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School Leaders' Perceptions of Students' Antisocial Behaviors

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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2015

Abstract

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by

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MA, City University of Seattle, 2004

BS, Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, UK, 1997

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

There was a problem regarding students' antisocial behavior in a small rural school district in Washington State. Public data within the district indicated increasing incidents of students' antisocial behaviors. However, perceptions of school leaders regarding this problem were not known. As a result, there was a need to gain an understanding about school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behaviors in order to suggest potential solutions to reduce students' antisocial behaviors, as these perceptions are closely associated with their intent to address the problem. Bandura's theory of self-regulation provided the conceptual framework for collecting and analyzing data. Using an instrumental case study, the research questions explored school leaders' experiences in working with students who failed to manage their behavior and who exhibited antisocial behavior. Semi structured interviews were conducted with 13 school leaders in the district, and an iterative, inductive process of data collection, open coding, and thematic analysis was used. The themes that emerged from analysis of the data indicated a gap in the school leaders' practice regarding participation in ongoing, job-embedded professional development and an absence of a systematic school-wide positive behavior support approach to prevention and intervention. The findings indicated the need for professional development training to address these issues related to school leaders' practice. The suggested training could create positive social change by reducing students' antisocial behaviors, thus leading to an improvement in academic achievement. The recommended job-embedded professional development training resulting from exploring school leaders' perceptions can increase the capacity of the school leaders to manage students' antisocial behaviors.

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Dedication

This project study is primarily dedicated to my exceptionally supportive husband Mike, who never complained about me staying home instead of going out, but who understood that if I didn't run, I would go entirely crazy, and who took care of keeping our house and kept our kitchen clean for the last 2 years. Achieving this goal, to finally finish my education would not have been possible without you. Thank you for always being there, for encouraging me to finish the process, and for making me laugh when I needed it most. To my mum, who never let me believe going to college in the first place was anything but an option; thank you for instilling in me a love for education and a passion for learning. I will always appreciate the sacrifices you made so that I could become a teacher. To Ned for always being there when I needed him the most. And finally, to my colleagues; this project would never have come to fruition without your support. Thank you all for believing in me.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

The appropriate management of student behavior is critical to the operational safety of a school and to creating an environment that facilitates students' academic success. Students who exhibit antisocial behaviors and violate the school's code of conduct negatively influence the integrity of a safe and civil learning environment. In this project study, I investigated school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior and discerned the role that student self-regulation plays in managing appropriate school behavior. This section provides a definition of the problem of students' antisocial behavior and explains how such antisocial behavior manifests in the educational setting. I provide evidence that demonstrates the problem of students' antisocial behavior in the local context. The rationale for studying school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior is to provide an understanding of the problem in order to reduce antisocial behaviors and contribute to social change. Within this section, I define the key terms and share the research questions that guide the study, which concludes with a review of the literature regarding both student antisocial behavior and self-regulation theory.

Definition of the Problem

School leaders spend significant amounts of time working with students who exhibit negative behaviors such as failure to complete assignments, off-task behavior, and behavioral infractions. In my role as a middle school assistant principal, I frequently work with students who violate the school's code of conduct, and often the only option as

a consequence for these violations is an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Bear (2012) explained that often strict behavioral codes of conduct and state legislation require suspension for certain antisocial behaviors, which leaves school leaders with no option but to enforce a suspension for such violations.

For many students, exclusion from the learning environment does not result in a change of behavior. Instead, students continue to exhibit negative antisocial behaviors and further alienate themselves from the learning environment (Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Excluding students from school as a consequence for violating the code of conduct does not address the root of the problem; removing students from the learning environment is counterintuitive and has an adverse effect on students' academic and life well-being (Skiba, 2014). Specifically, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (2013) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) found a relationship between higher academic performance and fewer incidents of disciplinary infractions. Excluding students from school does not teach students alternative prosocial behaviors and might reinforce antisocial behavior, which has a negative impact on academic achievement (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Quinn and Fromme (2010) highlighted the importance of implementing interventions designed to reduce and prevent high-risk behaviors. Consequently, understanding school leaders' views of students' antisocial behavior might offer suggestions for reducing these behaviors (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [OSPI], n.d.a).

When individuals do not establish internal values and standards, it becomes easier for external influences to direct behavior (Bandura, 1986). Engaging in reflective practice

requires individuals to weigh choices with personal values and then utilize those values to self-regulate behavior (Bandura, 1986). Consequently, students without established internal standards and moral motivation are more likely also to lack self-regulative ability, which causes conformance to external negative influences and results in violations of the code of conduct (Bandura, 1986). Additionally, Olthof (2012) and Halgunseth, Perkins, Lippold, and Nix (2013) found that individuals with high moral standards were more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors and refrain from engaging in antisocial behaviors. For individuals with established moral standards and moral motivation, participation in antisocial behaviors would violate their moral standards; the presence of moral norms results in self-censure and thus avoidance of antisocial behavior to prevent the onset of guilt (Halgunseth et al., 2013).

The problem of students' antisocial behavior is a global concern. For example, the 2012 PISA indicated that of all Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, 32% of principals considered student disruption to be a significant concern (OECD, 2013). Within the United States, the PISA data indicated that 16% of principals considered student disruption to be a problem, which demonstrates that finding ways to understand and reduce student antisocial behaviors is necessary. In general, students in the United States reported higher scores than the PISA average regarding the classroom environment being conducive for learning; however, the scores indicated that improving the classroom environment and reducing antisocial behaviors is necessary (OECD, 2013). Specifically, 30% of students in the United States and 32% of all OECD country students claimed that there is noise and disorder within their

classrooms; 18% of students in the United States and 22% of all OECD country students believed that they could not work well within their classrooms (OECD, 2013).

The district in which this study took place is a small, rural public school district in Washington State, with 14 school leaders and approximately 5,500 students. For the purpose of this study, I refer to the district as Washington School District (WSD). The WSD behavior report, which is available as public data through the OSPI website, showed that student exclusions from the learning environment continue to be a common occurrence. Table 1 presents a summary of the number of WSD's student exclusions (out-of-school suspensions and expulsions) for selected antisocial behaviors. As evidenced in Table 1, while the exclusion rate remained relatively consistent from year to year, during the 2011–2012 school year, compared to 2010–2011, there was a 47% increase in total district exclusions (213 in 2010–2011; 313 in 2011–2012). From 2005–2006 to 2011–2012, drug exclusions rose from 12 incidents to 71 (492% increase). Wills, Ainette, Stoolmiller, Gibbons, and Shinar (2008) associated an inability to self-regulate with an increase in drug and alcohol use. It was thus important to explore school leaders' views of student antisocial behavior through the lens of self-regulation theory with the intent to understand and address these behaviors.

Furthermore, from 2005 to 2012, incidents of violence without injury declined until the 2011–2012 school year when the number of incidents increased dramatically. In 2005–2006, there were 129 incidents, compared to 2010–2011 in which there were 82; however, in 2011–2012 there were 156 incidents of violence without injury. Table 2 presents a summary of incidents of student weapons possession. Of note, in alignment

with the increase in drugs and violence without injury exclusions, the district experienced an increase of exclusions for possession of weapons: 17 in 2006 and 27 in 2012 (OSPI n.d.b).

Table 1

WSD Student Behavior Report

Year	Enrollment	Bullying	Tobacco	Alcohol	Drugs	Violence no Injury	Violence with Injury	Total
2006	5555	43	–	29	12	129	13	226
2007	5625	72	–	27	36	102	0	237
2008	5495	70	–	14	45	80	2	211
2009	5527	33	–	14	33	64	0	144
2010	5479	57	8	14	49	92	2	222
2011	5452	66	7	9	46	82	3	213
2012	5318	54	12	19	71	156	1	313
2013	5507	30	31	11	29	110	2	213

Note: The violence with injury category presented exclusions with the need for medical attention. A dash indicates nonreported data. This table was developed from "School safety center: Student behavior data," by OSPI. n.d.c., retrieved from http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter/Behavior/default.aspx and from "Washington State report card," by OSPI, 2013, retrieved from http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?groupLevel=District&schoolId=220&reportLevel=District&orgLinkId=220&yrs=&year=2012-13.

Table 2

WSD Weapons Report

Year	Handgun	Rifle or Shotgun	'Other' Firearms	Knife or Dagger	'Other' Weapon	Total
2006	–	1	1	12	3	17
2007	–	–	1	10	8	19
2008	–	–	–	12	4	16
2009	–	–	–	12	2	14
2010	1	–	1	10	4	16
2011	–	–	–	21	4	25
2012	–	–	–	21	6	27

Note: A dash indicates nonreported data. This table was developed from "School safety center: Weapons and schools," by OSPI, n.d.b., retrieved from http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter/Weapons/default.aspx.

Specifically, WSD's infractions that resulted in the greatest number of exclusions from the classroom setting were violence without injury and drug offenses. Furthermore, in the larger educational context, understanding and addressing students' antisocial behaviors has the potential to generate social change. Skiba (2014) indicated that removing students from school contributes to the crime rate and the expanding prison population. If educational leaders find ways to not exclude students with antisocial behaviors from school but instead uncover alternatives to exclusion, they might prevent those students from embarking on a lifetime of delinquency and contribute to increased academic achievement.

As a school leader, I wanted to understand school leaders' perceptions of working with students as they learn to manage their behavior from within the framework of self-regulation theory. Given that Teske (2011) noted that school leaders have a duty to help students learn to correct and manage their behavior, my desire was to identify whether

there was a gap in practice regarding the way in which school leaders manage students' behavior. I further investigated whether there were possible alternatives to exclusion that would better serve the students. This study, therefore, examined and recommended alternative methods for helping students manage their behavior, for reducing the number of behavioral infractions and developing productive citizens, and for assisting school leaders in creating a safer school environment, raising academic achievement, and, therefore, facilitating social change.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Students' antisocial behavior continues to be of concern for the students and the educational setting. For example, Ryan and Goddram (2013) found that excluding students with antisocial behaviors from the classroom had a negative impact on the students' social and academic development, which Eivers, Brendgen, and Borge (2010) explained is essential for children to adjust successfully to the school environment. In addition, Kennedy (2011) noted, however, that teachers would prefer that these students not be in their classrooms so that they are free to teach those who demonstrate prosocial and appropriate classroom behaviors. Rhee et al. (2013) noted that additional research into antisocial behavior is critical due to the potential negative impact that such behavior has to both the individual and society. Antisocial behavior contributes to delinquency and occurs from an inability to control one's emotions; it is this eventual lack of control that may lead to arrest (Mowat, 2010a). Public district discipline reports available from OSPI demonstrate that my concern is justifiable (OSPI, n.d.b.).

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Exclusion from school is a direct result of students' failure to adhere to the school environment norms, which has a negative impact on learning. When school leaders fail to help students change negative behaviors, the continual displays of antisocial behavior increase along with the risk of academic failure (Teske, 2011). Assisting students in developing their ability to manage behavior should result in a reduction of antisocial behaviors and school exclusions, and increase academic achievement. Heitzeg (2009) and Teske (2010) cautioned that in addition to interfering with academic success, recurrent antisocial behavior increases the likelihood of students' entering the school-to-prison pipeline, which results in a burden to both society and the economic health of the nation. For example, the Vera Institute of Justice (2012) stated that the cost of incarceration for one inmate in Washington State during 2010 was $46,897, compared to the cost of $5,140 for educating one child during that same year (OSPI, 2013). Additionally, Henggeler and Sohoenwald (2011) claimed that the juvenile system handles over 1,000,000 adolescents each year, and yet only 5% of those adolescents who are high risk receive research-based interventions, such as functional family therapy and behavioral therapy programs. Consequently, if school leaders can assist students in learning to effectively manage their behavior, it is plausible that the decrease in antisocial behavior might increase academic success and decrease the exclusion rate.

The purpose for exploring school leaders' perceptions of students' ability to manage their behavior is to suggest a potential solution for increasing students' ability to self-regulate and thus reduce the exclusion rate and increase academic success.

Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore school leaders' perceptions of the ability of students to manage their behavior within the construct of self-regulation theory, from a small, rural school district in Washington State. This study contributes to an understanding of the role that self-regulation theory plays in the management of behavior and provides possible solutions for assisting students with learning to develop their self-regulation abilities.

Definitions

Antisocial behavior: For the purpose of this study, antisocial behaviors refer to behavioral actions considered to be deviant and which violate the expected norms of society, interfere with the rights of other people, or cause physical or emotional harm (Brooks, Narvaez, & Bock, 2013; Burt, 2009; 2012; Malti & Krettenauer, 2013; Murray, Farrington, & Sekol, 2012; Oşvat & Marc, 2014).

Conflict resolution: Conflict resolution teaches individuals how to solve problems with others (Hart & Mueller, 2013).

Distributed leadership: Distributed leadership is the conceptual sharing and integration of leadership across a system, which requires cooperation and the ability to work as a team (Baloglu, 2012).

Expulsion: Permanent removal of the student from the school setting (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Theriot, Craun, & Dupper, 2010).

In-school-suspension: In-school suspension programs provide a place inside the school for students who violated the code of conduct, which is a structured, supervised setting that is aside from their regular school environment (Ryan & Zoldy, 2011).

Love and Logic: A communication and behavior framework used when working with students, which focuses on building positive and supportive relationships while putting the ownership for solving problems back on the child (Love and Logic Institute, 2014).

Out-of-school suspension: Temporary removal of the student from the school setting (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Theriot, Craun, & Dupper, 2010).

Professional development: Professional development describes the formal learning opportunities that school leaders attend for the purpose of improving their practice (Goldring, Preston, & Huff, 2012).

Prosocial behavior: Prosocial behaviors benefit people other than the individual, serve to defend others, and demonstrate an individual's empathy (Carlo et al., 2014; Olthof, 2012; Malti, Gummerum, Keller, & Buchmann, 2009; Malti & Krettenauer, 2013).

Restorative justice: Restitution, resolution, and reconciliation following a code of conduct violation (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012).

School exclusion: Exclusionary discipline includes in-school-suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Theriot, Craun, & Dupper, 2010).

School leader: For the purpose of this study, a school leader is a building level administrator: a principal or assistant principal.

School-wide positive behavior support: A school-wide positive behavior approach is a framework from which to establish tiered prevention and intervention approaches that are systemic and address the behavioral needs of students (McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; McIntosh, Ty, & Miller, 2014; Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012).

Self-regulation: Self-regulation describes how an individual manages his or her behavior; it is reliant on individuals' motivation and their capacity to reflect on their actions in comparison to their intrinsic values (Bandura, 1986).

Social emotional learning: Social emotional learning explains the process by which an individual develops his or her capacity to conform to societal behavior norms (Harlacher & Merrell, 2010).

Social skills training: Social skills training teaches people how to interact with others and how to interpret the impact of their behaviors on others by interpreting social cues (Armstrong, 2011).

Zero tolerance: Zero tolerance policies require the exclusion of students from the learning environment for code of conduct violations such as weapons and drug or alcohol possession, or violent behaviors (Heitzeg, 2009; Martinez, 2009; Teske, 2011).

Significance

WSD public behavior and weapon possession data indicate that incidents of antisocial behavior within the district are increasing. Furthermore, a comparison of public student behavior and weapons reports from WSD to a local school district with similar enrollment and similar demographics (District Y) provides evidence that student exclusions in WSD are of concern. Figures 1 and 2 present a comparison of exclusions

for antisocial behaviors and weapon possession for WSD and District Y. Figure 1 indicates that student exclusions in WSD are generally remaining constant, whereas exclusions in District Y are declining. Additionally, Figure 2 indicates that weapon possession is increasing in WSD but is declining in District Y.

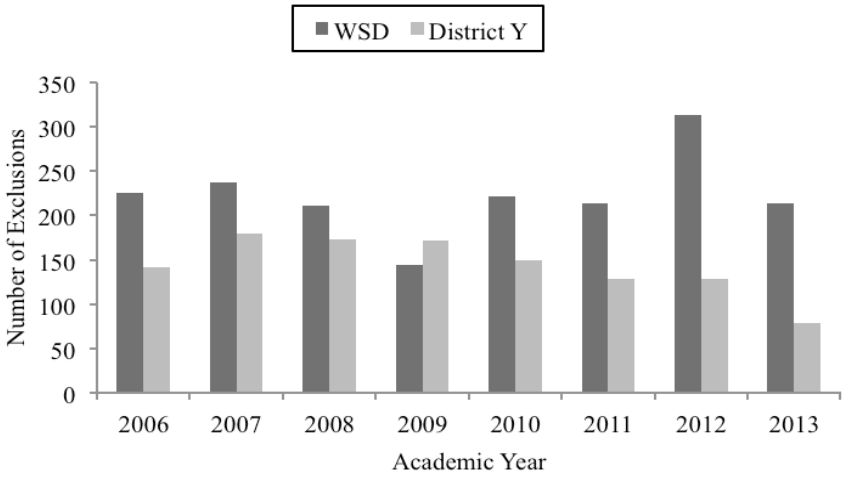

Figure 1. Comparison of the number of student exclusions for WSD and District Y. A Adapted from "School safety center: Student behavior data," by OSPI. n.d.c., retrieved from http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter/Behavior/default.aspx and from "Washington State report card," by OSPI, 2013, retrieved from http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?groupLevel=District&schoolId=220&reportLevel=District&orgLinkId=220&yrs=&year=2012-13.

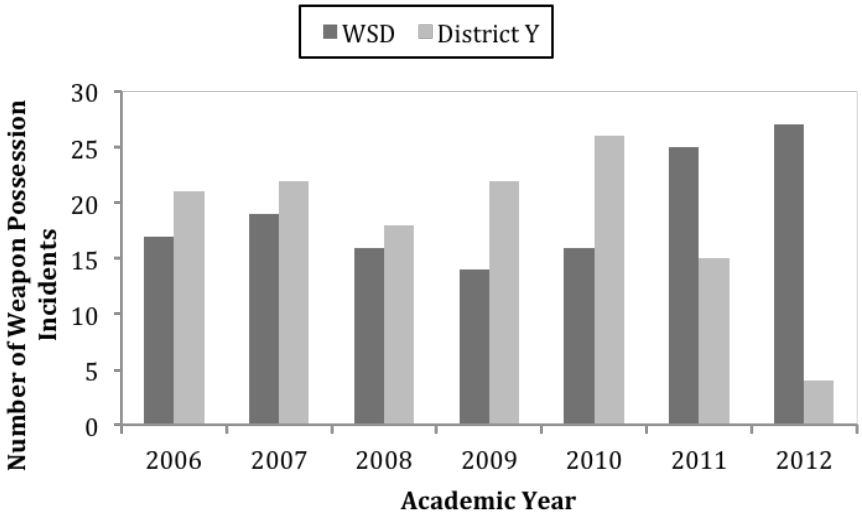

Figure 2. Comparison of the number of student weapons possession incidents for WSD and District Y. Adapted from "School safety center: Weapons and schools," by OSPI, n.d.b., retrieved from http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter/Weapons/default.aspx.

