, 2017). XYZ's principal manages change and prepares the workforce for

change by providing the workforce with information regarding identified changes and

providing strategies on the way the workforce and the organization will work through

transitions. XYZ's principal reviews the strategic plan with the BOD monthly to discuss

work achievements and necessities for goal attainment. XYZ's principal disseminates

vital information to workforce members to provide them with insight into the completed

work versus the work that needs to be completed. The principal and BOD use a SWOT

analysis to determine the needs of the organization and discuss success.

Workforce climate. XYZ's leaders ensure its workforce feels secure and has

access to policies and procedures that protect them. XYZ's leaders take specific measures

to protect the organization and its workforce members. XYZ's principal and BOD are

available to address any concerns the workforce may have regarding policies and procedures.

Workplace environment. XYZ's leaders have established policies to ensure workplace security and accessibility for all workforce members are available. An essential requirement of XYZ's workforce is to work in a safe environment. XYZ's principal implements a once a month emergency drill to practice safety preparations. XYZ's principal attains a discretionary security assessment by an external contractor to assess XYZ's safety practices and makes modifications to XYZ's safety plan as needed. XYZ's leaders provide new employees with a one-time, 3-hour security clearance class. The workforce members are then required to participate monthly in a security webinar.

Workforce benefits and policies. XYZ is an equal opportunity employer. As part of the benefits package, XYZ offers paid time off (PTO), medical insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, long-term disability, accidental death and dismemberment, life insurance, and a retirement savings plan. XYZ's principal is in support of professional development days and encourages workforce members to participate in conferences when available.

Workforce engagement. XYZ's leaders foster an organizational culture characterized by open communication, emphasizing listening to concerns, performing at a high level, and engaging the workforce through a continual focus on XYZ's vision, mission, and core values. XYZ's principal has an open-door policy, weekly meetings with teachers, and monthly meetings with all staff to discuss and address any concerns. XYZ's principal empowers the workforce by providing opportunities for sharing

information, best practices, and promoting solidarity.

   Organizational culture. XYZ's leaders set the tone of an honest, engaged, and positive organizational culture. XYZ's leaders ensure the lines of communication are open and straightforward with workforce members. XYZ's leaders also focus on guaranteeing that the workforce has the knowledge and skills to perform at the highest level.

   Drivers of engagement and assessment of engagement. The key drivers of engagement and assessment focus on the way leadership engages the workforce and assesses workforce engagement (Pitt, Botha, Ferreira, & Kietzmann, 2018). XYZ's leaders maintain commitment by keeping the workforce involved in all activities at the organization. XYZ's leaders provide the workforce with resources, such as training, conferences, and performance reviews, to promote engagement and professional development. XYZ's leaders use internal assessments to guarantee that the workforce has the appropriate skills to meet the needs of the stakeholders and fulfill organizational objectives.

   Workforce and leader development. Workforce and leadership development share the same essential criteria, such as addressing core competencies, linking performance to the development of the organization, and managing performance (Malenczak & Nemec, 2017). XYZ's leaders focus on workforce requirements because these skills foster organizational success. There needs to be alignment between workforce and leadership development, along with the appropriate opportunities to improve advancement (O'Lawrence, 2017). XYZ's leaders are knowledgeable in developing the

workforce; XYZ's leaders use this process to model the behaviors and skill sets needed for their workforce to be successful.

Learning and development effectiveness. The connection between learning and development is crucial to the success of an organization (Sum, Wallhead, Ha, & Sit, 2018). XYZ's leaders take an inclusive approach to learning and evolving, which includes all workforce members. XYZ's leaders work together to discuss the appropriate approach to provide the workforce with the proper opportunities to learn and grow. The internal SWOT analysis conducted by XYZ's leaders influences training opportunities that XYZ's leaders provide to the workforce to increase performance.

Operations

Leaders should be aware of the way they design, manage, improve, and apply work processes (Pashev, Rusenova, Totkov, & Gaftandzhieva, 2019). This systematic process should be well documented, efficient, and part of the organization's strategic plan. XYZ's leaders continually review key products that the organization offers. These reviews affect the value of services while determining how these services are beneficial to customers. XYZ's leaders examine key requirements to ensure the proper work processes are in place throughout the organization.

Product and process requirements. XYZ's leaders monitor their key education programs, services, and work process requirements by remaining focused on their mission, vision, and core values. To accomplish its mission, vision, and core values, XYZ's leadership and its members review AdvancED and the Archdiocese of Washington, DC's regulatory requirements, key customer requirements, competitor

advantages, customer satisfaction, and dissatisfaction data. XYZ's leaders create strategic objectives based on previously collected data. XYZ's leaders' purpose for all strategic objectives is to exceed customer and workforce expectations in key areas.

Key work process and design concepts. XYZ's leaders collaborate to help ensure all services provided are of value to their customers. XYZ's leaders provide nonmandatory fundraisers, which take the pressure off parents; however, XYZ's leaders encourage parents to engage in these fundraisers to strengthen engagement efforts. Families are required to complete 20 service hours throughout the school year. In addition, parents are required to self-report their hours through an online-based system called school reach. XYZ's "free money" partnerships provide parents with another opportunity to assist the XYZ's leaders in increasing finances.

Process management and improvement. The responsibility of understanding the way to increase progress for higher performance is with leadership (Emmenegger et al., 2016). XYZ's leaders are committed to increasing performance and providing their customers with quality services. XYZ's leaders understand the positive effect improving performance has on an organization's success by creating value for workforce members, customers, and stakeholders. XYZ's leaders understand the importance of improving performance that may lead to an increase in financial and operational performance.

Process implementation. Through continual SWOT analysis, XYZ's leaders can identify opportunities for improvement and strategies to resolve issues. The leaders focus on evaluating work processes to ensure these processes are in alignment with XYZ's vision, mission, values, core competencies, and budget. When XYZ's leaders discover

that there is a missing link, they complete a new SWOT analysis to narrow down the areas of greater need for improvement and adjustment. XYZ's leaders are responsible for ensuring that the process to identify needs is congruent, and the process implementation is successful.

Support processes. XYZ's leaders manage key work processes by completing a SWOT analysis, along with using the PDSA model. The reviewing of key work processes assists in improving parent involvement strategies, increasing workforce performance, and maintaining financial viability. XYZ's leaders enhance key work processes to increase performance results, engagement with parents, and the workforce. XYZ's leaders track work processes to achieve performance outcomes.

Product and process improvement. XYZ's leaders take responsibility for managing and implementing strategies to improve the work system process. XYZ's leaders begin product and process improvement by identifying areas in need of improvement. XYZ's leaders ensure these processes are in alignment with the organization's vision, mission, core values, budget, and performance goals. This systematic process contributes to leaders' awareness of any areas of improvement and issues that require intervention.

Supply-chain management. Leaders must understand that managing best practices is the best way for an organization to improve performance (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ's leaders follow the guidelines outlined by the Parrish regarding purchasing, including a review of the budget for support. XYZ's principal ensures that the required products are within the budget and necessary for operations. XYZ's leaders do not rely

on particular suppliers because parents support most of the purchases by participating in the free-money partnerships.

Innovation management. XYZ's leaders are committed to improving parent involvement. The ultimate goal is to increase parent involvement and express to parents the value that they bring to the organization when they are involved in the happenings at XYZ. XYZ's leaders dedicate time to helping parents increase engagement and improving strategies to make the relationship with parents cohesive and two-sided. XYZ's leaders focus on innovation as part of the strategic process to create awareness regarding the importance of building a cohesive relationship with parents. XYZ's leaders share involvement opportunities through the XYZ's website, newsletter, and social media accounts to provide information on the ways parents can increase their involvement efforts. XYZ's leaders create an environment of support to ensure that parents are comfortable and understand that, at any time, parents can discuss their concerns with XYZ's leadership and the workforce.

Operational effectiveness. XYZ's principal controls overall costs by closely monitoring all financial activities monthly. XYZ's church bookkeeper and principal work together twice a week to ensure XYZ's accounts are accurate. XYZ's principal monitors all day-to-day operations and implements necessary adjustments when needed. XYZ's principal also monitors internal performance data to make adjustments to key work processes.

Process efficiency and effectiveness. XYZ's principal measures key processes through continuous reviews of the organization's everyday operations and performance.

Based on the outcome of the reviews and stakeholder feedback, XYZ's principal

enhances the work processes for alignment with the vision, mission, core values, and

performance results. XYZ's principal focuses on ensuring that XYZ's workforce

members can function at the highest level.

Safety and business continuity. XYZ's leaders understand the importance of a

proper emergency preparedness plan. XYZ's leaders prepare the workplace and work

systems for all emergencies. The planning process includes procedures for addressing

security, catastrophes, and crises. XYZ's leaders share emergency preparedness plans

with workforce members and stakeholders. XYZ's leaders focus on ensuring that

everyone connected to the organization feels safe on the organization's grounds.

Additional resources are available and provided to the workforce members and

stakeholders regarding the reporting of safety concerns.

Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

Leaders use data and information to support decisions aligned with the direction

the organization wants to take (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders should focus on analysis and

knowledge management to help improve performance measures (Baiocchi, 2019). XYZ's

leaders concentrate on analysis and knowledge management to understand their

competitive position, competitive advantage, and improvements needed throughout the

organization. XYZ's leadership understands the importance of improving performance

measures and expanding the organization's performance.

Performance measurement. XYZ's leaders use a cycle of continuous

improvement and SWOT analysis to measure performance. XYZ leaders select, collect,

and integrate the data into the strategic plan to improve parent-involvement strategies. XYZ's leaders use organizational performance measurements to support parents and develop new approaches to increase parent involvement. XYZ's leaders understand the importance of incorporating the information obtained from the data collection process into organizational operations, which aligns with the mission, vision, and values of the organization. XYZ's leaders share learned information with the workforce and stakeholders using knowledge sharing. The information provided gives leaders an outside viewpoint to create new opportunities to share knowledge.

Comparative data. XYZ's leaders focus on a cycle of continuous improvement and new strategies to assist in increasing parent involvement. Vinyard (2017) discussed the importance of leadership's approach to selecting, collecting, and using comparative data. XYZ's leaders collect data through the cycle of continuous improvement and use data to help with leadership decision making, future objectives, and areas of development. The leaders of XYZ also use comparative data to conduct benchmarking.

Customer data. The leaders of XYZ use a continuous cycle of improvement and communication system to obtain information from customers. XYZ's leaders use this approach to create a customer-focused environment. XYZ's leaders ensure that parents and students are a priority by incorporating an "open door" policy into the organization to increase engagement. XYZ's principal encourages parents to contact leadership when there are concerns or compliments. XYZ's leaders provide parents with several opportunities for parents to use their voice, such as surveys, XYZ's website, and social media accounts.

Measurement agility. XYZ's leaders conduct performance reviews, strategic planning, and action plans, if needed, monthly. XYZ leaders use performance reviews to determine if any adjustments are required in specific areas. XYZ's leaders will adjust the performance system based on the outcomes from previously collected data. XYZ's leaders take action when responding to unforeseen changes, both internally and externally by implementing best practice strategies.

Performance analysis and review. XYZ's leaders conduct a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the organization's performance and strategies used to increase parent involvement. XYZ's leaders use the strategic plan to record short- and long-term goals and establish a realistic timeframe for achieving the identified goals. XYZ's leaders review the strategic plan monthly at BOD meetings to examine the objectives and current measures. The purpose of a monthly review meeting is to ensure there is progress, adjust objectives if needed, and verify if the organization is on target with the set objectives.

Performance improvement. Leaders are responsible for identifying performance measures, data collection, and analyze and review the data to determine the way this process can help improve organizational performance (Vinyard, 2017). Leaders should conduct performance evaluations to recognize and identify actions needed for continuous improvement, innovation, and future performance (Baldrige, 2017). XYZ's leaders consistently conduct reviews to understand the benefits of related costs, investment revenue, and customer satisfaction. XYZ's leaders understand that without consistent performance reviews; the organization could be at risk financially. XYZ's leaders are

aware of the importance of balancing and maintaining funding to be successful and remain sustainable without losing funding.