Studying the problem of student antisocial behavior and incidents of exclusion in WSD was relevant for improving the learning climate and opportunities for developing students' prosocial behavioral skills that will serve them in their future lives. Examining the problem of students' antisocial behavior from the self-regulation theoretical construct was pertinent because individuals' ability to self-regulate has a direct impact on their ability to function in an academic environment, which in turn has an impact on academic performance (Menzies & Lane, 2011). Self-regulation is a foundational skill for academic success and behavior management. Therefore, this study sought to discover solutions to help students increase self-regulative abilities, which is important and relevant for school leaders who strive to decrease antisocial behaviors and increase academic achievement (Ning & Downing, 2012).

In the larger educational context, for students who frequently exhibit antisocial behavior, the consequences of exclusion are often far reaching. Beginning in the early part of the 1990s, the national pressure to ensure school safety forced school leaders to adopt zero tolerance policies for antisocial behavior (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force [APAZTTF], 2008). These zero tolerance policies mimicked zero tolerance laws that targeted an increasing drug problem and called for the use of exclusion from school as a disciplinary consequence for a variety of antisocial behaviors in order to eradicate violence and ensure school safety (Martinez, 2009). However, Martinez (2009) claimed that zero tolerance policies, which require students' removal from the educational environment, have simply restricted many students from accessing educational opportunities. Skiba (2014) also claimed that students' removal from school increases their risk factors for poor academic and life success. Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) explained that students who experience school exclusions tend to not feel a bond with the school, their peers, or their teachers, thereby lacking motivation to follow school rules or pursue academic success. Consequently, Gregory, Skiba, et al. claimed that it is the lack of a bond to school that pushes excluded students to continue to participate in antisocial activities and pull further away from academic involvement. Excluding students from school might be a solution to a short term problem and provide for a safe environment; however, the action of exclusion often alienates students from school and leaves society to deal with frequently unsupervised antisocial youth, rather than providing those students with the support and structure to develop prosocial behaviors (Ryan & Zoldy, 2011).

While the intention of zero tolerance policies is to protect the educational environment and reduce school violence, Skiba (2014) found that exclusion from school did not reduce incidents of students' antisocial behavior nor improve the educational climate. Additionally, Skiba stated that in the previous 30 years, there has not been a change in the number of incidents of school violence. In contrast, Bear (2012) claimed that the threat of exclusion from school does in fact help to reduce incidents of antisocial behavior. Specifically, Bear explained that exclusion serves as a social sanction for students who would participate in school life, preventing them from connecting and engaging with other members of the educational setting.

Given that there is little evidence that zero tolerance policies reduce incidents of students' antisocial behavior and that there has been little change in school disciplinary infractions in the previous 30 years, schools should find different ways to reduce incidents of antisocial behavior (Martinez, 2009; Skiba, 2014). It is the use of alternative disciplinary protocols that provide opportunities for students to learn from their mistakes, as opposed to excluding students, which has the potential to reduce incidents of antisocial behavior and improve the educational environment (Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Furthermore, Sharkey and Fenning (2012) cautioned that excluding students from school might serve to increase their use of antisocial behavior and fail to assist them in developing prosocial behavior. Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) stated that there are alternatives to excluding students from school for code of conduct violations; however, it is the responsibility of school leaders to identify those programs that would be effective and appropriate alternatives to exclusion for their schools and communities.

Guiding/Research Question

In this study, I sought to understand school leaders' perceptions of their experiences in working with students who fail to manage their behavior and who exhibit antisocial behavior. Students who demonstrate antisocial behavior are often removed from the educational environment and not provided assistance with changing their behaviors, which has a negative impact on their learning and does not help their development of prosocial skills. At the outset, I projected that this study might provide guidance for possible interventions to assist school leaders in working effectively with students who frequently exhibit antisocial behaviors and who are regularly subjected to exclusion. However, at the conclusion of data collection and analysis, it was apparent that there was a need to develop and advocate for a policy recommendation to address gaps in school leaders' practices in working with students with antisocial behaviors. Consequently, in alignment with the research problem and purpose of the study, in order to explore school leaders' perceptions of the ability of students to manage their behaviors within the construct of self-regulation theory, the overarching research questions were:

- What are the experiences of school leaders in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?
- What are the perceptions of school leaders regarding the skills they need to effectively manage students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?
- What are the perceptions of school leaders regarding the necessary interventions for students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

In alignment with qualitative research, the research questions focused the study and yet remained open to emerging data (Hatch, 2002). The open-ended research questions allowed the data to emerge from the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Review of the Literature

Self-Regulation Theory

In this study, I utilized Bandura's (1986) self-regulation theory as the foundational theoretical framework. Self-regulation theory is a component of Bandura's social cognitive theory, an interactive model in which environmental, behavioral, personal, and cognitive factors shape and control how individuals function. Crossley and Buckner (2012) argued that the acquisition of the ability to self-regulate behavior is critical for children's healthy development and life success. Consequently, Crossley and Buckner noted that understanding self-regulation is essential for assisting children to learn to adapt and function successfully within society.

Self-regulation regulates how individuals take responsibility for their actions and how they select actions that are acceptable to society (Deed, 2010). Of relevance within this study, Carroll, Hemingway, Ashman, and Bower (2012) noted an association between the inability to self-regulate behavior and continual exhibition of antisocial and delinquent behaviors. Consistent with social cognitive theory, as children grow and develop, they acquire self-regulating behaviors through observation, personal experience, and interactions with others; these experiences often occur within the school setting (Halgunseth et al., 2013; Kumi-Yeboah, 2012). Additionally, the development of self-regulative behavior occurs through the practice of effective self-regulation skills, which

requires constant modeling, scaffolding, and opportunities for explicit practice of those skills (Erlich & Russ-Eft, 2011; Florez, 2011). Given the importance of self-regulation for children to adapt and function within society, this theoretical framework lends itself to exploring a myriad of student learning situations and was, therefore, appropriate for this study (Crossley & Buckner, 2012; Erlich & Russ-Eft, 2011).

All members of the school community should manage their behavior to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members. Bandura (1986) noted that the difference in individuals' beliefs and values are often the cause of conflict. It is when these conflicts violate the school code of conduct that individuals receive punitive and remedial consequences. Subsequent research has used self-regulation theory to investigate student antisocial behavior; for example, Vazsonyi and Huang (2010) posited that self-regulation is a critical concept for understanding antisocial behavior and delinquent behavior, Gardner Dishion, and Connell (2010) examined the role of self-regulation in preventing adolescents from negative peer influences, and Quinn and Fromme (2010) studied how self-regulation served as a protective factor for preventing involvement in risky behaviors. Additionally, both Carroll et al. (2012) and Vazsonyi and Huang found a self-regulatory deficit to be consistent with the onset of delinquency. Consequently, within this study, the application of self-regulation theory provided insight into how students manage their behavior and their compliance with the code of conduct, which might result in suggestions for improving self-regulation skills and reducing the district exclusion rate (Bandura, 1986).

Students who do not acquire the ability to self-regulate behavior due to emotional, behavioral, or familial challenges require explicit teaching of self-regulation skills in order to navigate the school setting successfully (Menzies & Lane, 2011; Wisner, Jones, & Gwin, 2010). Through the strategic instruction of self-regulative skills and the provision of opportunities to practice those skills, teachers might assist students in developing their ability to monitor behaviors and process the effects of those behaviors in their acquisition of self-regulation (Kumi-Yeboah, 2012). While students might initially be reluctant to adopt academic self-regulating behaviors and prefer to have a teacher direct their learning, scaffolding the teaching of self-regulation encourages students to engage in self-regulative behaviors (Deed, 2010). Likewise, Kistner et al. (2010) found that explicit teaching of self-regulation correlated with an increase in learning and academic performance; however, explicitly teaching self-regulation occurred in only 15% of all self-regulation instructional strategies, with the remaining 85% of self-regulative instruction occurring implicitly. In addition, Wyman et al. (2010) discovered that teaching self-regulation within a group intervention that focused on strengthening emotional regulation reduced suspensions and improved teachers' classroom management, which had a positive impact on academic achievement. Of note, Kumi-Yeboah (2012) expressed concern that in general teachers do not understand the self-regulation construct, which prevents them from effectively teaching students to become self-regulating learners. Providing both an explanation of the self-regulation construct and suggestions for developing and implementing relevant and manageable strategies for

teaching self-regulation might assist school leaders in raising schools' academic performance (Menzies & Lane, 2011).

Moral Motivation

To a large extent, the effective application of self-regulation is reliant on an individual's level of motivation and moral disposition. Malti and Krettenauer (2013) claimed that a strong moral disposition serves to moderate behavior by promoting prosocial conduct and serving to aid in the avoidance of antisocial behaviors. Halgunseth et al. (2013) and Olthof (2012) found that individuals with a strong moral disposition were more likely to avoid engaging in antisocial behaviors due to the behaviors not aligning with their moral standards. It is the absence of moral motivation and the ability to morally disengage from antisocial behaviors that allows for the minimization of negative behaviors and increases the likelihood of delinquency (Halgunseth et al., 2013). In addition, the absence of moral motivation has a negative effect on one's sympathetic responses and his or her ability to consider others' perspectives of the antisocial behaviors (Brooks et al., 2013; Malti et al., 2009). Understanding the self-regulation framework could assist school leaders in providing opportunities for individuals to develop moral disposition and be able to consider their behaviors through the perspectives of others.

Antisocial Behavior

Individuals who demonstrate antisocial behaviors tend to violate the norms of society through actions and attitudes that violate others' rights (Brooks et al., 2013; Burt & Neiderhiser, 2009; Carlo et al., 2012; Carlo et al., 2014; Nowak, Gaweda, Jelonek, &

Janas-Kozik, 2013). Bandura (2001) explained that people tend to self-regulate their behavior to act in a manner that is consistent with societal expectations and avoid behavior that might produce a negative outcome. While many antisocial behaviors do not involve criminal acts or criminal behavior, the behaviors often have a negative physical or psychological impact on others (Malti & Krettenauer, 2013; Murray et al., 2012).

Several researchers have further categorized antisocial behavior as being either covert, which includes aggressive behaviors, or overt, which includes rule-breaking types of behaviors (Burt, 2012; Tackett, Daoud, DeBolle, & Burt, 2013; Veenstra, Huitsing, Dijkstra, & Lindenberg, 2010). Antisocial behaviors include actions such as dishonesty, assault, lying, bullying, theft, vandalism, alcohol and drug use, and fighting (Brooks et al., 2013; Burt, 2012; Connell, Cook, Aklin, Vanderploeg, & Brex, 2011; Murray et al., 2012; Olthof, 2012; Van Ryzin & Dishion, 2013). Burt (2012) categorized behaviors such as fighting, defiance, bullying, aggression, and oppositional behavior as overt antisocial behavior, and considered theft and vandalism to be covert antisocial behaviors. Specifically, Connell et al. (2011) and Vaaland, Idsoe, and Roland (2011) explained that there are three pathways of antisocial behavior: overt, covert, and authority conflict. Overt antisocial behavior begins with minor aggressive behaviors, such as bullying, evolves into physical fighting, and culminates in more serious acts of violence (Connell et al., 2011). Covert antisocial behavior develops from minor covert behavior, such as shoplifting or lying, to vandalism, into moderately serious delinquency, such as fraud, and concludes with serious delinquency, such as burglary (Vaaland et al., 2011). The final pathway of antisocial behavior is authority conflict, which begins with stubborn

behaviors, moves through defiance and disobedience, before ending with authority avoidance (Vaaland et al., 2011). While young children who exhibit aggressive behaviors are more likely to develop more significant antisocial behaviors, Burt (2012) cautioned that during development most children engage in various forms of aggression or rule-breaking behavior. Due to school leaders' role in dealing with a variety of situations, they are likely to encounter students who fall into any one of the three antisocial behavior pathways.

Teachers of all grade levels most likely encounter students who fall within the authority conflict pathway, who demonstrate disobedience, defiance, or insubordination (Vaaland et al., 2011). Of note, Vaaland et al. (2011) found that students who strive for power through gaining the social approval of their peers were more likely to demonstrate the authority conflict pathway by disobeying the teacher. Carroll et al. (2012) further explained that students who tend toward delinquent behavior focus on exhibiting behaviors that build and strengthen their "non-conforming reputation" (p. 104). Students frequently demonstrate antisocial behaviors with the intent to either develop new relationships or to strengthen their relationship within the peer group (Vaaland et al., 2011). Carlo et al. (2014) found that deviant peers have a tendency to encourage other delinquent acts and reinforce negative social behaviors. Consequently, the positive reinforcement that students receive for delinquent acts serves to reinforce those actions due to the satisfaction that arises from the admiration and respect of the peer group (Halgunseth et al., 2013). Due to the developmental disruption that antisocial behaviors have on children, such as healthy relationship development and academic progress,

school leaders should make every effort to reduce the positive reinforcement that antisocial behaviors receive from the peer group (Carroll et al., 2012).

When children continue to demonstrate antisocial behaviors, the risk for negative life outcomes increases. For example, behavior problems negatively impact the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships, which is largely due to individuals' developed insensitivity to the emotional responses that their behavior has on others (Carroll et al., 2012; Eivers et al., 2010; Forsman, Lichtenstein, Andershed, & Larsson, 2010; Fosco, Stormshak, Dishion, & Winter, 2012). Extant literature pointed to several factors that predict later engagement in antisocial behaviors. For example, children who demonstrate early disruptive behavior and early childhood aggression are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors, which often manifests as violence in adulthood (Van Ryzin & Dishion, 2013; Vitaro, Barker, Brendgen, & Tremblay, 2012). Also, in a study that researched cheating behaviors in young children, Callender, Olson, Kerr, and Sameroff (2010) found that children who demonstrate severe cheating behaviors experienced greater behavior problems in adolescence. Additionally, family relationships also had an impact on children's development of antisocial behaviors. Van Ryzin and Dishion (2013) found that coercive relationships within the family were a strong predictor of coercive peer relationships during adolescence. Furthermore, Vitaro et al. (2012) noted that less parental supervision of children predicted a greater amount of adolescent antisocial behavior.

Precursors to antisocial behaviors. When school leaders identify the traits that are precursors and predictors for future antisocial behaviors, the onset of negative

behaviors might be preventable by providing interventions that address those precursors to antisocial behavior (Callender et al., 2010). There is evidence in previous research that certain personality traits predict the acquisition of antisocial behaviors during adolescence. For example, children who exhibit a disregard for others during early childhood, who demonstrate a lack of empathy or remorse for their behaviors, who fail to appreciate the consequences for their behavior, along with those who lack guilty responses toward wrongdoing have a greater tendency toward antisocial behavior (Brooks et al., 2013; Forsman et al., 2010; Olthof, 2012). In addition, young children who have low verbal skills alongside high levels of impulsivity and inattention, children who are hyperactive, and those who demonstrate poor visual–motor skills also demonstrate greater affinity toward antisocial behavior during adolescence (McEachern & Snyder, 2012; Murray, Irving, Farrington, Colman, & Bloxsom, 2010). Carroll et al. (2012) also found that young children with an inability to self-regulate behavior were also at risk for adolescent involvement in delinquent activity.

Home and familial influences on antisocial behavior. In addition to individual traits that indicate a propensity toward antisocial behavior, research has demonstrated how familial influences have contributed to later antisocial behavior. Halgunseth et al. (2013) described an association between inconsistent parental discipline and antisocial behavior. Jaureguizar, Ibabe, and Straus (2013) also noted there to be a direct effect between the relationships between school and families, and explained that this relationship contributes to the level of violent behavior that children exhibit toward authority figures. While school leaders cannot control how parents discipline their

children, school leaders can demonstrate their support by striving to work alongside parents collaboratively to help a student adopt prosocial behaviors and reduce and eliminate antisocial behaviors.

Another familial concern that has an impact on students' behavior is parental incarceration (Murray et al., 2012). Murray et al. (2012) explained that the number of incarcerated parents in the United States is substantial. Students who experience the incarceration of a parent are at an increased risk for involvement in delinquent activities due to the preexisting tendency toward antisocial behavior, the stigma children perceive regarding incarceration, and the genetic and social influences associated with behavioral development (Murray et al., 2012). Also, in another study Fosco et al. (2012) found that it was the quality of the father and child relationship that dictated the child's engagement in deviant activities. Consequently, when school leaders take the time to build relationships with students who display antisocial behaviors, they might be able to solicit information about the family that would allow them to provide support and assist these students in coping with difficult situations.

An additional familial concern for the onset of antisocial behavior is the socioeconomic status of the student's family. Murray et al. (2010) found a significant association between socioeconomic status and the onset of antisocial behaviors. However, a later study by Hart and Mueller (2013) determined that while there was a significant correlation between socioeconomic status and antisocial behavior, this relationship was not as significant as the relationship between peer group bonds and antisocial behavior. Of note, Stewart, Rapp-Paglicci, and Rowe (2011) found that

students living in poverty lacked the conditions fully to develop self-regulation skills, which had a negative impact on their behaviors.

Antisocial behaviors and peer relationships. Therefore, along with the familial and individual factors that influence a child's acquisition of antisocial behaviors, it is evident that the child's peer group also has a significant impact on his or her inclination toward antisocial behavior and delinquent activity. Both Connell et al. (2011) and Monahan, Steinberg, and Cauffman (2009) found that an individual's level of antisocial behavior correlated to the level of antisocial behavior of his or her friends, especially in regards to the level of imitation and participation in each type of antisocial behavior. Veenstra et al. (2010) also noted that students who perceive themselves to be unpopular in school experience a sense of isolation that causes them to seek friendships outside of school. Often, these friendships lack a positive influence on the already isolated individual, which increases opportunities for participation in delinquent activities (Veenstra et al., 2010). Additionally, a lack in popularity is often associated with students who demonstrate antisocial behaviors because those individuals do not possess the necessary skills to make appropriate contributions to the group dynamic. For example, these students lack the ability to contribute to team goals through failure to follow instructions and an inability to focus on a mutual goal (Veenstra et al., 2010). On the contrary, Johnson and Menard (2012) found that students excluded from their school peer group had fewer opportunities to participate in delinquent activities, which served as a protective factor against antisocial behavior.

The peer influence on antisocial behavior becomes a greater concern during early adolescence. During the early adolescent developmental period, students begin to organize themselves into groups and cliques, and these groups have a direct influence on an individual's behavior within the group (Monahan et al., 2009). Through the establishment of these groups, adolescents form a social hierarchy in which antisocial behaviors (aggression and disruption) often become a way to control the hierarchical structure (Farmer, Lane, Lee, Hamm, & Lambert, 2012). During this early adolescent phase, the peer group is largely responsible for either encouraging or discouraging antisocial behaviors (Cook et al., 2009). Van Ryzin and Dishion (2013) highlighted that peer friendships are elective, rather than requisite, and, as such, individuals might choose to cease friendships that are disagreeable. Furthermore, Monahan et al. (2009) noted that as a child progresses through the adolescent phase, the affiliation with deviant peers declines. It is possible that a student's moral disposition will have a significant impact on an individual's choosing to end a friendship and cease association with delinquent peers. Specifically, a strong moral disposition might cause children to feel guilty about engaging in antisocial activities and aid in their ability to perceive the responses of others toward antisocial behavior, which assists those children from refraining from participation in delinquent activities (Olthof, 2012).

Investigating the relationship between antisocial and prosocial behaviors enables the identification of peer relationships and attributes that influence negative behaviors, which has the potential for identifying ways to reduce and prevent future antisocial behaviors (Carlo et al., 2014; Cook, Buehler, & Henson, 2009). Understanding these

relationships allows for the development of interventions that reduce the participation in delinquent activities, which might reduce the costs of these behaviors to society (Connell et al., 2011). Rapp-Paglicci, Stewart, and Rowe (2011) suggested that failure to self-regulate behavior could lead to deviancy with damaging consequences such as substance abuse, gambling, academic failure, and violent behavior. When youths engage in deviant behaviors, they are more likely to attract friends with a similar level of deviancy and thus continue to demonstrate less desirable, antisocial behaviors (Knecht, Snijders, Baerveldt, Steglich, & Raub, 2010). Most nondelinquent youths either avoid having deviant friends or are able to evade the negative influence of delinquents through self-regulation (Gardner et al., 2008). Consequently, self-regulation is an important aspect of students demonstrating prosocial behavior.

Protective factors that prevent antisocial behavior. The identification of influences that operate as protective factors against demonstration of antisocial behavior is evident within the literature. Specifically, Hart and Mueller (2013) indicated that the involvement of parents, a sense of belonging to a school, and participation in extracurricular activities were significant influences to keep children from participating in delinquent activities. Charles and Egan (2009) claimed that the greater the number of interests of children and the more activities in which they participate, the more likely they are to refrain from delinquent activities. Monahan et al. (2013) also found that adolescents who maintained employment were less likely to engage in delinquent activities on the condition that those individuals remained in school full time. However, Monahan et al. found that irregular school attendance, and not complete nonattendance,

increased an individual's risk for an association with delinquent peers and participation in antisocial activities. Children who lack supervision and structured activities are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors (Veenstra et al., 2010). Therefore, in order to reduce youth's opportunities for engagement in delinquent activities it is essential to find out their interests and to fill their time with meaningful, structured activities that receive adequate supervision.

A noteworthy protective factor for the prevention of antisocial behavior is the quality of the parental relationship and the role of the parent with the child (Connell et al., 2011; Fosco et al., 2012). When parents articulate disapproval of delinquency and antisocial behavior, children are more likely to refrain from participation in these activities (Cook et al., 2009). Also, when parents take the parental role seriously, model appropriate behavior, hold children accountable, and know the whereabouts of their child and the activities in which they participate, they are likely to prevent children from engaging in delinquent activities and reduce the onset of any problematic behaviors (Fosco et al., 2012). Finally, students who fear punishment, consequences, and social sanctions for antisocial behaviors are more likely to refrain from engaging in delinquent activities (Halgunseth et al., 2013).

Preventing the onset of antisocial behavior requires diligence and early intervention (Murray et al., 2010). Due to the strong force of the peer group, and the delinquent child's desire to establish and maintain a nonconforming reputation, it is also essential that when implementing interventions that the child does not feel stigmatized by the intervention (Carroll et al., 2012; Murray et al., 2010). Helping students who utilize

antisocial behaviors learn to comply with the norms of school and society and demonstrate unselfish behaviors should assist students from refraining from participation in delinquent behaviors (Carlo et al., 2014). Finally, encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities, to pursue individual interests, and to occupy their time productively will likely reduce opportunities to engage in antisocial behaviors (Noyori-Corbett & Moon, 2010).

School Exclusion and Zero Tolerance

The media regularly portrays violent acts that occur in schools and universities at the local, national, and global levels. Martinez (2009) and Rogers (2010) both argued that while incidents of school violence are typically isolated and infrequent, the vast amount of media coverage of the most violent incidents creates a public perception that school violence is prevalent and increasing. Additionally, the school's administration of student discipline and assignment of consequences for code of conduct violations has also gained media attention (Mowat, 2010a). However, the APAZTTF (2008) stated that there were insufficient data neither to claim an increase in school violence nor to state that school violence is a significant concern. On the contrary, however, Gregory, Skiba, et al. (2010) and Theriot et al. (2010) discovered in their data analyses that school safety is a concern for all schools, and Dupper, Theriot, and Craun (2009) stated that excluding students from school for minor behavioral violations is commonplace in many U.S. schools. Gregory, Skiba et al. claimed that in 2005–2006, 95% of high schools in the United States experienced one or more violent crimes, and Theriot et al. found that 44% of students in their study received a school exclusion each year. Over recent years, there has

been an increase in violence in the United States, which Lunenburg (2010) correlated with the increase in violence within schools. However, in their analysis of school exclusion data, Dupper et al. claimed that the majority of exclusions were a result of students threatening the authority of the teacher, as opposed to being a result of the exhibition of dangerous or violent behaviors.

School codes of conduct address multiple antisocial behavior violations, and are not limited to only addressing dangerous or violent behaviors. Consequently, school codes of conduct and state legislation often leave school leaders with no choice but to exclude students from school for behavior violations (Bear, 2012). The removal of a student from the regular school setting for any duration of time is an exclusionary form of disciplinary action, which is designed to instill punishment for a code of conduct violation and to encourage prosocial behavior (Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, & Rime, 2012; Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). The use of exclusionary discipline is commonly applied by school leaders in response to student antisocial behavior and code of conduct violations (Theriot et al., 2010). Particularly, the intent of excluding students is to adhere to district policies and educational law, maintain school safety, ensure that the environment is conducive to learning, and to use students who violate the codes of conduct as an example to other students that consequences will follow a violation (APAZTTF, 2008; Butler et al., 2012; Gregory, Skiba, et al., 2010; Martinez, 2009; Skiba, 2014). Both Skiba (2014) and Theriot, Craun, and Dupper (2010) noted a concern that school leaders lack consistency with their application of consequences for antisocial behaviors; specifically, that school leaders are inconsistent

with the manner in which they exclude children from school. In line with the recommendations of Noltemeyer and McLoughlin (2010), who claimed that understanding the disparity in exclusionary practice will facilitate the ability to understand the factors that lead to exclusion, this study provided an opportunity to explore school leaders' perceptions of this concern.

The effects of students' antisocial behaviors on teachers. School leaders have a responsibility to ensure that all students receive the best opportunities to learn, which requires an environment that is conducive for teachers to be able to teach. Consequently, teachers are not in a position to execute their best teaching when they have to frequently manage student antisocial behaviors or deal with behaviors that are so egregious that those behaviors threaten the safety and well-being of students or staff (Rafferty, 2010; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Additionally, antisocial student behaviors and discipline policies that are ineffective contribute to the increase in teacher withdrawal from the teaching profession (Brownstein, 2009). When teachers feel that they cannot engage students or manage their behavior, it is likely that they will experience feelings of inefficaciousness, which might potentially lead to burnout (Pas, Bradshaw, Hershfeldt, & Leaf, 2010).

In contrast, however, Kennedy (2011) found that teachers might in effect contribute to students' antisocial behaviors. For example, Kennedy noted that when teachers failed to build relationships with their students or focused solely on content instruction, students' antisocial behaviors increased, which resulted in frequent exclusion from the classroom, additional disengagement, and an increase in disciplinary referrals.

Furthermore, excluding students from school often generates students' feelings of frustration with school and reduces the bond between student and school, which leads to a lack in motivation toward academic success (Gregory, Skiba, et al., 2010; Theriot et al., 2010) Therefore, it is essential to address student behavior in order to improve relationships between students and teachers, student achievement, and teacher satisfaction.

School exclusion. Extant research also presented supporting data for the exclusion of students with antisocial behaviors. Bear (2012) argued that student behavior in schools would be significantly worse without exclusion as an option for a consequence of antisocial behaviors. In addition, both Skiba (2014) and Bear (2012) considered the social sanction of exclusion to be a powerful deterrent for antisocial behaviors. Furthermore, Dupper et al. (2009) found that exclusion provided an opportunity for teachers to take a break from students who drained their energy. When students behave in ways that violate the rights of other people, exclusion is a reasonable consequence in order to protect the safety of the school and the environment in which students learn (APAZTTF, 2008; Dupper et al., 2009).

With the increased media attention, fear for children's safety, and the fear of violence, zero tolerance policies for antisocial behaviors became more prevalent (Skiba, 2014). It is the level of disruption to the school environment of antisocial behavior, along with the societal focus on violence, that has led to harsh disciplinary consequences that demonstrate a zero tolerance for antisocial behaviors (Heitzeg, 2009). Teske (2011) noted that the term *zero tolerance* arose during the 1980s when there was a national effort "to

combat drugs, or what became known as the 'war on drugs'" (p. 88). While many schools implement zero tolerance policies, the use is controversial (Gregory & Cornell, 2009). The aim of these zero tolerance policies is to provide a safe school that is free from violence, while facilitating the removal of an offending student and deterring others from engaging in antisocial behaviors (Martinez, 2009; Teske, 2011). Zero tolerance policies are typically used for infractions such as weapon possession, drugs and alcohol possession, or violent behavior (Teske, 2011). Lunenburg (2010) claimed that while each state has a responsibility for educating all students, schools should not be required to retain delinquent students and need a viable option for removing students who compromise the environment. Furthermore, several researchers claimed that zero tolerance policies do not address students' educational needs, do not align with adolescent development, and the rigid structure does not take into account the need for student support (APAZTTF, 2008; Gregory & Cornell, 2009; Kennedy, 2011).

Consequences of exclusion. In addition to the concern that zero tolerance policies simply exclude students from the learning environment, school leaders rarely have the skills or resources to help these students change their behaviors and reduce delinquency (Heitzeg, 2009). Consequently, school leaders consider there to be no alternatives other than removal of disruptive students from the educational environment (Gregory & Cornell, 2009; Heitzeg, 2009; Teske, 2011). Excluding students from the learning environment serves to further alienate students who already struggle to exhibit prosocial behaviors by preventing them from receiving access to the regular curriculum with their peers, which causes them to fall behind academically (Ryan & Goodram,

2013). In addition, excluding students often sends the message that the exclusion is a school-approved absence, which does not serve to discourage antisocial behavior, and has the potential to contribute to continual displays of antisocial behaviors (Bear, 2012; Chin et al., 2012). In order to address the ineffectiveness of zero tolerance policies and consider alternatives to exclusion, school leaders should focus on changing a culture that focuses on punishment into a culture that holds students accountable while providing the support necessary to make behavioral changes (Bear, 2012; Gregory, Cornell, et al., 2010).

These zero tolerance policies often include a provision that school leaders must report certain conduct violations to law enforcement. The current trend for upholding these policies and removing students from school, coupled with the presence of police officers on many school campuses, has led to an increase in student arrests (Teske, 2011). In addition, the APAZTTF (2008) noted that uses of zero tolerance policies, rather than using in-house consequences, have significant financial implications to society; arresting and incarcerating youth for school conduct violations is costly. Heitzeg (2009) explained that excluding students from school and criminalizing antisocial behaviors created a school-to-prison pipeline, whereby the zero tolerance policies led to involvement with the juvenile or adult justice system. Teske (2011) noted that this school-to-prison pipeline is evident in the rise of referrals to the justice system of over 1,000% from the mid-1990s until 2004 and by the number of incarcerated adults who did not graduate from high school.

Furthermore, Skiba (2014) claimed that excluding students from school contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline because the time spent outside of school provides additional opportunities for participating in criminal activities. Ryan and Zoldy (2011) explained that excluded students are unlikely to receive adult supervision during the time of their exclusion, and yet it is these students who are in need of adult supervision and guidance; consequently, the lack of supervision affords those opportunities to participate in undesirable activities. Additionally, excluding students with antisocial behaviors from the school environment prevents them from receiving any support and guidance to change those negative behaviors, which could prevent these students from receiving the help that is necessary to help them develop prosocial behaviors (McLoughlin, 2010; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). The APAZTTF (2008) recommended that prior to excluding a student from school, school leaders take time to consider the necessity of a consequence for antisocial behavior along with the potential negative impact of the exclusion. Consequently, school leaders should carefully make decisions to exclude a student based upon the long-term impact that the exclusion might present to the student; every effort should be made to keep students in school and provide alternative consequences in order to minimize any long-term detriment to the student or exacerbate antisocial behavior (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). Due to the ineffectiveness of zero tolerance policies in changing school climates, addressing concerns of school safety, and reducing school violence, school leaders should rethink their use of those policies (Martinez, 2009). The exploration of the phenomenon of

student antisocial behavior might indicate ways to reduce the exclusion rate, which could have a positive effect on schools' academic climate.

Academic impact of exclusion. School leaders strive to demonstrate students' academic improvement, meet adequate yearly progress, and implement academic interventions in order to raise standards. Excluding students from school for behavioral infractions has a negative academic impact on the student (Ryan & Goodram, 2013). When students are under exclusion, they miss opportunities to learn and return to school with gaps in their knowledge, which leads to low academic achievement (Theriot et al., 2010). Allman and Slate (2013) found that students who had at least one incident that resulted in school exclusion demonstrated lower scores on math and reading tests than students without any incidents of exclusion. Students who lack grade level skills and knowledge often act antisocially in class, which causes frustration for their teachers and results in additional exclusion (Kennedy, 2011). Of particular concern is that Gregory, Skiba, et al. (2010) determined a correlation between low academic achievement and aggression and disciplinary referrals.

Additionally, the need to focus on and prioritize academic achievement overwhelms many school leaders, counselors, and social workers because they do not feel that they either have the time or are able to assist students with developing prosocial skills (Cawood, 2010). Brownstein (2009) cited that one arrest during high school doubles the likelihood of the student dropping out. Of note, it is often students with mental and emotional needs who struggle academically and who are most at-risk for academic failure, and unless they receive assistance with managing those behaviors they

are more likely to drop out of school and enter the school-to-prison pipeline (Teske, 2011). Therefore, providing interventions to reduce student antisocial behaviors could also have a positive impact on graduation rates, academic achievement, and the classroom environment, which would benefit both the student and his or her peers (Cawood, 2010; Mowat, 2010b). Consequently, this study provided an opportunity to understand school leaders' perceptions of antisocial behavior and provide suggestions for ways to reduce student exclusion and address the ineffectiveness of zero tolerance policies.

Interventions for Antisocial Behavior

In schools, when students fail to self-regulate their behaviors and instead demonstrate behaviors that are outside the norms of expected social conduct, the most common disciplinary action is to exclude the offending student from school (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Dupper et al. (2009) determined that many school leaders believe that effective discipline requires a form of punishment, such as exclusion; however, Bear (2012) cautioned that exclusion should not be the primary method for holding students accountable for their antisocial behaviors. While excluding students from school serves as a social sanction for those students who are socially connected to their peers, teachers, and schools, the act of exclusion might create an alienation effect, which, if repeated, can weaken the students' bond to school and contribute to continual incidents of antisocial behavior (Bear, 2012; Chin et al., 2012; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).

While there is a need to identify alternative disciplinary sanctions to school exclusion, proponents argue that excluding students for antisocial actions is justifiable and appropriate, and suggest that the threat of exclusion reduces the frequency of antisocial behavior (Bear, 2012; Dupper et al., 2009). Additionally, Bear (2012) found that for many students the threat of exclusion from school was an effective deterrent for engagement in antisocial acts. Additionally, if a student poses an immediate danger to himself or herself or to others, exclusion appropriately protects the safety of the environment and removes students who are a disruptive influence within the classroom, which ensures an optimal learning environment for all students (Butler et al., 2012; Dupper et al., 2009).

Students' continual exhibition of antisocial behaviors causes stress and frustration for both teachers and school leaders; consequently, excluding a student from school provides some relief for teachers, school leaders, and other students (Dupper et al., 2009). However, exclusion is only a temporary solution to a more significant problem because, for the most part, the student returns to school and to his or her classroom, and exclusion fails to address the underlying problem that caused the behavior (Dupper et al., 2009; Osher et al., 2010; Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Exclusion does not offer a solution to reduce or eliminate antisocial behaviors, nor does it teach students how to comply with the school's norms of conduct (Chin et al., 2012). Additionally, exclusion does not address the behavior that resulted in the exclusion, nor does it help students to learn alternative ways of behaving (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Moore-Thomas, 2012; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).

Home and familial relationship to exclusion. Furthermore, school leaders ought to consider the needs of individual students when working with those students who violated the code of conduct; a successful consequence might not work for all students, nor work in a different situation (Armstrong, 2011; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Additionally, school leaders ought to consider the family dynamics when administering consequences to students for antisocial behaviors. In order for a consequence to be effective, school leaders should work in conjunction with the family, potentially providing family interventions in addition to an individual student's consequence in order to have a positive impact on behavioral changes (Halgunseth et al., 2013). To help students reduce antisocial behaviors and develop prosocial behaviors, it is essential that both the student's family and the school hold students accountable for their actions (Halgunseth et al., 2013). Involving the family when working with students who have antisocial behaviors is essential given the association between parental involvement and decreased delinquency; for example, antisocial behaviors often either arise from the home, or students maintain their negative behaviors because parents do not address the behaviors (Hart & Mueller, 2013; Oşvat & Marc, 2014).

Student antisocial behavior is a complex issue that is not limited to the confines of the school; often, antisocial behavior manifests in the student's home and within the student's culture (Oşvat & Marc, 2014). However, for school leaders, antisocial behavior has a negative impact on the school and classroom climate, which, in order to generate social behavioral change through interventions, necessitates its understanding and investigation (Bradshaw, Rodgers, Ghandour, & Garbarino, 2009; Butler et al., 2012;

Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Understanding the complexities of juvenile delinquency and antisocial behavior is requisite to informing policy changes and altering the cycle of violence (Bradshaw et al., 2009; Fenning et al., 2012). In addition, an understanding of how to address antisocial behaviors requires a paradigm shift away from the culture of punishing individuals for their antisocial acts to a culture where prevention and interventions that increase the belongingness to school prevail (APAZTTF, 2008; Fenning et al., 2012; Vitaro et al., 2012). Finally, public opinion of violence calls for zero tolerance for antisocial behaviors (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Consequently, to generate understanding and support for new policies and the adoption of a positive versus punitive approach to discipline, school leaders should present both clear evidence for the consequences of exclusionary discipline and the benefits of alternatives to exclusion (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).