Future performance, continuous improvement, and innovation. Performance reviews should include future results; leaders can then use these results by prioritizing and translating into action for continuous improvement and innovation (Vinyard, 2017). XYZ's leaders work together to discuss and examine the current and future objectives to include in the strategic plan. XYZ's leaders prioritize these objectives, review progress monthly, and make annual updates as part of the strategic plan. XYZ's leaders communicate results to key stakeholders through various methods, such as the XYZ's website, social media accounts, email, and face-to-face meetings.

Information and knowledge management. Leaders use knowledge management to manage data and organizational assets (Nielsen et al., 2017). Stakeholders and workforce members must understand the quality and availability of information (Baldrige, 2017). XYZ's leaders ensure that they are providing the workforce and stakeholders with data and other information effectively and efficiently.

XYZ's leaders use a student information system, known as School Speak, to engage with parents constantly. School Speak has up-to-date information regarding XYZ's activities, fundraising efforts, and report card information. Parents can also use School Speak to communicate with leadership to schedule meetings when necessary. XYZ's principal maintains an environment of continual communication with parents; ensuring parents understand they are vital to the success of the school and family partnership.

Organizational knowledge. Leaders should have a basic knowledge management system available for sharing information regarding data and performance reviews (Obermayer & Toth, 2019). XYZ's leaders determine what information is vital for the organization to operate and then disseminate the information to workforce members and stakeholders by using an organized system for sharing information. XYZ's leaders ensure that the knowledge management system has information related to performance review outcomes and improvements.

Knowledge management. XYZ's leaders implemented a system to share information with the workforce and stakeholders by using face-to-face meetings and web-based platforms. XYZ's principal upholds the vital knowledge to collect and share information aligned with the mission, vision, and values of XYZ. In addition, XYZ's principal ensures that the data collected is reliable and able to translate effectively to the workforce and stakeholders.

Best practices. XYZ's leaders created a performance process to assist in sharing best practices. The performance review process is a vital component in facilitating best practices to ensure the entire organization improves (Clarke, 2016; Vinyard, 2017). The leaders of XYZ work together to identify the best strategies and presents information to workforce members and stakeholders. The purpose of having XYZ's leaders share information with stakeholders and workforce members at the same time helps apply best practice techniques to ensure there are no misinterpretations of information.

Organizational learning. XYZ's leaders share knowledge and resources with the workforce through multiple channels. XYZ's leaders provide opportunities for workforce

members and stakeholders to understand organizational operations as a way to enhance organizational learning. XYZ's leaders monitor performance reviews to manage operational success and gain knowledge regarding areas of improvement.

XYZ's principal encourages workforce members to take part in professional development opportunities to assist with organizational learning. The methods used to share knowledge, whether personal or organizational, are face-to-face meetings, conferences, and emails. XYZ's principal takes pride in providing stakeholders and workforce members with opportunities to share information and learn more about the direction that the organization is seeking to fulfill short- and long-term objectives.

Collection, Analysis, and Preparation of Results

XYZ is a diverse, faith-based organization focused on student achievement. XYZ's leaders continuously strive toward excellence based on a rigorous educational curriculum. XYZ's leaders maintain a commitment to learning and seek a path of continuous improvement while nurturing their students. XYZ currently has 325 students enrolled, with an 84% retention rate. XYZ's leaders have a goal to increase the retention rate to 90% for grades K-7th. XYZ's leaders have considered purchasing a bus to assist families in getting students to school due to traffic concerns. XYZ's leaders focus on increasing their engagement practices to retain families.

Product and Process Results

XYZ's leaders are committed to increasing parent involvement by devoting time to the development of strategies to achieve that goal. XYZ's leaders provide volunteer opportunities for parents to engage in the activities at the organization. XYZ's leaders

implement strategies to improve communication with parents to ensure that parents are knowledgeable about all volunteer opportunities. The use of effective communication strategies supports parents by providing an opportunity for sharing their concerns and learning ways to increase their involvement with XYZ's leadership when encountered with barriers.

XYZ's leaders provide parents with multiple ways to serve, which include access to an online system to sign up for volunteer opportunities and enter volunteer hours completed. The system is available for parents outside of regular organization hours and accessible to parents throughout the year. XYZ's leaders ensure that the cost of these systems is a priority because of the value the systems create by providing parents with access to the organization's happenings without assistance. XYZ's leaders use the PDSA model as a guide to managing continuous improvement, including the adjustment of strategies to involve parents. XYZ's leaders ensure the highest quality and most cost-effective resources are available. XYZ's leaders ensure the approach used aligns with the performance objectives identified in the strategic plan.

Customer Results

XYZ's leaders use parent satisfaction surveys as a method to monitor and analyze the level of parent satisfaction and as the basis for making fact-based decisions to improve parent satisfaction and engagement. XYZ's leaders provide parents with surveys every other year and report the outcomes to the board of directors. XYZ's leaders analyze data and create objectives based on the results. XYZ's leaders are knowledgeable and

results-driven individuals committed to aligning the mission, vision, and core values with customer expectations.

Customer satisfaction. XYZ's leaders use customer satisfaction results as a measurement to support their customers. XYZ's leaders understand the need to hear the customer's voice to improve customer satisfaction. The use of an effective communication system that covers all modes of communication, including face-to-face, e-mail, meetings, conferences, website, and social media accounts increases involvement opportunities. XYZ's leaders used customer surveys in previous school years to identify areas of improvement and satisfaction.

Customer engagement. XYZ's primary measure of leader engagement includes reaching out to customers on all platforms and expressing the importance of increased customer engagement. XYZ's leadership goal is to have a 90% engagement rate (see Figure 2). During the 2018-2019 school year, the customer engagement rate was 84%; this has been a steady rate since 2015. XYZ's leaders are working together to improve strategies to increase customer engagement. XYZ engagement results have remained the same from 2015-2018. XYZ's leadership goal is to increase the retention rate by 6%, raising the retention rate from 84% to 90% by 2023.
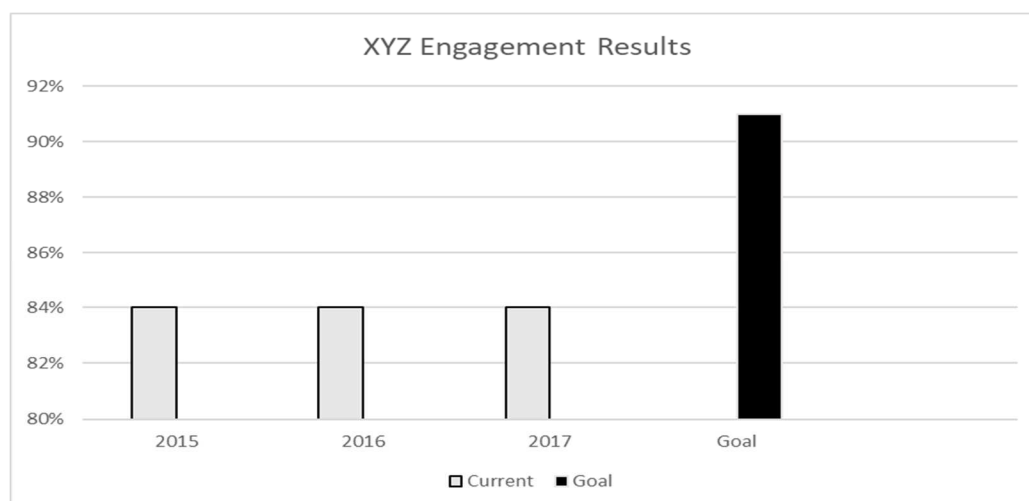
Figure 2. XYZ engagement results.

Workforce Results

XYZ's leaders recruit, hire, and retain workforce members who share the same vision, mission, and core values. Engagement is a crucial instrument for maintaining a healthy workforce. XYZ's principal completes a form created by the Archdiocese of Washington regarding an open position available at XYZ. XYZ's principal lists the open positions to School Spring, a web-based service for job seekers to pursue potential employment opportunities and for organizations to post openings within their organization. XYZ's principal also lists open positions on Indeed, another web-based service for job seekers. XYZ's leaders hold a job fair once a year to network with potential candidates. Once XYZ's leaders select a candidate for a position, the candidate will attend new hire training through the Archdiocese. The new hire completes a security clearance consisting of a three-hour security class taken once and updated online once a month. The new hire completes fingerprinting through the Archdiocese. XYZ's principal schedules all new hire workshops, which last between two to three days. New hires are

required to sign an agreement stating that they are living within the Catholic guidelines. All employees are required to attend a one-time, eight-hour training concerning living a Catholic life.

Workforce capability and capacity. XYZ's leaders provide the workforce with professional development opportunities. XYZ's leaders use the performance of the workforce to measure workforce skills and knowledge. XYZ's workforce members are required to stay current on all certificates and professional development opportunities. XYZ's leaders monitor the workforce capability and capacity based on performance.

Workforce development. The leaders' primary objective at XYZ is to ensure that there are adequate opportunities for workforce development. XYZ's leaders encourage the workforce to acquire additional knowledge and skills for professional and personal development. XYZ's leaders urge the workforce to participate in conferences and meetings that will increase their professional growth. The organization benefits from the advancement of the workforce. XYZ's leaders support the workforce by providing workforce members with appropriate resources for professional development.

Leadership and Governance Results

XYZ's leaders comply with requirements presented to them by AdvancED and the Archdiocese of Washington (see Table 8). AdvancED commits to helping public and nonpublic institutions improve performance. The Archdiocese of Washington includes Washington, District of Columbia, and five Maryland counties. XYZ's leaders communicate expectations and guidelines to workforce members, making it easy for

members to do their job successfully. XYZ's retention rates indicate that the workforce is devoted to the organizations, mission, vision, and core values.

Table 8

Leadership and Governance Results

Title	Educational requirements
Principal	100% met
Vice Principal	100% met
Secretaries	100% met
Teaching Staff	100% met
Aides	100% met

Governance, law and regulations, and ethics. AdvancED and the Archdiocese of Washington's leaders create the governance, law, regulations, and ethics (see Tables 10, 11, and 12). XYZ's principal and BOD members ensure that the workforce complies with these requirements and monitors the mandated requirements for leadership and the workforce. XYZ's leaders create the strategic plan and action plans and presents the information to workforce members to follow through with objectives. XYZ's leaders review the strategic plan monthly, updating it accordingly. XYZ's leaders are responsible for reviewing and submitting the budget, along with making adjustments based on products and services offered.

Table 9

AdvancED Mission and Values

AdvancED Mission and Values

Mission
Lead and empower the education community to ensure that all learners realize their full potential.
Values
Dream Big. AdvancED partners are not constrained by the current environment or framework, even while working within existing systems.
Stand for the Learner. AdvancED partners represent the interests of all learners with a commitment to equity and integrity.
Be Bold and Daring. AdvancED partners take risks that support beliefs.
Drive Potential. AdvancED partners create and initiate change, growth, and innovation within work but also among each other. AdvancED partners embrace individuality and strive for excellence as a team.
Be Tenacious. AdvancED partners are relentless in pursuing AdvancED's mission.
Build Connections. AdvancED partners expand and nurture internal and external relationships.

Table 10

Archdiocese of Washington Policies for Catholic Schools

Archdiocese of Washington Policies for Catholic Schools

Catholic Identity	Catholic school's purpose and designation of a school as Catholic.
Governance	School structure, levels of affiliation, the approval process of new Catholic schools, Archdiocesan Catholic school leadership.
Academic excellence	Instructional, assessment, professional standards, student life, community.
Affordability and accessibility	Archdiocesan tuition assistance, Parish support of schools, setting Archdiocesan school tuition rates, Archdiocesan school financial operations and budget, Archdiocesan school viability and planning, required Archdiocesan school communications, geographically necessary schools.

Table 11

Archdiocese of Washington Statistics and Services

Serving	Other services provided
621,000 Catholics 95 Catholic Schools 26,000 children being educated	Counseling, shelter, affordable housing, adoption and foster care assistance

Financial and Market Results

XYZ's leaders evaluate key measures and indicators for budgetary and financial

performance to support the strategic initiative of sustainability. The principal's financial

management plan links to XYZ's core values and supports the mission and vision. The

viability of XYZ is due to the principal's financial planning, which include the review of

XYZ's finances every month to examine and adjust them, if necessary. While

engagement efforts have decreased, finances have remained stable throughout the years.