The school's role in developing alternatives to exclusion. In the United States, children have the right to free, public education. Consequently, students who struggle with exhibiting prosocial behaviors deserve to receive education in both social and academic skills. Specifically, students deserve to receive the support of educators to change their antisocial behaviors and to participate in programs that help them to learn how to manage those behaviors (Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). Alternatives to exclusion should have a supportive rather than punitive structure, and school personnel should exhibit empathy and understanding in order to generate positive relationships with students who might otherwise experience disillusionment with school (Gregory, Cornell, et al., 2010; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). Encouraging students to debrief and reflect upon their behavior

helps students to learn from their behavior and allows school leaders to determine the appropriate intervention and to establish and demonstrate their commitment of support to the student (Chin et al., 2012; Ryan & Goodram, 2013).

In order to consider alternatives to exclusion, Ryan and Zoldy (2011) posited that school leaders should take the time to rethink their philosophies to managing students' antisocial behavior and refocus their efforts to consider alternative options for consequences for antisocial behaviors. Specifically, school leaders ought to "focus on the elimination of students' problematic behaviors rather than the elimination of students themselves" (Dupper et al., 2009, p. 6), and thus consider alternatives to exclusion. Osher et al. (2010) suggested that interventions that serve as alternatives to exclusion should focus on helping students to make cognitive and behavioral changes through situational learning opportunities. Additionally, Osher et al. noted the importance of teaching students self-regulative skills while developing relationships that engage the student and create a culture of trust and care.

The development of interventions. Interventions aimed to assist students in developing prosocial behaviors are less common than interventions for raising student academic achievement, and yet both are essential for academic success. The ability to self-regulate behavior is essential for functioning within the confines of the school environment (Rapp-Paglicci et al., 2011). While most children develop self-regulative abilities naturally over time, learning to effectively self-regulate requires the child to experience continual adult modeling of thought, feeling, behavior, and emotional control; as the child develops and adopts self-regulatory skills, adults can reduce their support

(Florez, 2011). Rafferty (2010) further noted that as children develop self-regulative behaviors, they require less external control and prompting to behave appropriately.

Targeting interventions to assist students in decreasing antisocial behaviors is an important aspect of reducing the school exclusion rate and increasing academic achievement. Students who frequently exhibit antisocial behaviors more often receive an exclusion from the classroom, fail to experience academic success, and dropout of school (Menzies & Lane, 2010). The rigid structure and punitive nature of zero tolerance policies do not align with the developmental needs of children (Gregory & Cornell, 2009). Instead, in this study, I sought to understand principals' perceptions of students' antisocial behaviors and suggest interventions that address the phenomenon, which, as Teske (2011) suggested, might reduce the likelihood that students will continue to engage in situations that exacerbate the negative behavior. Consequently, providing students with interventions that are an alternative to exclusion might decrease the school exclusion rate, increase academic achievement, and reduce antisocial behaviors (Menzies & Lane, 2011; Teske 2011).

School leaders should conduct frequent evaluations within their buildings that analyze the variables within both the student and the school setting to gain information regarding the reasons behind students' antisocial behaviors; this information is necessary to aid in the consideration of alternatives to exclusion, (MacNeil & Prater, 2010; Theriot et al., 2009). When working with a student who violated the code of conduct, a school leader should determine whether the student poses a substantial risk to the safety of the learning environment (APAZTTF, 2008). If students do not pose an immediate risk, it is

essential to establish whether exclusion is an appropriate consequence for the code of conduct violation and whether it has the potential to be detrimental to the student (Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Theriot et al. (2009) noted that potential interventions should be in alignment with the needs of the school and the students. Additionally, it is important for school leaders to examine any teaching factors that might have a negative impact on students' ability to manage their behavior. For example, Theriot et al. and the APAZTTF (2008) noted the importance of educating teachers about discipline practices that contribute to the problem, alternative approaches to classroom and student management, and any cultural or social concerns that are relevant to the environment.

When school leaders fail to intervene in changing students antisocial behaviors, students receive the message that the behaviors are acceptable, which presents a risk for continual antisocial behavior that might potentially escalate in severity (Oşvat & Marc, 2014). Alternatives to exclusion ought to be plausible and appropriate for the disciplinary situation and each student. These alternatives should also focus on building relationships between school personnel and the student while remediating the student's antisocial behavior (Bryan et al., 2012; Butler et al., 2012). Furthermore, alternatives to exclusion should follow a progressive discipline continuum that is appropriate for the infraction (APAZTTF, 2008; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). Armstrong (2011) and Levin (2009) also suggested that targeting antisocial behavioral interventions to the small group of students in most need of assistance would reduce the amount of resources necessary to provide such assistance and increase the impact that the intervention would have on the individual.

Alternatives to exclusion. Extant literature indicates a variety of alternatives to exclusion; these include social skills training, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and in-school-suspension programs. Chin et al. (2012) noted "schools do not use a one-size-fits-all approach to academic instruction" (p. 157); as such, this approach is not appropriate for administering consequences to students for antisocial behavior. Consequently, when considering alternatives to exclusion, the school leader should consider the needs of both the individual student and the school. Suggested alternatives to exclusion might be more appropriate for different students or different situations. For example, social skills training and conflict resolution could serve as both prevention and intervention efforts that teach students to receive positive instead of negative reinforcements; these skills could be taught to small groups of students or as part of a school-wide curriculum (Bear, 2012; Bradshaw et al., 2009; Chin et al., 2012; Crossley & Buckner, 2012; Martinez, 2009). A key component of social skills training is that students learn about the impact that their behavior has on other individuals, to recognize how others view their behavior, and acquire the ability to interpret various social cues (Armstrong, 2011). Also, by teaching conflict resolution skills, students acquire the ability to handle conflict in a nonthreatening manner that encourages respect for others' opinions and collaboration to find a resolution (Dupper et al., 2009). By instilling prevention efforts, such as social skills and conflict resolution training, school leaders provide a way to increase students' bond to school, which further acts as a deterrent to delinquent behavior (Hart & Mueller, 2013).

In addition to interventions that focus on the students, alternatives to exclusion should not only help students understand the importance of a positive learning environment, but also clearly identify the teacher's role in reducing antisocial behaviors (Mowat, 2010b). Mowat (2010a) found that students' self-regulative behavior improved when a supporting adult met with a small group of students with behavioral concerns on a weekly basis, and Stewart et al. (2011) claimed that interventions that targeted improving self-regulation skills improved students' mental health. Additionally, ensuring that teachers demonstrate high levels of self-regulation is essential for helping students to develop these skills. Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, and Salovey (2011) found that those teachers with a high level of emotion-regulation ability created engaging learning environments and maintained positive interactions with others. The intentional teaching and modeling of self-regulation within the school environment might provide a classroom and school structure that encourages student engagement and develops self-efficacious, self-regulating learners (Erlich & Russ-Eft, 2011). Florez (2011) cautioned that in order to establish the foundation for subconscious application, self-regulation should be an integral part of the curriculum.

Sports and extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, encouraging students who exhibit antisocial behaviors to participate in extracurricular activities would offer the students a chance to participate in activities that strengthen their developmental assets and acquire skills such as self-regulation, social skills, and conflict resolution (Urban, Lewin-Bizan, & Lerner, 2010). In contrast, Rutten et al. (2010) noted that the desire to be successful within a sporting activity would support the development of personal

awareness and self-regulatory skills; competitive activities often restrict collaborative practices and encourage inappropriate behavior.

Conversely, Hart and Mueller (2013) noted the importance of using caution when relying on sports to develop prosocial and reduce antisocial behaviors. Hart and Mueller found that nonsport activities reduced the likelihood that participants would participate in delinquent behaviors; however, they found that with males, participating in a sports activity did not operate as a protective factor in reducing antisocial behavior. In support, Rutten et al. (2010) found that peer pressure and inappropriate encouragement to participate in activities outside of social norms from coaches often presented negative consequences for youth. In contrast, Rogers (2010) explained that coaches are in a position to serve as mentors to youth and that adolescents had a tendency to respect their coaches. Consequently, it is important to ensure that coaches working with adolescents understand their boundaries and serve as positive role models to help develop prosocial behaviors and reduce antisocial behaviors.

In-school suspension. Adopting an in-school-suspension program provides another alternative to exclusion on the condition that the program is not simply a holding space for excluded students (Dupper et al., 2009; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). An effective in-school-suspension program should focus on helping students to understand their behaviors through an analysis that couples reflection and a focus on how to behave appropriately in the future and not repeat the inappropriate conduct (Dupper et al., 2009). Additionally, an in-school-suspension program should ensure that students continue with their academic work in a structured environment that is supervised by an educator with

the ability to be able to assist with the student's learning (Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). Keeping excluded students in school informs both the students and their parents that learning is paramount and that antisocial behavior does not result in a school-approved vacation, thus preventing school leaders from reinforcing the antisocial behavior (Chin et al., 2012).

In line with in-school-suspension, which provides an opportunity for students to remain in school, analyze their behavior, and reflect on ways to behave in a prosocial manner in the future, restorative justice offers an effective alternative to exclusion. Restorative justice focuses on restitution, resolution, and reconciliation following a code of conduct violation (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). The purpose of restitution is to repair any harm of the antisocial act, while also reducing the risk or repeating the behavior through resolution, and allows time to heal from the antisocial act through reconciliation (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). A strength of restorative justice is that it provides support to the student in changing behavior while also holding the student accountable for his or her actions (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). Combining restorative justice practice with an in-school-suspension program might offer a credible alternative to exclusion.

A relevant goal for adopting alternatives to exclusion is to reconnect students with school and develop meaningful relationships with adults (APAZTTF, 2008). Students who feel a sense of belonging to their school are less likely to participate in delinquent activity (APAZTTF, 2008). The cost to both the individual and society, in terms of welfare and prison costs, is significant; consequently, it is imperative that school leaders

make every effort to reconnect antisocial students and find alternatives to exclusion that prevent future delinquency (APAZTTF, 2008). While an analysis of school exclusion data should indicate whether alternatives to suspension have effectively reduced incidents of antisocial behavior, Bear (2012) cautioned that the analysis of data might indicate a change in the exclusion policy and not a change in antisocial behavior. Consequently, when analyzing the success of an alternative to exclusion program, it is essential also to conduct climate surveys and collect other forms of data as indicators as to the effectiveness of any program implementation (Bear, 2012).

Implications

Following the review of the literature that outlined the extent of the problem of students' antisocial behaviors, I gained insight into some potential ideas for developing a project that has the capacity to reduce antisocial behaviors and, therefore, the exclusion rate. The purpose of this study was to understand school leaders' perceptions of students' ability to manage their behavior and to suggest a solution to increase self-regulatory ability and reduce the exclusion rate. An investigation into this topic is relevant because continual student exclusions from the learning environment have a significant negative impact on the student's future. Menzies and Lane (2011) explained the importance of intentional and systematic support for those students who have a difficult time conforming to the social norms of the school environment.

Extant literature presented several viable projects that demonstrated success in reducing students' antisocial behaviors within empirical studies. For example, Wyman et al. (2010) described the Rochester Resilience Project, which provided mentors to students

with antisocial behaviors with the intent to teach self-regulatory skills within both a practical and cognitive behavioral development framework. Also, Gilbert, Chessor, Perz, and Ussher (2010) analyzed the Classroom Project, which adopted social development modeling through experiential learning to provide mentorship to adolescent males to address both academic and behavioral concerns. The purpose of the Classroom Project was to reduce deviant behavior and develop prosocial skills, which included positive behavior management, appropriate socialization, the ability to work with others, how to develop a respect of and tolerance for others, and the development of self-esteem and resiliency (Gilbert et al., 2010). Furthermore, Rapp-Paglicci et al. (2011) investigated whether the teaching of self-regulation could occur through the cultural arts. This study found that the Prodigy Program, which synthesized the arts and self-regulation, increased participants' self-efficacy in academics and decreased mental health issues (Rapp-Paglicci et al., 2011).

Additionally, an intervention that appeared within multiple articles focused on using service-learning projects to engage at-risk students and those with behavioral challenges. One of the greatest benefits of service learning is that students can utilize their strengths to work collaboratively for the betterment of the community (Conner, 2011; Nelson & Sneller, 2011). Additionally, service-learning projects help youth to develop their critical thinking skills and apply academic content knowledge in a practical situation, which often has a positive impact on the student's engagement in school (Carter, Swedeen, & Moss, 2012; Frank, Omstead, & Pigg, 2012). Bosma et al. (2010) investigated the success of LeadPeace, a middle school service-learning project that

focused on reducing antisocial behaviors through developing students' social and academic skills and increasing their motivation toward learning.

Another potential intervention is to address students' social and emotional learning at a global level. For example, the incorporation of social–emotional skills training into the regular academic curriculum has the potential to serve all students (Dulak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Social–emotional skills training will provide the education necessary to assist all students in developing skills that are essential for academics, socialization, and emotional stability (Dulak et al., 2011; Sklad, Dieksra, Ritter, Ben, & Gravesteijn, 2012). Durlak, Weissberg, and Pachan (2010) suggested that when developing programs to support students' social and emotional development the training should include four principles: be sequenced appropriately to scaffold skills, include active student participation, focus on specific skills, and utilize explicit teaching. Sklad et al. (2012) found that one difficulty with the effective implementation of social–emotional skills programs was the lack of a manual or training guide to explain how to implement the program with fidelity. Consequently, utilizing the findings of this study to develop a project that is specific and relevant to the school district might also require the development of a training manual to ensure that the implementation of interventions occurs with fidelity.

The use of cognitive–behavioral interventions that address how the individual thinks and feels to tackle his or her deviant behavior should increase the student's understanding of social behavioral norms and empower students to become more prosocial in their behaviors (Thompson & Webber, 2010). Given that students who

experienced coercive relationships at home were more likely to develop coercive relationships with their peers, it is likely that students in these homes did not receive training in self-regulation (Van Ryzin & Dishion, 2013). Consequently, it is important for schools to teach students social skills (Bergeron, Nolan, Dai, & White, 2013). Bergeron et al. (2013) suggested that an effective method to teach social skills is through small group interventions that target the development of these skills.

The use of in-school suspension programs as an alternative to exclusion has the potential to become a place to provide interventions to reduce antisocial behaviors. Smith, Bicard, Bicard, and Casey (2012) noted that a functional behavior assessment could assist with the development of a functional-behavior intervention in order to reduce the time that students spend in in-school suspension. Flannery, Frank, and Kato (2012) explained that a function-based assessment should identify precursors to the antisocial behavior, and then the examination of these precursors should occur with an examination of the consequences to ensure that the behavior and consequence are in alignment. An in-school suspension program could be an arena to develop the functional-behavioral interventions to assist students be successful in the classroom and reduce incidents of antisocial behaviors (Smith et al., 2012).

The development of a project (policy recommendation) that was relevant to the participants within this study and that addressed the concerns and gaps in practice of the school leaders in working with students with antisocial behaviors emerged as a result of the study's findings. By gaining an understanding of the school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behaviors, it was possible to identify patterns that emerged from the

data analysis process. Upon reviewing the study's findings and using extant literature regarding previous successful intervention efforts, the emerging themes provided information from which to develop an effective project to address those findings.

Utilizing the findings from the study and the extant literature to develop a project was important given that Priddis, Landy, Moroney, and Kane (2014) claimed that there are a lack of research-based and skill-based programs and treatments available to work with youth who exhibit antisocial behaviors. Additionally, Thoder and Cautilli (2012) noted the importance of developing an intervention program that meets the needs of the individual schools and students, which, therefore, requires the analysis of the findings of this study to develop such interventions. Finally, schools have a responsibility to not only focus on educating students in academic content, but they also have an obligation to teach social and emotional skills (Sklad et al., 2012). The development of social and emotional skills will help to develop the whole child and provide the requisite skills and knowledge to lead a successful life beyond school.

The resulting project based on the findings of this study has the potential to elicit social change through advocating for a policy recommendation to address the school leaders' gaps in practice. The ensuing policy recommendation identified ways to assist school leaders in their professional growth to increase their success in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors.

Summary

Student antisocial behavior is a problem that affects every school, and school leaders continue to address the problem. Excluding students from school is the most

prevalent response of school leaders to students' displays of antisocial behavior (Bear, 2012; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). However, exclusion often exacerbates the problem of antisocial behavior and has far-reaching consequences for students' academic and social well-being (Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Skiba, 2014). The effects of students' antisocial behaviors are a problem for both schools and society, and, in order to generate social change, school leaders must better understand the causes and effects of antisocial behavior and find ways in which to address and reduce the prevalence of antisocial behaviors.

The inability to manage behavior and exhibition of antisocial behavior is often attributable to a lack of self-regulation. When educators explicitly teach children how to develop and employ self-regulation skills, children will be better able to monitor and manage their behaviors in order to adhere to social behavioral norms (Kumi-Yeboah, 2012). Also, when school leaders work with children who demonstrate antisocial behaviors, the identification of covert, overt, or authority pathway antisocial behavior is essential for providing children with the appropriate interventions to reduce the likelihood of the behavior recurring.

The onset of antisocial behavior might be attributable to many different internal or external factors. For example, individual personality traits play a significant role in the demonstration of antisocial behaviors; these include disregard for others, lack of empathy, low verbal skills, poor visual–motor skills, and a high tendency toward cheating (Brooks et al., 2013; Forsman et al., 2010; McEachern & Snyder, 2012; Murray et al., 2010; Olthof, 2012). Additionally, family dynamics and peer friendships influence

children, especially in regards to parental disciplinary actions, parental incarceration, and socioeconomic status of the family, and the children's desire for peer group acceptance (Callender et al., 2010; Halgunseth et al., 2013; Murray et al., 2012; Vitaro et al., 2012).

Often school leaders must enforce zero tolerance policies for school codes of conduct violations, which most frequently require exclusion from school. Zero tolerance policies fail to address the root cause of the problem and the antisocial behavior, and often encourage students to continue to engage in delinquent behaviors (APAZTTF, 2008; Martinez, 2009). Alternatives to suspension provide both structure and support to students as they learn to develop prosocial behaviors and have the potential of addressing the problem of antisocial behavior (Bear, 2012; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011). An understanding of school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior has the potential to identify barriers to implementing alternatives to suspension and to suggest ways to address these barriers and reduce incidents of antisocial behavior.