Figure 3 shows the availability of financial resources for processes and continuous

improvement. XYZ fundraising efforts have remained stable throughout the years due to

the amount of funding each fundraiser accumulates yearly. XYZ's leaders have placed

fundraising as one of the strategic objectives for XYZ. XYZ's leaders want to focus on

increasing the funds the fundraisers generate. XYZ's leaders believe by increasing
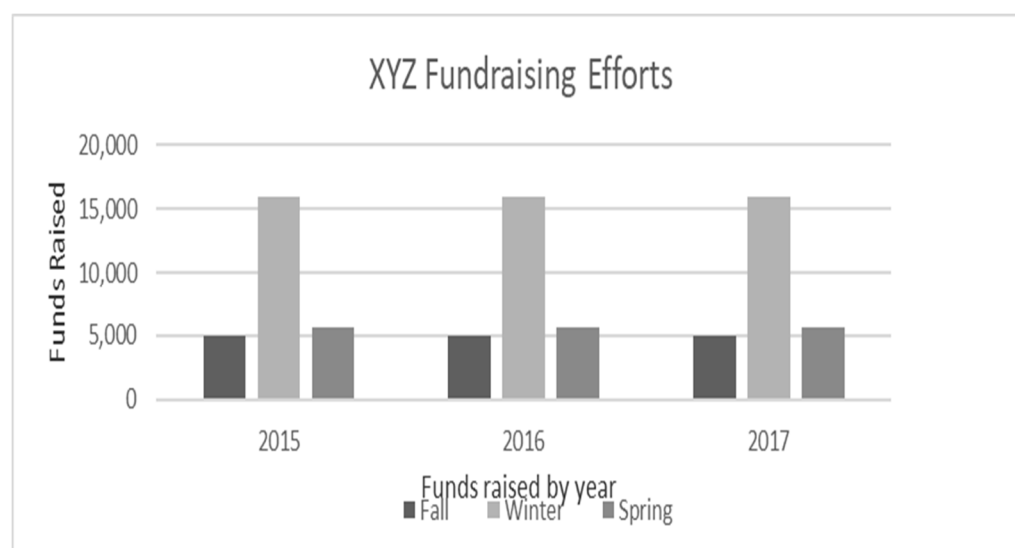
parent-involvement, funds will increase.

Figure 3. XYZ fundraising efforts.

Key Themes

  Process strengths. The first theme to appear was process strengths. Categories one to six of the 2015-2016 Baldrige Excellence Framework acknowledged these process strengths as (a) creating a successful organization, (b) encouraging two-way communication, (c) listening to customers, and (d) managing relationships. These process strengths are vital elements of parent–school partnerships. School leader's application of effective partnership strategies is the foundation for the school's financial sustainability. Another recognized strength is XYZ's leaders conducting a SWOT analysis and gaining overall awareness of the need to focus on parent–school partnerships to improve the organization.

  XYZ's leaders monitor work processes through continual assessments to increase its partnership with parents and demonstrate a proactive outlook. XYZ's leaders use process strengths to bridge any gaps in their partnership with parents through persistent communication. XYZ's leaders have proven that the relationship that they have with students' parents is vital in the everyday operations of XYZ. XYZ's leaders are successful due to open communication with parents and stakeholders, active listening, and practical strategies to assist in keeping a long-term partnership.

  Process opportunities. XYZ's leaders are responsible for ensuring that they have the knowledge and resources to maintain an advantage that will create value for their consumers. After discussing with XYZ's leaders the importance of parent–school partnerships, it is evident that reviewing strategies to improve parent–school partnerships as an opportunity for improvement would prove to be beneficial to school leaders and

parents. Since 2015, XYZ's leaders have seen a decline in parent–school partnerships without much of a decrease in funds. XYZ's leaders have noticed that families may not engage with XYZ's leaders, but parents are comfortable with contributing to XYZ's funding. While volunteer opportunities are not mandatory, it is encouraged, however, parents are more likely to donate or pay monies to XYZ in place of attending fundraisers.

One way for the leaders to increase parent attendance and improve parent–school partnerships is to continue to communicate the importance of collaborating with school leaders. School leaders must use all modes of communication to demonstrate their willingness to enhance their partnership efforts with parents. School leaders should also identify barriers that prevent parents from attending engagement opportunities and find solutions that would benefit XYZ and parent–school partnerships. Using Epstein's (2010) model could provide XYZ's leaders and parents with the means to identify their level of involvement, strengthen their connections, and enhance the financial position of XYZ.

Results strengths. In Category 7 of the Baldrige Excellence Framework, strengths are identified as customer engagement and leadership. These strengths are what keep XYZ in operation. XYZ's leaders recognize the importance of customer engagement and the imperative role that leadership plays. XYZ's leaders are committed to increasing collaboration efforts and making these attempts successful. The administration conducts a SWOT analysis to determine ways XYZ's leaders can improve their partnerships with parents and increase engagement opportunities. It is my suggestion that leaders continue to use all modes of communication; specifically, the system known as school speak to increase and maintain parent–school partnerships, as

this system is available outside of normal school hours. Using this system will allow XYZ's leaders and parents to create positive interactions and increase engagement efforts and financial viability without occupying too much of the parents' time.

Results opportunities. XYZ's leaders depend on the efforts of parents to assist with the school finances. Although fundraisers are not mandatory, XYZ's leaders encourage parents to participate. However, participation in these fundraisers has weakened due to a lack of parents' efforts. XYZ's leaders hope to improve parent–school partnerships and enhance the school's profitability by creating fundraisers that will appeal to parents.

It is my recommendation that XYZ's leaders administer an annual parent survey to learn the level of understanding and interest parents have in better developing a partnership with XYZ's leaders to enhance XYZ's revenue. XYZ's leaders should provide surveys to parents at the end of the year to learn ways school leaders can improve their efforts for the upcoming school year. If results are undesirable, XYZ's leaders should find alternative means to collect the information, such as an open forum and face-to-face conversations with parents. I would recommend these forums to occur during parent–teacher conferences because this approach would not require parents to dedicate more time and could potentially reach more parents.

Project Summary

Private schools need parent–school partnerships to maintain financial viability. Private schools have suffered a decrease in income due to a decrease in K-12 private school enrollment and parent–school partnerships (U. S. Department of Education, 2017).

This study was focused on ways that leaders of private K-12 schools in Maryland have developed and implemented intentional parent–school partnerships to engage and maintain relationships to increase financial sustainability. The data gathered throughout this single case study can assist leaders of private K-12 schools in improving and implementing parent–school partnerships strategies that enhance school profitability. Building successful parent–school partnerships are a critical component to student success. Boonk et al. (2018) discussed the relationship between parents and school leaders being a key component of positive student behaviors and productivity. McDowall, Taumoepeau, and Schaughency (2017) supported this outlook and mentioned involvement linked to school achievements.

All participants in this study provided a vast amount of information regarding continuous efforts in building healthier engagement practices. For the reasons mentioned above, the findings of this study are beneficial to school leaders. Engaging parents assist leaders in obtaining insight and suggestions on better ways to engage (M. M. Kraft, 2017). The results of this study could provide leaders of K-12 private schools with strategies to assess the value of parent–school partnerships.

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Contributions and Recommendations

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Application to Professional Practice

Parent–school partnerships are essential to the success of private schools because private schools rely on parent involvement to improve the schools' profitability. The participants in this study expressed the need for improved strategies to increase parent–school partnerships. Leaders play a vital role in ensuring the relationship with parents is

cohesive (Alexander et al., 2017). I found that XYZ's leaders determination to implement effective parent–school partnership strategies to increase their finances enhances their relationships with parents. XYZ's leaders are persistent in ensuring parents are aware of the vital role each parent plays in XYZ's success.

I found that the improved relationship between school leaders and parents could increase parent involvement, communication, and trust. Such results could improve the school's financial viability. Through interviews with XYZ's leaders, the leaders are working to improve strategies to increase parent–school partnerships by identifying barriers, enhancing communication efforts, and increasing parent involvement opportunities. Henderson, Williams, and Bradshaw (2020) explained the importance of school leaders identifying barriers families encounter and discovering solutions to improve parent–school partnerships. XYZ's school leaders have identified barriers to parent involvement and have managed to obtain additional strategies to assist in decreasing barriers and increasing parent–school partnerships.

Attaining new strategies to improve parent–school partnerships may provide school leaders with a new approach to build a positive relationship with parents. XYZ's leaders are cognizant of different modes of communication and use these modes to connect with parents. An effective communication system is one strategy that school leaders can use to reach more parents (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). XYZ's leaders identified different strategies that leaders will use to increase communication with parents to increase interactions. The strategies include using various methods of communication through a variety of means (see Table 7). XYZ's leaders ensure that when providing

valuable information, school leaders use more than one communication method to connect with parents, such as e-mail, surveys, meetings, fundraisers, and social media accounts.

School leaders could apply the results of this study in professional practice and create communication strategies intended to increase parent–school partnerships. Kraft (2017) explained the importance of school leaders engaging parents through better communication systems. Parent–school partnerships are vital to the success of XYZ, and school leaders depend on the success of these partnerships to assist with XYZ's progress. Additionally, school leaders can benefit from developing a partnership model to increase parent–school partnership efforts.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide school leaders with strategies to increase parent–school partnerships. XYZ's leaders refining parent–school partnerships and enhancing communication strategies are beneficial to student learning. School leaders increasing student learning may influence the school's sustainability by motivating students, translating into students making vital contributions to the local community. Improving the school's sustainability and social status could positively affect the school's reputation and overall desirability to parents and the community.

This study's results may also provide school leaders with strategies to develop an effective communication system to increase parent–school partnerships. School leaders implementing an effective communication system could help school leaders increase

parent–school partnership efforts (M. Kim, 2016; Kraft, 2017). An effective

communication system will help school leaders identify areas of need and provide school

leaders with additional strategies to improve communication efforts (Durisic &

Bunijevac, 2017). Improving communication efforts may provide a strong foundation for

school leaders to increase their relationships with parents and increase the schools'

sustainability.

The implications for school leaders include awareness and understanding,

building strong partnerships with parents, increasing parent–school partnerships, and

identifying communication and parent engagement strategies for goal attainment.

According to Kraft (2017), school leaders engaging parents through better

communication strategies can assist with a school's sustainability. Schools leaders

increasing parent-school partnerships could reinforce the school's existence. School

leaders increasing parent-school partnerships may influence student achievement guiding

students to make an impact by contributing to the larger community.

Recommendations for Action

This study includes elements that school leaders need to develop a partnership

model to guide leaders throughout the continuous process of engagement. School leader

engagement efforts and the approach leaders take to implement these efforts are

connected to positive parent–school partnerships (McDowall et al., 2017). Many

important factors were identified throughout this research study to show the need for

school leaders to implement effective parent–school partnership strategies. To achieve

future objectives, XYZ leaders need to uncover new strategies to increase parent–school partnerships.

The first recommendation would be for additional research regarding the impact parent–school partnerships have on private schools' viability. Creating and implementing a strategic plan provides leadership with an effective means to continually monitor and assess the organization to guarantee alignment with the organization's mission, vision, and core values (He & Oxendine, 2019). The recommendations provided to senior leaders may assist leaders in identifying strategies to achieve both short- and long-term objectives. XYZ's leaders revealed that parents are more inclined to provide monies to the school without increasing involvement in activities.

The second recommendation would be to explore preferred parental activities to increase parent involvement and understand the barriers leaders may face. Hornby and Blackwell (2018) explained the importance of school leaders working with parents to decrease partnership barriers and increase visibility and engagement. Hornby and Blackwell supported Mytton et al. (2014) by suggesting that school leaders develop a useful model to uncover specific barriers and create strategies to eliminate barriers and increase involvement. School leaders obtaining information regarding activities from parents and identifying the barriers that hinder parent participation may see an increase in parent involvement with preferred activities.