In order to research school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior, this study utilized a case study design. Data collection occurred through interviews with the participants, school leaders in WSD, and data analysis utilized a coding process in order to generate themes to respond to the research questions. Section 2 will provide an explanation of the methodology in alignment with the local problem, the study's purpose, and the research questions.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

In Section 1, I examined the topic of student antisocial behavior within the construct of self-regulation theory and considered the problem of antisocial behaviors within the local context and the larger educational setting. The analysis of WSD public district behavior and weapons reports demonstrated and justified the need for this study. Additionally, a comparison of the data to a local, similar school district also indicated that this study was necessary. A review of the extant literature provided an understanding of the potential impact of continual antisocial behavior to an individual's future; furthermore, a review of the literature indicated different causes and effects of antisocial behavior, while also offering suggestions for potential interventions.

In Section 2, I deliver an explanation of the chosen methodology for this study, which provided the appropriate data to understand school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. My discussion of the qualitative methodology and case study research design literature provides justification for the design choice and the selection and access of the participants. The literature also assisted with the description of the protection of human subjects and explanation of data collection and analysis techniques that were most appropriate for this study. Additionally, an explanation of the role of the researcher generated understanding for potential bias and my preparedness for conducting this research. Consequently, following these accepted procedures established credibility for the research.

Research Design and Approach

A case study design enabled the exploration of school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behaviors and the students' ability to self-regulate their behavior. Yin (2014) noted that the case study design is appropriate for exploring a phenomenon (case) within its natural setting; consequently, this design aligned with the purpose of this study. A qualitative methodology, case study design, facilitated an in-depth understanding of the issue through the data collection and analysis procedures (Merriam, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the intention was to understand school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior in order to suggest ways to reduce incidents of antisocial behaviors. Rogers (2010) considered a qualitative approach to be appropriate for investigating antisocial behavior, noting that quantitative research does not measure the impact of delinquent actions or the individual's perceptions of antisocial behavior. I selected an instrumental case study design, following guidelines described by Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2009), because the case was similar (the study took place in one district), there was an existence of a bounded system, and the primary interest was the phenomenon. The phenomenon of study was students' antisocial behaviors.

Alternative research methods include quantitative and mixed methods methodology, a qualitative intrinsic case study, or ethnographic design; however, these did not align with the purpose of the study or the research questions. Quantitative methodology seeks to explain the views of a large number of participants in order to identify a trend or relationship between variables (Creswell, 2012). Mixed methods methodology requires the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, which

would necessitate a larger sample of participants in order effectively to conduct this type of study (McMillan, 2008). Consequently, there were too few participants available for quantitative or mixed methods methodology to be appropriate. Additionally, an intrinsic case study approach would focus on the case (school leaders) instead of the phenomenon (students' antisocial behavior), and an ethnographic approach would require the generation of a description of the cultural group (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009). Therefore, an instrumental case study design most effectively aligned with the purpose of the study and the research questions.

Consistent with qualitative case study research, I collected data from multiple sources in order to generate a rich, thick description of school leaders' perceptions of the ability of students' to manage behaviors within the construct of self-regulation, as recommended by Merriam (2009). The primary method of data collection included individual participant semistructured interviews, which was a reliable approach for exploring participants' perceptions and encouraged them to share their experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). While I planned possibly to collect a variety of student discipline reports, this did not prove relevant or feasible within the context of data collection; mostly, this was due to the school leaders maintaining records that are no different to the weapon and behavior reports conveyed to OSPI. I developed interview questions as a result of reading published literature on the ability of students to self-regulate behavior in a variety of settings; the literature assisted in eliciting detailed responses from the participants. Seeking input on the quality of interview questions from experts in the field of antisocial behavior, self-regulation, and case study methodologists'

further ensured credibility; the experts' review of the questions allowed for the modification and refinement of the questions. Additionally, developing and utilizing an interview protocol as recommended by Creswell (2012) and Yin (2014) ensured a structure for the interviews and provided ideas for probing questions.

Participants

Criteria for selection of participants. I conducted this study in a small, rural school district with approximately 5,500 students in Washington State. The participants included all school leaders in WSD, which consisted of four elementary principals, two alternative school principals, two middle school principals, one high school principal, and four assistant principals. Consequently, the participants available for this study were 13 school leaders from WSD. In addition to being the researcher for this study, I am also a school leader in WSD and am also, therefore, a member of the subgroup of participants. As a result of my strict adherence to the role of the researcher through complying with the ethical procedures for conducting human participant research and using a data collection protocol, I ensured that my membership in the subgroup did not color, nor had an impact on, the individuals' participation in the study.

While it was possible that not all of the available school leaders would consent to participate in the study, all 13 potential participants chose to take part in the case study. Therefore, full participation allowed for the identification and analysis of themes and the generation of a rich, thick description of the phenomenon, as recommended by Creswell (2013). Consequently, the sampling method was purposeful sampling, specifically, homogeneous sampling, because the district school leaders belong to the common

subgroup for the in-depth study, as explained by Creswell (2012) and Glesne (2011). All 13 school leaders received an invitation to participate in the study.

Gaining access to the participants. Access to the participants in this study required two levels of consent, which Glesne (2011) explained is a process to receive permission to conduct any form of research: Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and permission from the local organization, which, in this study was the WSD superintendent. First, I sought formal approval from the WSD superintendent and adhered to Glesne's suggestion to negotiate the conditions for access, requesting a letter of cooperation to conduct my study. Glesne advised that the initial gatekeeper meeting include (a) a presentation of a summary of the proposed research, (b) attention to any concerns and clarify issues, (c) an explanation that the data belongs to the researcher in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, and (d) agreement upon expected deliverables both during the study and at its completion. In addition, adhering to Hatch's (2002) suggestion I acquired a letter of permission to access participants from the WSD superintendent, which formalized the research process. Upon approval of the WSD superintendent, obtained consent from each participant confirmed his or her voluntary participation in the study. Glesne cautioned that initially seeking approval from the superintendent might make participants feel as though they may be required to participate in the study. However, gaining approval from the WSD prior to contacting potential participants was requisite for conducting this study, and given that I did not emphasize the connection, this did not appear to be a relevant concern.

IRB approval followed approval from the WSD superintendent (IRB approval number: 10-03-14-0348808). IRB approval requires a detailed plan for participant interaction, which included an explanation of protocols for data collection and a description of the methods for protecting participants, as explained by Yin (2014). Yin elaborated that conducting research within an organization often requires the researcher to follow additional guidelines and procedures.

Gaining access to the participants occurred after approval from both the WSD superintendent and the IRB. After an introduction to the study to all of the WSD school leaders, each participant received an e-mail invitation to participate in the study. This e-mail invitation included additional information, outlined the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and the participant, and included the consent form. A follow-up e-mail to several prospective participants was necessary due to responses that were not forthcoming. However, it was essential not to make participants feel coercion to participate; accordingly, I waited an appropriate amount of time (7 days) between providing the initial and follow-up invitation to participate. Additionally, a follow-up e-mail served as a way to ensure that all participants understood the timeline for data collection and had the opportunity to decide whether or not to participate.

Establishment of a researcher–participant working relationship. The role of the researcher is two-fold and includes the researcher as a researcher and the researcher as a learner (Glesne, 2011). First, to adopt the role of a researcher as a researcher required the development of behaviors and actions that resemble a researcher, which included both verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicated an attentiveness to the impact that those

behaviors had on the participants (Glesne, 2011). Second, to demonstrate the role of the researcher as a learner dictated that entry to the research process expressed the intent to learn alongside and from the participants (Glesne, 2011).

Membership in the subgroup of participants within this study provided a benefit of not needing to establish relationships with the participants. However, due to personal membership with the subgroup, establishing an effective researcher–participant working relationship required a guarantee of confidentiality and a level of personal discretion; not disclosing identifiable information or discussing participants' responses ensured participant confidentiality, as recommended by Glesne (2011).

To further establish the researcher–participant relationship required the adoption of the role of a researcher, which was possible by effectively preparing for conducting the data analysis and collection processes. This preparation began with introducing the study to the participants in a professional manner and inviting their participation. Initial explanation of the study was to the whole group of participants, and included an explanation of the nature and purpose of the study, which preceded an e-mail invitation to become a participant. A follow-up contact with several participants was necessary to provide additional information and details of the study. Explaining that participation was voluntary and that there would be no retribution for choosing to not participate and providing a clear explanation that this study was a personal study and not associated with the school district, or district personnel was important to establish security. Following the group meeting which explained the study, each school leader received a personal invitation to participate in the study; in order to avoid any feelings of coercion, the

participants received the invitation by e-mail, along with a letter of consent and, as Hatch (2002) recommended, an outline of the purpose of the study in a manner that was easy to understand. In line with Hatch's recommendation, this invitation included a description of the roles and responsibilities of both the participant and researcher, as well as the expected time commitment of the participants.

To further prepare for the role of a researcher required the development of an interview protocol and conduction of practice interviews with a fellow doctoral candidate. The manner in which I conducted myself in the interviews demonstrated that I served as a researcher as a learner. Adopting a nonthreatening, collaborative approach and using well-developed questions that were open-ended and encouraged dialogue expressed the desire to learn from the participants.

Ethical protection of participants. In order to ensure that I understood and complied with the ethical requirements of conducting human research, I took the National Institutes of Health (NIH) training course on protecting human research participants. The Belmont Report established three essential principles for ethically conducting research with human participants in order to protect participants from harm, which included ensuring the respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (NIH, n.d.). All individuals provided informed consent prior to participating in the study, and they received a verbal explanation and a written explanation, which included a participant consent form to sign before the start of any data collection. Compliance with the NIH principles required (a) confirmation of voluntary participant participation, (b) explanation of the risks to the study (sharing sensitive information) and benefits of the study (informing practice in

working with antisocial students), (c) assurance of confidentiality by using pseudonyms, (d) protecting all data by storing interview transcripts and notes electronically in a password-protected file and destroying data on completion of the study, and (e) scheduling interviews at a time and location that is convenient for the participant (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, treating participants with respect and taking the time to listen to their responses was an essential ethical role as a researcher. Hatch (2002) stated that a part of the design of qualitative inquiry should include the researcher "giving back something of substance" (p. 66). Consequently, I utilized the learning from this study in order to offer suggestions to improve practice in working with students' antisocial behaviors, which will help to serve students better.

An additional concern of conducting research within one's district was the potential for receiving risky information from participants. Hatch (2002) and Glesne (2011) referred to this type of information as dangerous knowledge and cautioned that this dangerous knowledge poses an ethical dilemma. Glesne suggested that a researcher should consider ways to communicate dangerous knowledge without violating confidentiality of the participants, and should never discuss this knowledge with others nor intervene in the situation. I ensured participant confidentiality and appropriately protected the data. Given the dual role of colleague and researcher, it was essential that the participants understood that information shared within the interview remained within the confines of the study and that there was no intervention in situations shared by the participants. A final concern was that friendships with the participants might result in the disclosure of more information than would be offered to an unfamiliar researcher

(Glesne, 2011). Hatch (2002) noted that an ethical consideration of a researcher is to determine how to protect participants' feelings when presenting findings from a study. Consequently, an ethical dilemma included determining whether to include or exclude certain information from the data, and how subsequently to present such information.

The intent of conducting this study was to investigate a local problem and suggest a solution to that local problem. Glesne (2011) posited that "*backyard* research" (p. 41), that is, conducting research in one's institution, would likely be useful for making improvements that are personally meaningful and relevant. However, being a member of the subgroup of participants was an ethical concern of this study. Belonging to the subgroup posed inherent risks for potential bias and generated possible concerns about the credibility of the study's findings. Hatch (2002) explained that conducting research in one's setting causes difficulties because the researcher and participants might not be able to remove themselves from established roles and might fail to adopt research roles. Additionally, Hatch noted that it is difficult to bracket previous experiences and warned "*familiarity breeds inattention*" (p. 47). Glesne (2011) cautioned that backyard research could lead to "ethical and political dilemmas" (p. 42), especially if the researcher discovers information that is possibly of political concern. By clearly defining the researcher's role, following an interview protocol, and noting assumptions throughout the study, ensured attentiveness to the research process and alleviated the concerns of Glesne (2011) and Hatch (2002).

Data Collection

Following participant informed consent, an interview took place with each participant at a time and location that was convenient to the participant; each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Appendix B presents the specific semistructured interview questions that I asked each participant. The solicitation of a signed consent form occurred at the time of the initial interview with each participant. Despite the emerging nature of qualitative research, follow-up interviews with participants were not necessary to seek clarification or gain further insight.

During the interview, I made notes regarding participant body language and tone of voice and audio recorded the interview. I transcribed verbatim all interviews and notes, which were then securely stored in a password-protected file on a personal computer. I conducted member checks with each participant, asked for a review of the interview transcription and a check for accuracy, which established reliability and demonstrated credibility; additionally, I shared preliminary findings with participants, which enabled feedback to revise the findings, thus further increasing the study's validity. All of these steps were described in Creswell (2012) and Yin (2011).

In addition to conducting participant interviews, I planned to collect physical artifacts or archival records to allow for a greater triangulation of the data and generation of a rich, thick description of the case, as recommended by Creswell (2013). Although the collection of multiple forms of data makes it is possible to infer a case’s complexity and to triangulate the data to support the same findings, these additional artifacts did not

materialize during data collection. However, triangulation was still possible due to the collection of data from all 13 of the WSD school leaders.

Research Log and Reflective Journal

To remain consistent with qualitative research required the maintenance of a research log and a reflective journal. As Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) suggested, utilizing a research log and a reflective journal provides an opportunity to employ a memoing technique, which will encourage documentation of thoughts and ideas and potentially form the foundation for interpreting the data, drawing conclusions, and indicating areas for recommendation of a solution to managing students' antisocial behaviors. Within the journal, in alignment with Glesne's (2011) recommendations, the documentation of thoughts formed part of the analytical phase of the study. The research log was a place to document the field activities, specifically, the planned interviews and a timeframe for ensuring timely transcription of the interviews. Cataloging of the research log and reflective journal was chronological; a moleskin notebook comprised the log and journal, with a date provided for each entry in the journals.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher of this study, I had a level of preparedness and experience to conduct the research. In addition, while I am a member of the subgroup of participants, I have no supervisory capacity, nor have ever held a supervisory role, over any individual who was a participant in this study. I am currently serving in my 10th year as a middle school assistant principal in WSD and have a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in educational leadership with a P-12 principal certification in

Washington State. As an assistant principal, working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors and finding zero tolerance policies and the lack of alternatives to suspension is a daily challenge. Additionally, a curiosity about why students display antisocial behaviors, and a belief that studying the "why" behind antisocial behavior, might shed light on alternatives that are more effective in eliciting change and development of prosocial behaviors. Finally, I was a doctoral candidate and a novice qualitative researcher with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct quality qualitative research.

Of note, one of the potential participants (middle school principal) is my direct supervisor and I worked directly with one of the other school leaders as co-assistant principals at Washington High School. I have not worked directly with any of the other school leaders. As previously mentioned, belonging to the participants' subgroup presented an ethical concern, posed a potential for bias, and could limit the study's credibility due to the possible inability to adopt the roles of researcher and participant (Hatch, 2002). Additionally, it is possible that participants shared information "in the context of friendship" (Glesne, 2011, p. 171) rather than in the context of research, which created an ethical dilemma when presenting the results; critically questioning whether particular pieces of narrative should become a part of the findings avoided this concern. Furthermore, it is possible that participants did not fully share their perspectives because they either believe I already had the information or because they chose to withhold information (Hatch, 2002). However, the established relationships with the participants

were of benefit to this study because the relationships encouraged the candid disclosure and sharing of information.

Data Analysis

Consistent with qualitative methodology, data analysis began early during the data collection phase and followed the first interview. In order to identify principals' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior, the primary form of data analysis was a thematic analysis, which required that the data be coded and segregated to allow for the emergence of themes within the data (Glesne, 2011). Following an iterative process, whereby data analysis and coding began immediately after transcription of the first interview, required switching between data collection and analysis alongside subsequent participant interviews (Creswell, 2012). Glesne (2011) claimed that the iterative process and constant reflection on the data and organization by codes would generate meaningful and relevant study findings. Yin (2014) suggested that one way to initiate the analysis phase was to begin by writing memos and notes; the reflective journal was a place to begin the analysis process.

Analysis of the data followed a constant comparative inductive process to describe, classify, and interpret the data (Creswell, 2012; 2013; Merriam, 2009). The application of a coding process during the analysis phase allowed for the labeling of all parts of each interview transcription, archival report, or physical artifact, which permitted the themes within the data to emerge, thus satisfying the thematic analysis technique (Creswell, 2012; Glesne, 2011). By grouping the developed codes, the combining of similar codes led to the generation of themes that responded to the research questions

(Creswell, 2012). In alignment with a thematic analysis, the intent was to use an iterative process and coding technique to compare the data and connect the stories between the participants in order to generate a clear understanding of principals' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior (Glesne, 2011). Consistent with Glesne's (2011) recommendations, I used a thematic analysis process to create a framework from which to present the findings.

In addition, during data analysis the conduction of a cross case analysis ensued when relevant. Specifically, the purpose was to identify patterns or differences in the data between the school leaders at each of the three grade level bands (elementary school, middle school, and high school). School leaders at each grade band have their own challenges in working with students' antisocial behaviors; consequently, identifying these grade band perspectives allowed for additional insight into the data.

A personal preference was to work with data using a hands-on approach, and, as such, analysis of the data occurred without the use of qualitative computer software. Within the reflective log, maintenance of a codebook helped to manage the emerging codes (Glesne, 2011). In order to secure the data, all artifacts, interview transcriptions, and interview notes remained in a secure, password-protected computer file (Glesne, 2011). I assigned pseudonyms upon completion of the interview so that only I knew the true identity of each participant (Glesne, 2011). For ease of data management, I chose a random letter of the alphabet to assign each participant as a pseudonym. Throughout the research process, the research log and reflective journal remained in a safe and secure place to which others did not have access.

Research Accuracy and Credibility

Demonstrating the validity of the research was important due to the interpretive nature of qualitative research. Demonstration of reflexivity occurred with a clear explanation of my role as a researcher and experience working with students and fellow school leaders (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, an examination of the different data sets in order to determine commonalities, differences, and patterns provided for triangulation of the data and helped ensure the validity, accuracy, and credibility of the study's findings (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Moreover, the establishment of credibility transpired by comparing, contrasting, and verifying the findings utilizing the published literature on student self-regulation within academic tasks, the classroom setting, and the unstructured social realm of school.

In order to ensure the accuracy and promote credibility of the findings, participants conducted member checks of both the transcribed interview transcripts and the preliminary findings. These member checks ensured that participants had the opportunity to clarify any misconceptions, provide additional detail, or modify their explanations and meaning (Merriam, 2009). Member checks also served to ensure that researcher bias did not impact the accuracy of the findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). In addition, triangulation, which is the collection and corroboration of evidence from multiple sources, was possible through the conduction of interviews with multiple participants (Merriam, 2009; Yin 2011). Triangulating all data sources ensured the reduction of threats to the validity of the study (Yin, 2011).