The third and final recommendation is for school leaders to implement a model to help with increasing parent involvement for increased partnership-building activities. A useful parent–school partnership model can motivate parents and school leaders to work

closely together to create an encouraging school environment (Alameda-Lawson, 2014; Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). XYZ's leaders may invite parents to work with school leaders in developing a model focused on parent–school partnerships to assist in advancing their relationship and increasing parent involvement. XYZ leaders, including parents in the development of a partnership model, may reduce barriers and alleviate challenges while increasing awareness to improve parental involvement.

After this study, I may be able to share the results with XYZ school leaders, local school leaders, and future researchers through publication research journals. The findings of this study could inspire both public and private school leaders to improve communication and parent–school partnerships within their districts. I can also disseminate the results of this study through leadership training and conferences related to parent–school partnerships.

Recommendations for Further Research

The data in this research study were limited due to the small sample size and the use of the Baldrige Excellence Framework. The conclusions in this study may not signify a comprehensive representation of an effective parent–school partnership model. I recommend an extended timeframe and a larger sample size to be able to provide additional understanding of the importance of parent–school partnerships. I also recommend that this research study be replicated to see if similar results are discovered in other private schools in different geographical locations. It would be beneficial to perform additional research on this topic using various school leaders and workforce members. Arendt, Peacemaker, and Miller (2019) discussed the importance of additional

research on the same topic to provide a different view to bridge any gaps in previous research. Performing additional research in this manner may uncover whether or not there will be significant differences from the findings found in this research study.

Further research could provide school leaders with an enhanced understanding of strategies they can implement to increase parents' interest in becoming more involved at school events and help leaders identify the appropriate strategies to increase finances. XYZ's leaders spend a vast amount of time seeking strategies to improve their partnerships with parents but face challenges in implementing strategies due to the lack of parent involvement. XYZ's leaders are interested in knowing if additional strategies will increase parent involvement. Additionally, research using a different method other than qualitative could provide extensive information on an effective partnership and communication model that school leaders can use to increase parent–school partnerships.

Reflections

In my own professional experience as a lead service coordinator working with families and school leaders, I have collaborated with various types of school leaders and parents. I have witnessed the effects of positive and negative parent–school partnerships. I have also heard firsthand from parents regarding the lack of communication and partnership efforts from some school leaders and the lack of time that parents have to commit to collaborating with school leaders. I decided to study these concerns to identify some strategies that school leaders and parents can use to increase positive interactions.

The research process allowed me to obtain additional knowledge and identify best practice strategies and the influence these strategies may have on school finances. After

conducting this research, I discovered there are several barriers to parent–school partnerships, communication, and commitment being significant factors. These issues create obstacles and deserve additional attention from school leaders to better partner with parents. Implementing an effective communication system and a parent–school partnership model will help school leaders and parents develop positive relationships with the potential of improving the financial viability of the school.

Conclusion

School leaders and parents working together is a vital component of a school success and can increase student achievement (Tett & Macleod, 2020). The partnership between school leaders have both positive and negative effects without positive interactions; school leaders may see a decline in parent involvement and school finances. School leaders seek strategies to build stronger relationships with parents and understand the importance of engaging parents and gaining their support (Kraft, 2017). A better understanding of the barriers parents experience when attempting to collaborate with school leaders will provide school leaders with insight to improve parent–school partnership strategies.

Parents play a crucial role in parent–school partnerships; without committed parents, it would be difficult for school leaders to increase parent involvement. School leaders discovering techniques to reduce barriers to parent involvement will help school leaders determine the appropriate strategies to use when collaborating and supporting parents. School leaders supporting parents may influence a parent's commitment to school leadership and their willingness to work together to better the school.

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Appendix A: DBA Research Agreement

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

DBA RESEARCH AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is made and entered into on this 6 day of September (the "Effective Date") by and between WALDEN UNIVERSITY, LLC, located at 100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900, Minneapolis, MN 55401 ("Walden") and ███████ ████████ located at ████████████████████████ ("Institution").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Walden offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs and seeks to partner with institutions to allow Walden doctoral students (the "Students") to receive academic credit for work on research projects ("Research").

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and covenants hereinafter set forth it is understood and agreed upon by the parties hereto, as follows:

I. TERM AND TERMINATION

This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date and shall continue for a period of three (3) years (the "Initial Term"). Upon expiration of the Initial Term of this Agreement, this Agreement and the Term shall renew for successive one (1) year periods (each a "Renewal Term"). Notwithstanding the foregoing, either party may terminate this Agreement for any reason or no reason, upon ninety (90) calendar days' prior written notice to the other party. In the event of termination or expiration of this Agreement before a participating Student(s) has completed the Research, such Student(s) shall be permitted to complete the Research subject to the applicable terms of this Agreement, which shall survive for such Research until the date of completion.

II. RESEARCH

A.   Institution and Walden may, from time-to-time, agree that selected Students, if accepted by Institution, may participate in Research with Institution. Walden shall be responsible for referring Students to the Institution and will instruct Students to provide Institution with a description of the Research. Walden agrees to refer to the Institution only those Students who have completed the required prerequisite course of study as determined by Walden. The parties anticipate that all Research will be done remotely and that Students will not be present at Institution's facilities.

B.   Walden and Institution will conduct their activities hereunder in compliance with their respective policies and all applicable laws and regulations. In the event that any regulatory compliance issues arise, the parties will cooperate in good faith in any review conducted by the other party.

C.   Where applicable, the Institution shall provide the Student with an orientation familiarizing student with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations that pertain to the Research with the Institution, which may include those pertaining to Standards for Privacy of

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Individually Identifiable Health Information (the "Privacy Rule") issued under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), which govern the use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

D.   The Institution reserves the right to dismiss at any time any Student whose health condition, conduct or performance is a detriment to the Student's ability to successfully complete the Research at the Institution or jeopardizes the health, safety or well-being of any patients, clients or employees of the Institution. The Institution shall promptly notify Walden of any problem or difficulty arising with a Student and a discussion shall be held either by telephone or in person to determine the appropriate course of action. The Institution will, however, have final responsibility and authority to dismiss any Student from Institution.

E.   The Institution and Walden shall each maintain general liability insurance (or comparable coverage under a program of self-insurance) for itself and its employees with a single limit of no less than One Million Dollars ($1,000,000) per occurrence and Three Million Dollars ($3,000,000) annual aggregate. Each party shall provide the other party with proof of coverage upon request.

III.   STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A.   The Student shall agree to abide by the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Institution as provided to Student by the Institution during their orientation at the Institution and shall abide by the requirements of all applicable laws.

B.   If applicable, the Student shall agree to comply with the Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information (the "Privacy Rule") issued under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), which govern the use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

C.   The Student shall arrange for and provide to Institution any information requested by Institution including, but not limited to, criminal background checks, health information, verification of certification and/or licensure, insurance information and information relating to participation in federally funded insurance programs.

IV.   MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A.   FERPA. For purposes of this Agreement, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA"), the parties acknowledge and agree that the Institution has an educational interest in the educational records of the Student participating in the Program and to the extent that access to Student's records are required by the Institution in order to carry out the Research. Institution and Walden shall only disclose such educational records in compliance with FERPA.

B.   HIPAA. The parties agree that, if the Institution is a covered entity under HIPAA:

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      (1)   Where a Student is participating in Research that will require access to Protected Health Information:

      (a)   Student shall be considered part of Institution's workforce for HIPAA compliance purposes in accordance with 45 CFR §160.103, but shall not otherwise be construed to be employees of Institution;

      (b)   Student shall receive training by the Institution on, and subject to compliance with, all of Institution's privacy policies adopted pursuant to HIPAA; and

      (c)   Student shall not disclose any Protected Health Information, as that term is defined by 45 CFR §164.105, to which a Student has access through program participation that has not first been de-identified as provided in 45 CFR §164.514(a);

      (2)   Walden will never access or request to access any Protected Health Information held or collected by or on behalf of the Institution that has not first been de-identified as provided in 45 CFR §164.514(a); and

      (3)   No services are being provided to the Institution by Walden pursuant to this Agreement and therefore this Agreement does not create a "business associate" relationship as that term is defined in 45 CFR §160.103.

      C.   Publications. Students and Walden are free to publish, present, or use any results arising out of the Research for their own academic, instructional, research, or publication purposes. Students shall submit a draft of any proposed publication to Institution at least ten (10) business days prior to submission for publication, presentation, or use. To the extent Institution requires that Students enter into nondisclosure or confidentiality agreements, such agreements shall be subject to this Section allowing publication of Research results.

      D.   Institution and Walden will promote a coordinated effort by evaluating the Research at mutually agreeable times, planning for its continuous improvement, making such changes as are deemed advisable and discussing problems as they arise concerning this affiliation.

      E.   The parties agree that Students are at all times acting as independent contractors and that Students are not and will not be considered employees of the Institution or any of its subsidiaries or affiliates by virtue of a Student's participation in the Research and shall not as a result of Student's participation in the Research, be entitled to compensation, remuneration or benefits of any kind.

      F.   Institution and Walden agree that Student will have equal access to their respective programs and facilities without regard for gender identity, race, color, sex, age, religion or creed, marital status, disability, national or ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, veteran status, sexual orientation or other legally protected status. Institution and Walden will comply with all applicable non-discrimination laws in providing services hereunder.

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G.   The terms and conditions of this Agreement may only be amended by written instrument executed by both parties.

H.   This Agreement is nonexclusive. The Institution and Walden reserve the right to enter into similar agreements with other institutions.

I.   This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota.

J.   Any notice required hereunder shall be sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested and shall be deemed given upon deposit thereof in the U.S. mail (postage prepaid). Notices to Walden shall be sent to Jenny Sherer, Office of Research Ethics and Compliance; 100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900; Minneapolis MN 55401 with a copy to: Walden University, LLC; Attention: Assistant Divisional Counsel; 650 South Exeter Street; Baltimore, MD 21202.

K.   Each party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the other from all losses or liabilities resulting from the negligent acts or omissions of the indemnifying party and/or its employees or agents arising out of the performance or the terms and conditions of this Agreement, except to the extent such losses or liabilities are caused by the indemnified party's negligence or willful misconduct.

L.   This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding of the parties hereto and supersedes any and all prior agreements, arrangements and understandings, oral or written, of any nature whatsoever, between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof. This Agreement and any amendments hereto may be executed in counterparts and all such counterparts taken together shall be deemed to constitute one and the same instrument. The parties agree that delivery of an executed counterpart signature hereof by facsimile transmission, or in "portable document format" (".pdf") form, or by any other electronic means intended to preserve the original graphic and pictorial appearance of a document, will have the same effect as physical delivery of the paper document bearing the original signature.

SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have duly executed this Agreement, effective the date first above written:

WALDEN UNIVERSITY, LLC   INSTITUTION

By: _____   By: _____
    (signature)   (signature)

Name: __L.Ward Ulmer__   Name: _____
      (Print name)   (Print name)

Title: __Vice President__   Title: _____

Date: __10/3/2016__   Date: __10/3/16__

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Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. The interview begins

2. I will introduce myself to the participants and thank each participant for his or her agreement to participate in this research study.

3. I will provide the participant with information on how the participant can remove himself or herself from the study if necessary.

4. I will inform the participants that each interview will be recorded for accuracy.

5. I will provide each participant with information on how data is gathered and the member checking process

6. I will begin the interview process beginning with question #1 and will follow to the final question.

7. When the final questions are completed, I will thank each participant for his or her time.

8. I will provide each participant with my contact information for follow up and informed each participant to contact me with any questions or concerns.

9. The interview protocol ends.

Appendix C: Interview Questions

1.   What strategies do you use to engage parents in school activities to enhance

parent–school partnerships to increase profitability?

2.   How do you communicate with parents regarding enhancing parent–school

partnerships to increase profitability?

3.   How do you assess the success of the strategies you have used to enhance

parent–school partnerships in your school to increase profitability?

4.   How do you communicate strategies to enhance parent–school partnerships

throughout the organizational ranks and among stakeholders?

5.   What additional information would you like to share about "lessons learned"

regarding strategies to enhance parent-engagement and increase profitability?