Discrepant Cases

With 13 potential participants, there was a likelihood of discovering discrepant cases. A discrepant case included information within the data that was contradictory to an emerging theme or category, or that provided a different perspective on those emerging themes (Lodico et al., 2010). The critical examination of the data for discrepant cases and careful analysis, interpretation, and reporting of those cases increased the credibility of the findings and also provided an opportunity to present the differing perspectives on the phenomenon of students' antisocial behavior. The identification of discrepant cases during data analysis required the development of additional codes and re-visitation of all data to ensure full exploration of these cases (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Additionally, Freeman, deMarrais, Preissle, Roulston, and St. Pierre (2007) explained that there are two choices for managing the emergence of a discrepant case, which included (a) noting the discrepancy for future analysis, or (b) revisiting the data and emerging patterns in order to find a better fit for the data. Accordingly, Lodico et al. (2010) stated that it is acceptable to either modify the themes or make a suggestion as to how the discrepant case does not align with the emerging patterns and themes. In summary, Yin (2011) suggested that maintaining a sense of skepticism throughout the data collection and analysis phases would likely elicit discrepant cases within the data, and would serve to strengthen the study's validity. In line with Yin's recommendations, a discrepant case led to additional scrutiny of the data, consultation with additional sources and sought other evidence or data that explained or eliminated the discrepancy.

Timeline

Following IRB approval in October of 2014, participants received information regarding the study, followed by a personal email invitation to become a participant. Subsequently, the data collection and analysis phases of this study took place during October and November of 2014. Following data collection and analysis, a synthesis of the data facilitated the writing and presentation of those the findings. As a result of the study's findings, the development of the resulting project followed as a means of applying those findings. This project became a policy recommendation to advocate for a change in school leaders' practice in working with students' antisocial behaviors, which included receiving ongoing, job-embedded professional development and the inclusion of SEL skill development and a school-wide positive behavior support approach.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Two main assumptions guided this project study. The first assumption was that WSD's school leaders would voluntarily participate in the study. The second assumption was that the WSD school leaders would be willing to share their experiences and perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. Specifically, it was an assumption that the school leaders would share their experiences and perceptions openly and honestly within the constraint of participant to me as a researcher and not as a colleague.

Limitations

The conduction of this study as "backyard research" (Glesne, 2011, p. 43) presented potential difficulties and required an increase in the awareness and sensitivity

to the acquired data. Consequently, an area of concern, which thus served as a limitation, was that the participants would withhold information because they either assumed that I knew the information or because they did not wish to share their perceptions or experiences due to my membership in the participant subgroup (Hatch, 2002). Additionally, it was possible that the participants did not take the research process seriously due to my role as a novice researcher.

Qualitative research in itself poses certain limitations. For example, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection, which required the continual awareness of researcher bias that should be addressed throughout all aspects of the study (Glesne, 2011). Also, the participant size for this study was small; however, the study had enough participants to be credible (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, a limitation of a case study was that the results were unlikely to be generalizable to another setting; consequently, the study might have little value outside of the WSD (Yin, 2014).

Scope

The scope of this study focused on school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. Specifically, the intent was to determine ways in which to reduce students' antisocial behavior and student exclusions in order to increase academic performance. This study included all 13, K-12 school leaders from the WSD.

Delimitations

The purpose of this study was to explore school leaders' perceptions of the ability of students to manage their behavior within the construct of self-regulation theory. The study did not intend to cover teachers' or students' perceptions of antisocial behavior due

to the ethical consideration of recruiting these groups as participants. In addition, while there were numerous theoretical constructs that govern or explain antisocial behavior, this study did not intend to cover theoretical frameworks other than self-regulation. Finally, this study only included participants from WSD because the purpose of the study was to respond to a problem at the local level; to study participants outside of the WSD would not provide data that was relevant for solving the problem in WSD.

Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. Following data collection and analysis, a synthesis of the findings provided a response to the study's research questions. The participants appeared amenable during the interviews and shared their experiences as school leaders, which included details and examples from their work. The following section presents these findings and includes a synthesis of the participants' perspectives as well as direct quotes, which provides the study's rich detail. During data analysis, there was an evident emergence of themes and patterns; it is these themes that assisted in the development of the discussion of the study's findings. Additionally, presentation of the study's findings is subsequently organized according to each of the three research questions.

Findings

Research Question 1

The first research question focused on understanding the experiences of school leaders in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors. Specifically, questions

asked during the interview encouraged the participants to share examples of the types of antisocial behaviors they most frequently encounter, the location of those behaviors, and to provide a description of those students who often exhibit antisocial behavior. Also, the school leaders described some of their challenges and explained how they work with teachers and families, as well as the students themselves, when utilizing exclusionary corrective action, while also reflecting on the time that this works takes during their day.

Data indicated that the work school leaders do as a result of antisocial behavior varies depending on the position of the school leader as well as the grade band that he, or she serves. However, the data also highlighted numerous similarities, patterns, and trends regarding the investment of time, energy, and nature of the work that all participants undertake on a daily basis. When school leaders support students who engage in antisocial behaviors, their role is not limited to working solely with the student; as school leaders navigate the challenges that accompany students' antisocial behaviors their role also necessitates interaction with teachers and family members.

Typical antisocial behaviors. Antisocial behaviors among children and youth continue to plague school leaders. Typical antisocial behaviors change and become more intense according to the developmental level of students, which presents concerns for the continuation of deviant behaviors into adulthood (Fosco, Stormshak, & Dishion, 2012). However, the participants in this study did not indicate consensus regarding how student behaviors have changed during their time in education. Interestingly, two middle level participants and one high school participant did not consider there to be significant changes in student behaviors, and actually considered there to be a reduction in

disciplinary infractions; Participant I noted "I would say…I've seen a lot less tobacco than I used to see" and Principal G reflected that "there's not as much of that physical fighting as there was." Initially, Participant B did not consider there to have been a change to the types of antisocial behaviors, but then followed up by saying, "I think maybe in regards to drugs; I see way more heroin than I ever saw 10-years ago at the high school level…I think it's more prevalence with the drugs", which aligned with three other high school leaders who also noted an increase in drug violations. For example, Participant J explained that drug violations at the high school level are "more hardcore…we can't really use dogs for [finding]…it's pills, it's prescription drugs, it's just a lot harder to find." Two other high school leaders noted the impact that the legalization of marijuana in Washington State had on drug (marijuana) violations. While participant M did not identify a correlation between the legalization of marijuana and an increase in marijuana suspensions, the participant considered students to be more brazen about their drug use. Participant K, however, shared:

> I think we've seen more…pot in the first few weeks of school than we have, I don't know, maybe not the whole year last year, but for most of the year. I mean it's been a really, really big problem and I attribute that to the legalization, and students are saying, you know, this is okay.

In support of Participant K's analysis, Palamar, Ompad, and Petkova (2014) found that 10% of 12th graders claimed that the legalization of marijuana would result in the onset of their use of marijuana.

Most participants shared that they felt there to be a change in student discipline issues throughout their time in education, and there was some agreement as to the changes in those issues. The perception of the elementary participants focused on increased concerns regarding threatening behavior, language, and the sexualization of behavior, largely due to the access that students have to content that is developmentally inappropriate for students this age; as Participant D noted, "kids are more knowledgeable, and of course they're going to bring it [inappropriate language, and sexual and violent material] to school and talk about it." At the middle and high school levels, other than drug violations, the perception of the participants was that changes in discipline issues centered on harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) and classroom issues such as disruption, disrespect, and defiance. Furthermore, participants shared that the nature of antisocial behaviors has become more intense, especially in regards to the role that social media plays; Participant J commented that "anything dealing with social media, we're just not equipped [to deal with]." Stanbrook (2014) highlighted the impact that social media has on the nature of HIB and suggested that combatting cyberbullying requires the evolution of strategies, including legislation; Stanbrook further suggested that while addressing bullying is a societal issue, schools should continue "to play a primary active role…through education, prevention, monitoring, and enforcement" (p. 483). Consequently, school leaders should adopt a strategic prevention and intervention approach to address societal issues that manifest within the school.

The categories of antisocial behavior that participants predominantly cited as the greatest changes in discipline issues were also those cited as being the most frequently

encountered antisocial behaviors: HIB, drugs, and disruptive behavior. The finding that disruption and HIB are commonly occurring antisocial behaviors is concerning given that Harber and Sakade (2009) noted how frequent disruption to the classroom environment and incidents of HIB negatively impact how children learn and grow. Specific to each grade band, elementary participants noted that incidents of personal conflict were the most typical antisocial behaviors, with middle school participants' encountering disrespectful behaviors. Both high school and middle school participants claimed that disruptive behaviors and incidents of HIB occurred most frequently with only high school participants indicating that drug infractions were a prevalent antisocial behavior. An additional finding was that insubordination is a frequently occurring antisocial behavior that spans all grade levels. Vaaland, Idsoe, and Roland (2011) described how insubordinate and defiant behavior falls into the authority conflict pathway of problem behavior, which is a result of students attempting to gain peer affiliation or striving for power over their peers. Consequently, when school leaders understand the student's need to belong, finding ways to create a sense of community and belonging might reduce antisocial behaviors.

Undoubtedly, participants shared how most incidents of antisocial behavior occur during unstructured time in locations that, as Participant M claimed, are an accumulation of "the mass of humanity", such as the lunchroom or the hallways. Unstructured time, which has a high level of freedom and the absence of constant direct adult supervision and vigilance, allows for increased opportunities for students to participate in antisocial behaviors such as HIB and drug use. Participant H explained that in the classroom

environment teachers control how students engage with each other, organize groups, or partners, which assists those students who have not learned to engage effectively with others. Additionally, Participant E described how the structure in the classroom, along with the lower amount of stimuli (as compared to recess) provides fewer opportunities for students to make antisocial behavioral choices. However, several participants at the middle and high school levels described the occurrence of antisocial behavior in the classroom, in addition to unstructured locations. Participant G's reflection was that antisocial behaviors occurred within the classroom when the classroom teacher failed to establish a relationship with the individual child. On the other hand, Participant K felt that antisocial behaviors occurred in:

> Classes that the student is not challenged, or [where] they are so far behind and don't get any of [the content] that they start misbehaving because it doesn't matter to them…why should they listen [when] they're never going to get it.

An alternative perspective shared by two participants focused on how, when they think about students' antisocial behavior, their concern lies with the student who isolates himself or herself from his or her peers. While not necessarily considered antisocial, in regards to demonstrated deviant behavior, the observation that the isolated students exhibit antisocial behavior is relevant. Participant J stated that they're "the kid I worry about the most" and Participant C shared that with the students who are isolates, who do not know how to engage with others, a role of the school leader is to "teach the kids that are the lonely ones what [their] role [is]…how you get engaged without somebody doing it for you." Jevtic (2011) supported the need for concern of those students who isolate

themselves from their peers and explained that while social isolation is the absence of dysfunctional behaviors, it is "the first phase of antisociality…which demonstrate[s] in a symbolic way the disregard of social values…[and lack of] care for the dialog with others" (p. 34). Given that the participants indicated that antisocial behavior predominantly occurs during unstructured time, it is possible that students who isolate themselves from other students do so to avoid either engaging in antisocial behaviors, or becoming the target of others' antisocial behaviors.

When asked to describe students who frequently exhibit antisocial behaviors, the participants portrayed these students as injured, damaged, hardened, and beaten down. In addition, participants explained how repeatedly being in trouble for antisocial behaviors created a sense of acceptance, a desire to give up, and a lack of confidence in these students. While Participant F articulated that these students "seemingly have big hearts, they just get hurt easier" and generally have limited coping skills when faced with adverse situations, which results in an antisocial behavioral response. Additionally, Participant H shared her concerns that with students who are repeatedly in trouble, the discipline begins to define who they are as an individual. However, Participant E noted that students who make antisocial behavioral choices often are "screaming for help", which aligned with the thoughts of Participants A and F, who noted that students get addicted to both their behavior and being in the office.

Delving deeper, several themes emerged as to the possible causes of antisocial behavior: drugs, learning disabilities, home, maturity, and values. Participants B and M shared that in uncovering the root cause of disrespect or anger issues with their students,

they find it is often the involvement of drugs. Given that drugs alter the functional capacities of the body and mind, this is not a surprising finding (National Institute on Drug Abuse, n.d.). In general, participants shared that when students' home lives are dysfunctional, or even abusive, when they do not receive support regarding the development of appropriate prosocial behaviors, and when they are not held accountable at home for their antisocial behaviors, students are less likely to behave according to accepted societal behavioral norms. Halgunseth, Perkins, Lippold, and Nix (2013) also found that when students come from a home that does not establish guidelines for prosocial behaviors, and accepts antisocial behaviors as the norm, those children are more likely to demonstrate antisocial behaviors. Participants E and I, noted that at the opposite end of the spectrum, affluent parents, who consider that their child can do no wrong, who enable their child, and who rescue their child also contribute to repeated antisocial behaviors. In addition, Participants I and J noted that students who see no value in school, who are failing, have limited high school credits, who are not on track to graduate, or who are not connected to school also more often demonstrate antisocial behaviors. Participant H further reflected that students who struggle academically compensate by acting out in classes in order to deflect attention from their academic deficits, which Valaand, Idsoe, and Roland (2011) supported in their description of how learning difficulties serve as a trigger for antisocial behavior. Participant G expressed that those students "that get multiple exclusions on a lower level are usually a bit more immature", with both participants K and L sharing that often the repeat offenders are great kids who

make poor choices; Participant L captured the essence of their choices saying that they "just consistently make stupid mistakes."

The data indicated that there was no typical student response when working with students in a discipline situation. Participant A found that the students' responses when facing an exclusion "ranged from just real anger about it, disbelief, not agreement, to completely understanding, and contrite, just biding their time to get back in school." Many of the participants found that while students might not like the consequences, or might deny the allegation, they understand how the action resulted in the consequence. Participant M clarified:

> I will rarely suspend a kid if I don't have sufficient evidence, unless I can show them point blank this is the proof that we have that you did this…and even the kids that stick with the lie eventually will, you know, adhere to the consequence.

Additionally, Participant D reflected:

> It's really rare that a child doesn't understand why the consequences are as big as they are. I suppose that's the easy part. When we get to that stage helping them understand what's going on if they don't already know is easy, but taking it to the next level and actually helping them change their behavior is the real challenge.

Interestingly, Participant A found that the more serious the situation, the greater level of cooperation by the student. This was a similar finding to the high school leaders, who noted that older students had a tendency to take greater responsibility for their actions, and that at the high school level, incidents of antisocial behavior required less investigative time than similar incidents at the middle level. Additionally, Participant J

shared that "unfortunately at high school, their actions are…sometimes more serious, so the duration [of an exclusion] tends to be a lot longer, but sometimes it's a lot more clear too."

Elementary and middle level school leaders described a different, more empathetic response, to students when working with their antisocial behaviors. These participants described their focus on building student connections and engaging in conversations that put the ownership for solving the problem back on the child. The elementary participants shared that a foundational approach to working with students in discipline situations is to apply the *Love and Logic* framework, which promotes "healthy parent/teacher and teacher/student relationships and positive school wide discipline" (Love and Logic Institute, Inc., 2014, para. 1). Participant D explained that the purpose of *Love and Logic* is for the student to own and take responsibility for his or her actions; she explained that *Love and Logic* is essential "because we can't change their behavior for them, they are the ones who are captains of their own ship." Furthermore, Participant D described the essence of using the *Love and Logic* process as "empathy building, talking, helping them recognize someone else's perspective, and helping them decide what they are going to do to make the situation right and solve the problem." Additionally, Participant G shared her tendency to spend more time and pay greater attention to students who receive an out-of-school suspension a little more when those students return from an out-of-school exclusion; she explained her reaction to be "more attuned to them…just in the holistic child thing", further explaining how students are more likely to "weather an ISS a little better" than an out-of-school suspension.

A resounding theme among all participants was their notion that exclusion does not solve the underlying problem or change the antisocial behavior. As Participant D noted "taking it to the next level and actually helping them change their behavior is the real challenge in a situation." It was very evident among all participants that they shared a collective desire to help students learn from their mistakes and be able to move forward from the incident with some additional coping skills; helping students learn to take ownership and responsibility for their actions is a key role that school leaders perceive they must play. Participant F shared the importance for school leaders to help students understand that someone cares about them, and to help them internalize the positive attributes that the adults share so that they might demonstrate prosocial rather than antisocial behaviors in the future.

Investment of time. Within this study, four of the principals noted that they have an assistant principal or program support specialist who does most of the work with students' antisocial behaviors; however, three of these principals expressed that this aspect of their position still consumes between 20-50% of their day, with only Participant F indicating that the time spent dealing with students' antisocial behaviors occupies perhaps 10 minutes a day. The range of time that the assistant principals considered they spent with these students indicated some variation. Interestingly, Participant J (principal) believed that assistant principals spend about 50% of their day engaging with antisocial behaviors; however, this was not the general sentiment of the assistant principals. Most assistant principals considered they spent 25-30% of their day managing students' antisocial behaviors; however, Participant H shared that working with students' antisocial

behaviors consumes 40-50% of each day, and Participant A considered that time to be 60-70% of their daily work.

While no patterns transpired regarding the time that this part of the school leaders' jobs takes within the grade bands (elementary, middle, and high), one emergent theme indicated that the school leaders have very different perceptions regarding what working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors involves. For example, Participant I shared that "a lot of issues that we deal with are as a result of that [antisocial behavior], you know, talking to teachers about classroom management type stuff." Participant B explained that engaging with these students does not always require a disciplinary consequence, but involves an investment of time, she noted that "I'm really dealing with kids in trying to problem solve and teach, because a lot of them have never been taught appropriate behavior." Similarly, other participants indicated that working with students who demonstrate antisocial behaviors includes the investment of time prior to them getting into trouble by supporting these students in developing prosocial behaviors, meeting with them to help keep them on the right track, and connecting with and building a relationship with these students. Participant G explained that she will assign a student to the office because he or she is in "need [of] a place where someone's going to say 'hello', you know, and put their thumb down and make sure that they're doing something." Building relationships, connecting with students, and providing teaching opportunities are some of the ways in which school leaders invest time in the hopes of preventing antisocial behavior.

Working with teachers and families. The work that school leaders accomplish with teachers, families, and the students around incidents of antisocial behaviors presents numerous challenges and requires a plethora of skills and attributes. All participants noted their varied experiences in working with each group and yet shared that there were the similar characteristics in working with all of the groups. Participant H shared that when working with students in a discipline situation, the response of the student was very similar to the response of the parent. All participants discussed their encounters with each group and shared their experiences with a continuum of responses, which included the willingness and unwillingness to receive guidance and support, the level of ownership and ability to take responsibility, and the amount of support, or lack thereof, received during the corrective action process.

Working with teachers. Most school leaders shared that while their experiences varied in working with teachers, for the most part, most teachers truly care about, support, and successfully manage their students, especially those who have a tendency toward exhibiting antisocial behaviors. A pattern that emerged from the data indicated that those teachers who struggle in working with students who have antisocial behaviors do so because they do not know how to deal with those behaviors. While assisting teachers whose students demonstrate antisocial behaviors in their classroom is a vital aspect of the school leader's work, to improve student achievement, helping these teachers is challenging and often requires a significant investment of time.

For example, Participant J shared that working with teachers whose students have antisocial behaviors can be difficult, and noted that "it's hard to work with a teacher like

that because sometimes they're the reason." In reflection, Participant J felt, "they [the teachers] struggle with knowing how to deal with them [students with antisocial behaviors], because that's why they're present in their classroom…[and] because they're not dealing with it…I notice it in my observation." Interestingly, Participant L reflected that the teachers with "the worst classroom management…probably tend to be [the] ones who are least willing to change the way they do things." Participant K shared an experience during an informal observation when there were incidents of antisocial behavior in the classroom; the participant reflected on the importance of sharing the observation, and commented that "I'm not sure that all the time…the teachers are aware that it's happening." In a similar light, Participant M noted that it is on the rare occasion that school leaders address an individual teacher who writes frequent and multiple referrals. In general, school leaders expressed that they expect teachers to assist the students in correcting antisocial behaviors that occur within the classroom; Participant C shared that her discipline philosophy is that it is essential to work with the students to improve a situation in which they are struggling. Participant C further articulated that when teachers do not take the time to help the student, to build a relationship, and to support them in making behavioral improvements, but instead send children directly to the office, it is the conflict in philosophy that causes frustration; she explained:

> I think that's where…some teachers get frustrated with me because I'm not the heavy hand unless I…absolutely have to be…it's really working with the kids; it's changing behavior…it's not disciplinary, this is a kid that has social emotional issues that we need to be helping, not making it worse.

The participants shared that when school leaders do intervene and work alongside the teachers, the strategies that the school leaders use focus on providing suggestions for different classroom management techniques, encouraging teachers to increase the level of engagement within their lesson, and guiding teachers to provide documentation, calling home, and meeting with the student and, if appropriate, the family. These experiences supported the findings of a study by Griffin and Galassi (2010) on parental perceptions of academic success. Griffin and Galassi found that a lack of communication between the school and the home created a barrier to academic success, and, therefore, they advocated for an increase in proactive communication on behalf of the school, and in particular, the teacher.

Participant G discussed the helpfulness of the new teacher evaluation system in Washington State and shared that when students exhibit antisocial behaviors in a classroom, the conversation with the teacher is immediate, "in the moment, because that's when it's right in front of you"; however, with student behavior being a part of the evaluation criteria, "the evaluation system allows you to talk when it's not…[a] no news is good news...format." Finally, Participant F shared the importance of identifying and fixing systems within the structure of the school that are either broken or not effective and "helping [the teachers] understand what is their responsibility to manage…what that looks like…and sounds like, and what the office will support them in [managing]."

Working with families. The experiences of all participants in working with families of students who received a suspension for antisocial behavior proved to vary considerably regarding the level of support for the school and school leader.

Predominantly, the school leaders had positive experiences when interacting with families. Participant C shared:

> I was nervous about involving [and] calling families…[but] when I came here I was amazed by the response of the families; "thank you for this information, we will talk with…our son or daughter at home, please let us know if we can do anything else, or if there's any other incidences."

However, Participant K noted that involving and partnering with the parent is one of the most challenging parts of working with a student during a discipline situation, and shared one of the most stressful situations:

> When you're having a conversation with the parents and you're…trying to convince them that what you're doing is to provide a teachable moment to this student, let them know that it's antisocial behavior and that it's not okay when the parents don't totally agree with you…sometimes the discussions can get a little bit heated, and trying to maintain that sense of professionalism and calmness and keep control of the conversation. Those are probably the hardest conversations and make that parental involvement piece be most difficult, but, I think, if you keep at it, you know, you just have to keep at it.

Interestingly, one participant (a principal) shared how the role of the assistant principal and the principal alters the interaction with the families. Participant J shared that when he was as an assistant principal, and was typically the informant of the incident and corrective action, the familial interactions were generally negative. Whereas in the role of principal, Participant J felt that family members are "nice to me because they're trying to

get me to change and reduce the suspension"; however, Participant J did add that the greatest issue is that while family members "for the most part, understand, yeah, my kid screwed up, or my kid has done something bad, it's just they disagree with the duration of the suspension and having the kid miss school." Generally they want their child to be in school and not at home.

Despite the participants sharing the variation of their experiences with families, the majority of participants expressed their satisfaction with their ability to partner with families to provide corrective action and a learning opportunity for the student. As Participant M articulated "the hard part is, you know, the two or three parents that do give you grief on this seem to overshadow the 90% of the parents that are supportive." For the family members that are less supportive Participant M felt that it was a result of the parent's perception that there was a lack of evidence to substantiate the exclusion, or, as Participant F shared, it is a result of the child being a recipient of repeated exclusions, which created a lack of trust in the school or the system. However, Participant L, a high school leader, noted that as students get older, and are recipients of increased incidents of corrective action for antisocial behavior, "I visualize the eye-rolling on the other side of the phone…you know, they've heard it before." Another high school leader, Participant A shared an experience where "the mum was understanding, wasn't surprised, and really [was] at her wits end in knowing how to handle the girl because it'd been so frequent and so severe."

Consequently, school leaders need a variety of skills to work effectively with the families of students who receive an exclusion from school. When family members are

either unsupportive or adamantly against the corrective action, the art of listening to a parent is essential for moving forward, as Participant D explained:

> When I take the time to deescalate them and talk about the situation it's really markedly rare that a family doesn't come back around to saying I, at least, understand what the issue is; they may not agree with the discipline situation, but for the most part we can at least find some common ground.

As Participant E explained, when using empathy, building a relationship between the family members, the student, and the school, and focusing on "the positives about the kids that are genuine, the parents generally understand" and while they might not agree with the consequence, parents will support the school leader. Ryan and Zoldy (2011) noted the importance of using empathy in order to build and maintain relationships that antisocial behaviors might otherwise destroy. Additionally, Participant E stated that what helps garner support from families is when "the suspensions are very black and white, [when they] can't argue it, or it's the chronic misconduct and we've done a lot of work with the kids and the parents understand it, they know we've been working on it." Participant H also talked about the importance of clearly communicating with families and engaging in open conversations in helping them to understand the nature, severity, and consequence of an action that results in an exclusion; Participant H shared the importance of letting the family know that "I'm on their side; I'm on the kid's side" in building trust and a strong working relationship. Participant K summed up the importance of approaching the discussions with families in order to generate support by stating that "you have to figure out a way to approach the discussion so that the parents realize that

you're trying to be helpful and not hurtful, and then…they're on your side and going to be supportive of what you do."

At all levels, school leaders utilize in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and, on the rare occasion, expulsion, as exclusionary corrective actions. For the most part, all participants stated that they receive less push-back from parents when assigning an in-school-suspension as a consequence compared to out-of-school suspension. Several participants shared some interesting perspectives on the difference between in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. For example, Participant I noted that there "typically may be a little more push-back on out-of-school suspensions…[because] out-of-school impacts the parents more than in-school does, so that might be part of that…now it's their problem to deal with, not the school's problem." Whereas, at the other side of the spectrum, Participant G noted:

> Sometimes, if you deal with it at school it doesn't invite, it doesn't really put any ownership on to the parents to help out…they say, "well, if it isn't in front of me, you know, I'm not going to deal with it", and that's unfortunate for the kid.

Participant H elaborated further:

> An out-of-school suspension is more intense…I mean, I'm trying to make it that way, but an in-school suspension is something we can handle…an out-of-school suspension is more of, we need your parents' support and we need you to wrap yourself around this child and figure out what's going on, on the home front as well.

Participant G advocated for in-school suspension, noting the weight of the decision to remove a child from the academic setting and that to "deny them an education is so long lasting." Participant G clarified that an in-school suspension provides an "almost free card to be able to implement consequences without it damaging their education."

Challenges of exclusionary decision-making. For many school leaders, working with students in situations in which they engaged in antisocial behaviors is challenging. An underlying theme amongst the participants was that one of the greatest difficulties to overcome is when a situation elicits an emotional response of some nature from the school leader. For example, Participant G expressed that the hardest situations to manage are those that are "emotional, so if I get to a point where I over-identify with a certain situation"; Participant B shared that it is the moral and ethical side of drug suspensions that are the most challenging:

> I have this internal struggle of excluding them…just removing them is not going to help the situation, so what really helps them is treatment and…my goal with a kid who has been caught with drugs or alcohol a number of times is okay, how am I going to respond in order to really deal with the issue, because I can kick them out, but it's not going to do any good.

Another Participant, C, felt that the situations in which the students' generated a sense of fear among teachers or students cause the greatest level of angst due to the need to remain impartial. Additionally, Participant C explained that the complexity of corrective action includes providing due process for the student who is the perceived threat, while also ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all others. Participant C described the difficulty of

working with a student where the perception was that he or she was a threat to the safety of the school, and how that situation created internal conflict and left unanswered questions; she explained:

> You suspend him for 2 or 3 days, but it doesn't change it because he needs help, it's not just a one time it's going to fix it change…it was just impossible. But, you know, how do you work with a kid like that, that one, is taller than you, two, everybody's terrified of, three, you don't trust him at all, you know…he reminds me of a kid that's going to come back and do some damage.

On a different level, several participants discussed how incidents of HIB are the most challenging situations to handle because of the nature of the incidents and the often involvement of social media, which causes less clarity and adds additional drama to the situation. Participant I talked about how difficult the HIB situations are to navigate because:

> Sometimes the parents are also the most worked up about those too because they feel like their kid's telling the truth, and maybe they are and maybe they're not, so that's always the toughest one, when you're trying to…be the arbitrator between those kind of situations.

When the parents get emotionally involved in a situation, it often results in a far greater increase in the student's emotional response; Participant M explained how HIB incidents frequently become "a lose-lose for me in that situation", especially as more often than not, these situations do not align with the true definition of bullying. Bullying is "intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of

power" (Whitson, 2014, p. 4); whereas mutual conflict, or as Participant M referenced, "mutual combat", is where both parties are engaging in behaviors that are equally mean. Whitson (2014) described mean behavior as "purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone" (p. 4). In working through reports of HIB incidents, Participant M felt "like girls are much more subtle about the harassment and the bullying, so it's harder to prove where it's coming from, you know, [and] again, most of the time it's mutual combat."

Summary of research question 1. Resoundingly, almost all school leaders indicated that they invest significant time working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors. The participants described students who demonstrate antisocial behaviors as being hardened, injured, or damaged, and explained that in their experiences, these students generally have a chaotic and unsupportive home life. The typical antisocial behaviors noted by the participants included low level disruption, insubordination, and harassment, intimidation, and bullying behaviors; the progression of the severity of the behavior appeared to increase alongside the students' development. Most often, antisocial behaviors occurred during unstructured time, in which limited supervision is available to help students manage their behaviors.

Research Question 2

The second research question sought to understand the skills and strategies that the participants deemed essential for effectively working with students' antisocial behaviors. Additionally, the interview questions included enquiring about the participants' beliefs regarding their roles in reducing students' antisocial behaviors.

Another area of focus in this research question was the role of the participants' professional development targeted specifically to improving their skills and knowledge for working with students' antisocial behaviors. Within the topic of professional development, the participants described previous professional development opportunities as well as their thoughts about potentially useful professional development for the future.

School leaders spend significant amounts of time working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors. Participant D explained, managing students' behaviors "has been the greatest area of growth for me…as a principal because it's such a huge component of the job." Additionally, Participant G shared that the skill of managing students' behaviors improves over time by reflecting on mistakes and successes and modifying practices as a result of that reflection. Participant M noted that while working with students who demonstrate antisocial behaviors should lend itself to being a significant part of a school leader's job, however, this is not the case, and as such, school leaders find themselves reacting to students' behaviors, rather than being proactive in working with these students. Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) stated that schools should ensure that students develop social and emotional skills in addition to their cognitive development; however, due to the pressure to raise students' academic achievement along with a lack of resources to address social and emotional development, social and emotional learning becomes a by-product of school, rather than an integral part of the educational experience of a student. As Participant G noted, "social behavior is part of our job, so it's not just content-based and that is…probably my biggest job, is to make sure that is known and that it is an integral part of what we do." Skiba

(2014) found that when school leaders take the time to teach students social and emotional strategies that they can employ to effectively get along with others, the end result is that "we strengthen our children, our systems, and our communities" (p. 33). Consequently, how school leaders perceive their role in regards to teaching and managing students' behaviors, and how they develop the skills necessary to effectively work with those students who exhibit antisocial behaviors plays a large role in the successful reduction of behavioral incidents.

Skills and strategies. All participants shared similar examples of the skills they deem essential for working with students who demonstrate antisocial behaviors and described a variety of strategies that they utilize in order to conduct their work effectively. However, the three skills that most commonly occurred within the data was the ability to listen, to remain calm, and to be empathetic. Other skills frequently mentioned by participants as requisite for managing students' antisocial behaviors were honesty, patience, the application of common sense, the ability to remain neutral, and to not take students' behaviors personally. Participant B emphasized that when "working with this particular group of kids, the more animated they are, the calmer you need to be", which was supported by Participant E who stressed, "with those kids…they're looking for something to be angry about, don't let it be you." Additionally, Participant I discussed the importance of not arguing with students because it "doesn't really get you anywhere", and Participant A suggested that by not overreacting to a situation with a student the ability to remain calm will help build a relationship that will serve a school leader well in the long run.

Regarding strategies that the participants described using when working with students with antisocial behaviors, five participants directly shared their use of *Love and Logic*. Participant D considered the *Love and Logic* approach to be particularly effective with students who are repeat offenders, where the action is at a lower level of severity, and with those who are generally lacking in maturity in comparison to their peers. Participants H and I explained how one of the benefits of using *Love and Logic* is the ability to provide natural consequences to students for their actions; Participants E, I, and L suggested that asking the students to solve their own problems encourages them to take ownership of, and responsibility for, their actions. Furthermore, Participant L shared that a core foundation of *Love and Logic* is giving the students a choice about their consequences; he explained:

> Let them decide, I will do that sometimes, where I'll say you need to come back tomorrow and let me know what you feel like your consequence should be, you know, knowing that you're going to have a consequence, there's going to be something and I can give them a range of what that might be, that works, you know, just kinda listen to them.

The core belief by the participants was that *Love and Logic* serves as an effective strategy that encourages and supports students in developing prosocial behaviors.

Relationships. Seven participants specifically described the importance of building relationships as a vital skill for working effectively with students with antisocial behaviors. Participant C explained that one way to build relationships with students is by simply being present, and shared:

> I'm constantly in the lunchroom, I'm checking in with those kids that I see on a daily basis in here, you know: "how's it going?" I'm out at recess, so I think me being visible does help with reducing behavior issues.

Additionally, Participant A expressed similar sentiments in how building relationships is important as a strategy to reduce antisocial behaviors, and explained that this comprises "being involved with the students, sitting and eating lunch with them, playing hacky sack with them, whatever, just being, not necessarily trying to be their friend, but just [letting them] know that there's a presence that cares about them." Kennedy (2011) found that when school officials failed to develop a personal relationship with students it proved difficult for that individual to work with the student and led to the continuance of similar behaviors.

Participant J explained the importance of finding ways to try to connect with students and Participants K and M stressed the need for knowing the students in order to be able to effectively work through discipline situations. Participant K noted how important it is "to read the student when they walk in your door" in order to determine how to most effectively work with him or her. Participant M suggested that, with a student who "you've never seen in your office before and all of a sudden something comes up, you have to go to people that know them" in order to handle the situation in the student's best interest. Additionally, Participants C, E, and F noted how by involving the parents, school leaders are able to emphasize their desire to create a team approach to working with the student. Participant F shared the importance of how school leaders approach the initial phone call to the parents and stated, "anytime we call a parent, it's

first to partner with them to let them know that we want them to be a part of this process with us."

Seeking to understand. A resounding theme within the data was the importance, within each situation, for a school leader to take the time to understand the intricacies of a particular situation and the student. Participants D and J suggested that school leaders take the time to ask students questions in order to figure out the cause of their actions. Participant J noted that in his experience, when a school leader rushes to act or make a decision the student will "think…well, you don't really care, you made your mind up before I even came in here." Participant J also shared the importance of getting to the root cause of the student's action to provide strategies for adjusting behavior by:

> Trying to find the source of why they feel the way they do, why they act the way they do…so it's a lot of listening, trying to understand, and trying to get them to talk about the root cause of what behaviors we see.

Participant E noted that when a student's behavior becomes chronic it is imperative "to start digging into could there be…other things going on that they can't control…you have to start digging into patterns and trends" in order "to know the back story" and address the behavior.

Additionally, Participant I emphasized how important it is to understand "that kids are learning", and explained, "I think kids need to feel like you respect them, even if they do something wrong, we aren't going to hold that against you the rest of your life; kids [should] get multiple chances." Participant F further developed this concept and shared how "we don't have any 'done for' kids, or 'done with' kids…there's no way

we're going to give up on these kids." Sometimes students need help to move forward from their antisocial behavioral choices, prevent the situation from escalating, and receive assistance with understanding others' perspectives (Skiba, 2014). Participant H noted that when working with students it is important to help them gain an "understanding of what that might feel like, or be like, from another perspective, because a lot of times they haven't thought of that", and when they understand how others feel, they might be more inclined to adjust future behavior. Participant D shared that "helping them recognize someone else's perspective and helping them decide what they are going to do to make the situation right and solve the problem" is critical for helping students move forward from a code of conduct violation.

Participant L noted that not only is it important when working with students to help them recognize that their behaviors are antisocial, but also to offer suggestions and possible strategies to cope with their behaviors in the future. In support, Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, and Rime (2011) recommended that providing students with ways to develop social-emotional skills will likely help them understand how prosocial behaviors might provide a positive alternative way to meet their needs. Participant L shared a slightly different perspective on the importance of working with these students:

> We're not asking them to be perfect students, we're asking them to be productive citizens, and if they're blowing out of English class all the time because they're not getting along with that person, they're probably going to do that as adults to, you know, and it's just getting them to make that connection between school and work…those lifelong skills.

It is important for school leaders to remember that helping students to manage their behaviors is essential for their future successful and productive contribution to society.

Systems and procedures. The data clearly indicated that all participants consider establishing systems and procedures for prosocial conduct, modeling appropriate behaviors, and holding students accountable for behavioral violations to be essential components of managing antisocial behaviors. Participant J explained that for a teacher to effectively do his or her job in the classroom, managing students' antisocial behaviors, holding students accountable for their behavior, and discontinuing those behaviors should be high on the priority list of a school leader. While Participant D noted, "kid behavior is everybody's issue", Participant M further expressed the importance of adopting a collaborative approach in holding students accountable for their inappropriate behaviors.

The school leader holds the primary responsibility for establishing systems and procedures for appropriate prosocial behaviors and for determining consequences for violations of those behaviors. Participant L noted how important it is for school leaders to hold students accountable for their antisocial behaviors "in a way where their dignity is still intact." In addition, Participant F described the importance of examining the success of the systems and procedures and explained how he employs:

> A monitoring schedule, where we keep checking in whether it's annually, or monthly, or whatever the system might need to be looked at, that we make sure that everybody knows and understands and has clarity. We say that, too, a lot, that clarity proceeds competence, and if teachers aren't clear then they can't be competent, and then they're frustrated and so it's all these things about how we

> support kids, how we deal with kids, how we give them the tools they need, and then, in effect, what we're also saying to teachers is this is what you can expect, right, for support [from the school leader].

Participant I also emphasized the importance of establishing routines and expectations for behavior, as well as "having procedures in place for teachers [and] expectations for teachers." Participant H suggested "look[ing] at some positive behavioral systems, ways in which we can teach students and be proactive about the behaviors we expect, and how to help support them with positive social behaviors" as a means to establishing systems and procedures that encourage the use of prosocial behaviors and discourage antisocial behavior. When teachers understand the school leader's expectations, they will be in a position to hold students accountable and ensure a productive classroom where all students adhere to behavioral norms.

Several participants shared the importance of a school leader utilizing effective strategies to help students change their behaviors, as opposed to merely imposing disciplinary sanctions. For example, Participant B reflected, "if I just respond with a consequence every time, the chance that I have of changing the behavior's very small." Participant H suggested using scenarios with students, having them role-play different outcomes in order to practice alternate methods of responding to situations. Alternatively, Participant K suggested a different strategy for working with students; he explained how the organization and use of the physical space in the office could elicit different student responses:

> The way my office is set up; it depends on the student and the situation and what I'm trying to accomplish. If it's a student who is in trouble, but I feel like there's underlying issues…rather than sit at my desk I sometimes will walk around my desk and sit in a chair that's closer to them so that I don't have that barrier…those are the types of situations where I'm really wanting to build a relationship with that student…if it's a student that has done something that is serious and this isn't their first rodeo, I will sit at my desk and make them feel uncomfortable on purpose because I want them to know that what they did is not okay."

At the high school level, several participants explicitly referenced how they seek alternate resources, including school counselors, mental health counselors, and drug and alcohol intervention counselors, to offer additional support to a student struggling with either social-emotional or drug and alcohol issues. Interestingly, two participants specifically discussed how, prior to becoming school leaders, they completed a master's degree in guidance and counseling program, which they considered highly effective preparation for their role as a school leader. However, while the 11 other participants did not have this level of counseling experience to draw upon, they all indicated that the perception of their role is to support students in their social-emotional growth; specifically, Participant J shared "an assistant principal is like a counselor, I mean, you're like the police officer, the counselor, you're everything."

Investigative skills. A frequent theme within the data, indicated by middle and high school leaders, was the necessity of developing and utilizing effective interviewing and interrogation skills. However, when discussing the importance of employing these

skills, Participant M clarified, “I don’t want to say your interrogation skills, but you need to learn how to ask questions, and you need to learn how to listen.” Participant I also stressed the importance of learning how to ask good questions, within the investigation process, along with “being able to sift through multiple witness statements to get at the truth…[and] the ability to see multiple sides of the issue; there’s always two sides of every story.” Participant G emphasized that in order to conduct an effective investigation it is essential to “not…believe the first thing that’s said to you.” Finally, Participants A and J shared the importance of both using good judgment in dealing with students in a discipline situation while at the same time refraining from making quick judgments about a situation or a consequence.

Professional development. Surprisingly, seven participants shared that they received little to no professional development tailored specifically toward working with students’ antisocial behaviors. However, in reflection, almost all participants were able to recall at least one workshop they attended that addressed antisocial behavior at some level. However, intentional, continuous, and job-embedded professional development that specifically addresses changes in student discipline laws, procedural expectations, and collaboration regarding complex cases and best practices, across and within grade bands, is somewhat absent. Considering that, especially for assistant principals, working with antisocial behaviors constitutes a significant investment of the school leaders' time and that behavior has a large impact on student achievement, this finding was surprising. However, there was one exception: a discrepant self-evaluation, in which the participant indicated that managing and working with students is a personal strength, and as such,

did not consider the need for professional development. However, this participant indicated an interest in receiving additional resources and support surrounding HIB and the conduction of interviews.

When considering the concept of professional development, Participant C, raised an interesting question: "How can you have professional development when kids are so different, their needs are so different, the relationship you have with them is different, their home life is different"? Participant K, on the other hand, noted, "I think that it's our job to look at ourselves and…when you're reflecting on what happened, which we all do, you realize that…this is a hole, I need some help in this area…I think it's just opportunity." Goldring, Preston, and Huff (2012) emphasized the importance of professional development for school leaders given the expectation to demonstrate a marked increase in student academic achievement. Consequently, taking the time to reflect on individual practices to determine where professional development might be appropriate is an important skill that school leaders need in order to facilitate their professional growth.

Five participants shared that most professional development is on-the-job training; as Participants D and F defined, "the school of hard knocks." Participant L stated simply, "I would say, you just learn it"; that is, school leaders just learn how to work with students' antisocial behaviors. Similarly, in reflection on professional learning and development, Participant F shared that while learning occurred on-the-job, mentors played a large role in supporting the participant during disciplinary situations. Participant F also noted that while mentors support school leaders, the individual must "be open to

change, open to grow, not be shut off or think that you know it all." Goldring et al. (2012) found that mentors provide school leaders with continual and job-embedded support. In line with on-the-job learning, four participants noted that professional development included collegial conversations. Participant E shared, "the best professional development is sitting down with someone when you can't figure out that [issue]." Goldring et al. supported the notion of professional conversations serving as effective professional development by supporting school leaders with opportunities "to exchange and discuss ideas and strategies" (p. 226).

One of the most common themes regarding specific professional development undertaken by the participants was *Love and Logic* training. Throughout the data, *Love and Logic* was the most frequently described process that participants use for managing students' antisocial behaviors. Five participants (two from elementary campuses, two middle schools, and one from the high school) specifically cited that their professional development included *Love and Logic* training, and all but four participants discussed their use of the *Love and Logic* philosophy when working with students. Additionally, four participants shared their desire for additional *Love and Logic* professional development, which included two participants who have previously attended *Love and Logic* training.

Other than *Love and Logic*, an analysis of the participants' participation in other professional development opportunities did not indicate a particular trend. Two middle school participants noted that they previously attended HIB conferences or workshops. Other professional development activities included an investigation workshop, legal

workshops, conferences presented by the state principals' association, drug and alcohol awareness trainings, mental health training, de-escalation training, and positive behavioral intervention systems training. One discrepant case noted his use of reading published, professional literature as professional development.

Regarding professional development opportunities that participants considered as potential areas of need or interest, a resounding theme was the importance of improving personal skills in the area of human resources. As Participant F reflected, "at the end of the day it's about relationships and people, and if I can't relate to parents or individuals that represent our community then what good again am I going to do with their kids." In addition, Participant G noted how, to effectively work with people, it is important to "continue to brush up my skills on being a listener, finding that win-win situation, [and] figuring out how…we move forward from this." Park, Alber-Morgan, and Fleming (2011) emphasized the importance for school leaders to seek to understand the student's family strengths along with their needs to build a rapport with the family. Taking the time to listen to the students' family encourages a relationship established on trust and encourages the family to become an active participant in improving their child's behavior (Park et al., 2011). Consequently, building relationships with students and their families is essential for effectively managing students' antisocial behaviors.

Furthermore, Participant A suggested the concept of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in order to implement a framework for systemic support. Also, Participant H noted the desire to "look at some positive behavioral systems, ways in which we can teach students and be proactive about it, about the

behaviors we expect, and how to help support them with positive social behaviors." The purpose of school-wide positive behavior intervention and support programs is to teach "behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum" (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2014, para. 1), which focuses on developing no more than five positive and preferred behavioral expectations that students can easily remember. In regards to focusing on implementing positive behavioral supports, Participant J noted the importance of "just knowing how to talk to kids to get them to change their behavior." The pursuit of professional development opportunities that identify ways to use positive behavior interventions in order to both prevent antisocial behaviors and create a framework from which to help students who do demonstrate antisocial behaviors change that behavior is essential for creating a positive school climate and improving student achievement.

Additionally, two participants suggested pursuing professional development around HIB. Specifically, in regards to bullying, Participant D expressed, "I need to have more training on how to prevent it in the first place" and Participant M explained, "the hardest part is the harassment piece, I think I just need to continue to work on how to deal with that." In reflection, Participant M explained some of the challenges with HIB professional development sessions:

> Part of the thing with that is not necessarily how to deal with it, it's strategies to limit it, and those are really hard to come-by, like even the stuff I've gone to thus far, they talk about the attitude, they talk about the behavior, but they rarely give you strategies to actually deal with it.

In support of Participant M's sentiments, Whitson (2014) found that HIB programs that focus on the aggressor and dealing specifically with HIB are ineffective. Whitson shared that when HIB programs center on helping students to develop social and emotional skills instead of focusing on the acts of HIB, incidents of HIB decrease and student achievement increases. It is possible that professional development focused on social-emotional learning might be more effective than professional development designed solely for HIB behaviors.

The data presented two unique ideas for possible relevant and meaningful professional development activities. First, Participant C suggested that focusing specifically on the culture of the community that the district serves:

> Learning about the culture here, what are some of our issues in the community, and what are some of the issues that families are dealing with, because then that would give you a different insight into some of the families [and] kids then that come here.

This recommendation would be particularly appropriate for new school leaders in the district. Another reflection was that school leaders should seek professional development opportunities that focus on the professional learning that all teachers and staff need to support their management of students' behavior. Participant H shared, "interactions amongst everybody need to be consistent and similar, and having that same language and support [is essential for effective management]."

Summary of research question 2. Unquestionably, the skill that continually resonated among the participants for effectively managing students' behaviors was the

importance of building relationships with the student. *Love and Logic* is a systemic approach that many of the school leaders utilize when working with all students, but particularly to help students reduce their antisocial behaviors. The importance of establishing systems and procedures to provide a safe climate that is conducive to learning was evident throughout the data; however, there was no evidence within the data of the existence of a consistent systemic, district-wide system to address and manage students' antisocial behaviors. Furthermore, a significant area of interest was the absence of the participants' involvement in ongoing, job-embedded professional development to improve their capacities for working with students' antisocial behaviors.

Research Question 3

The third and final research question obtained information from the participants about potential interventions that might be effective for managing students' antisocial behaviors. Questions asked during the interview encouraged the participants to reflect on the types of factors that served to protect students from displaying antisocial behaviors. This research question also pursued the school leaders' reflections about how a differentiated approach to academics might also be applicable to helping students with reducing antisocial behaviors.

Providing support and interventions to students in order to help them not only reduce antisocial behaviors, but also to develop prosocial behaviors, is a role that is essential for school leaders who wish to raise the academic achievement of their students. As Participant F shared, finding appropriate interventions that meet the needs of students is crucial after "the failed past of zero tolerance, [which] disregarded the individuality of

a student." Participant J also explained how "those black and white discipline policies don't work" because they fail to allow a school leader to meet the needs of individual students effectively. Using suspension alone as a consequence for antisocial behavior, Participant L claimed is ineffective in changing behavior. Coggshall, Osher, and Colombi (2013) explained how school leaders could stop the school-to-prison pipeline through their responses to students' antisocial behavior and their willingness to address each student's academic and social and emotional needs on an individual and case-by-case basis. To prevent future incidents of antisocial behavior, school leaders must first determine the cause of the conduct violation and then determine what intervention would be suitable for helping the student understand, address, and modify future potential antisocial behaviors.

When antisocial behaviors occur in the classroom, determining which interventions might be appropriate or effective for a given student school leaders should also consider how they need to work with a teacher to effect change. For example, Participant J explained that teachers do not always understand that "black and white policies don't work"; teachers want to look at the policy and ensure the student's removal from school. Additionally, Participant L felt that school leaders who took an inflexible approach to discipline situations would not last very long in their position; he stressed that "there's got to be a little bit of gray in this job." While Participant J noted that often school leaders don't have time to, nor should they, explain themselves to the teacher, it is worth noting that in some instances seeking the teacher's perspective and possibly providing an explanation, support, or training around behavior management might assist

in preventing future incidents of antisocial behavior. For a school leader, providing clarity and professional development on the effective use of interventions to manage and reduce antisocial behaviors is fundamental for ensuring a system that operates efficiently and smoothly to support both the academic and social-emotional needs of all children.

Individual needs. In order to develop interventions that are appropriate for making a difference in reducing students' antisocial behaviors, understanding the needs of individual students is essential for the alignment of targeted interventions to meet specific needs. Data indicated that when designing interventions, the first role a school leader is to seek to understand the individual students and take the time to make connections and build relationships that are genuine. Ryan and Zoldy (2011) found that disciplinary consequences for antisocial behavior have no value to a student unless the school leader takes the time to develop and build a relationship with the student. Similarly, Participant E shared that positive relationships serve to help reduce antisocial behaviors because the student develops the desire to not "let you down", which might help them to make more appropriate behavior choices. Also, Participant I noted that when students feel like they have positive relationships with teachers and "if the teacher makes a connection with that kid, I think it's less likely that kid's going to screw up in their class."

When school leaders consider each situation as unique and take the time to analyze and understand the cause behind the antisocial behavior, they are more likely to be able to intervene successfully in the student's life. Participant I discussed the importance of looking at "the bigger picture; you have to understand where the kid's

coming from, you have to understand what's going to work for that kid." As Participant H explained, looking at the big picture requires the school leader to:

> Really take into consideration all the factors in it and make the decision based off of that; it kind of goes back to that *Love and Logic* belief that you have to really know the student and know what consequence is going to fit the student the best to help them learn and to help them build back up.

As Participants D and M explained, in order to understand each student's needs and to provide both support and consequences, the school leader must listen with empathy and make adjustments that they consider will be effective in managing and altering antisocial behaviors. Finally, Participant J expressed that when holding students accountable and determining appropriate consequences based upon a situation, it helps to also "use common sense" and consider "what would a reasonable person do in this situation"? Ryan and Zoldy (2011) also found that an empathetic approach to a student is more likely to allow for reconciliation of a potentially damaged relationship between the adult and the student.

Forming connections. When intervening with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors, several participants suggested that it is important to focus on building relationships, personally engaging with the students, and finding ways to help them make connections within the school environment. Participants A, C, and M explained that being present and visible is an important aspect of the school leader's role. For example, Participant A indicated that a school leader can effectively reduce antisocial behaviors by:

> Showing presence around [school], being involved with the students, sitting and eating lunch with them, playing hacky sack with them, just being, not necessarily trying to be their friend, but just [letting them] know that there's a presence that cares about them.

Participant J also shared that for students who receive numerous exclusions for antisocial behavior, often these students are intentionally hoping for removal from school. Furthermore, Participant J explained that finding ways to connect students to school, either by developing a positive relationship with an adult in the building, or by connecting students to a club or group so that "the school can be a place that's providing a safe place where everyone has a part…trying to find a club or group for everyone on campus", might be possible interventions to reduce these negative behaviors and keep students in school.

Participant F shared that an important role of the school leader is to analyze student antisocial behavior data and identify any patterns of behavior in order to make adjustments, intervene, and reduce future incidents of antisocial behavior. Osher, Bear, Sprague, and Doyle (2010) noted that collecting, analyzing, and sharing data on antisocial behavior patterns allows for schools to use data-based decision-making to address particular concerns. Also, Participants F and M reflected on the importance of having discussions with teachers who send numerous referrals for students' antisocial behaviors to the office.

Protective factors. Within this study, the participants provided a variety of examples of factors that serve to protect students from engaging in antisocial behavior,

alongside interventions that prevent them from exhibiting these behaviors. However, the majority of participants indicated that the greatest protective factor for preventing antisocial behavior was the student's home life. Specifically, Participants C and L suggested that a predictable, safe, and stable home environment was essential for preventing students from behaving antisocially. Also, Participants B and L shared that in their experiences, students who had their needs met at home, such as receiving adequate nutrition or medical care, and students whose families value education, tend to demonstrate less antisocial behaviors. Participant K also noted that students who:

> Come from a family or household where education is important and it could be a family that's not very well off, it could be a family where there's just one parent, but where education has an important focus, I think those students tend to fall less into the antisocial behavior group.

In addition, Participants D, H, I, and J found that when students' families were willing to support and partner with the school leader, or upheld similar expectations to the school at home, those students managed to learn more successfully from their mistakes, or did not exhibit antisocial behaviors in the first place. However, on the other hand, Participant D indicated:

> Kids that deal with a lot of stuff in their home are ones that usually have the most protective factors because they've learned to deal with so much, that or kids that have moved a lot because they're always starting a new school.

A factor may be that those students who do not have stable homes, or who do not have supportive families develop a sense of resiliency that serves to protect them from exhibiting antisocial behaviors.

Overall, participants discussed how the student's home life contributes toward their ability to manage behavior. As Participant B explained, typically children learn to manage their emotions and self-regulate their behavior at home through the modeling of appropriate behaviors by their families, which tends to dictate how they control their emotions. For example, children see how the members of their families deal with stress and how they cope when they are upset, and through the modeling process, the child learns how to manage their own emotions and behave appropriately (Halgunseth, Perkins, Lippold, & Nix, 2013). Also, Participant K shared that when children are taught at home to "respect adults, or their peers even for that matter, they're going to be even less likely to fall into antisocial behavior norms."

While most participants focused on how the student's home serves as a protective factor for preventing antisocial behaviors, Participant F perceived that other, internal dispositions also contribute to helping students manage their behavior. For example, when students feel respected, have a voice, and feel in control of their own choices and consequences they are more likely to elect prosocial behavior. Participant F also indicated that a sense of empowerment is helpful for eliciting prosocial behavior; however, Participant H cautioned that empowering children too much has the potential to create negative outcomes. Participant H shared:

We empower our young people so heavily that sometimes it's not in their best

> interest; giving them so many early choices in life and caving in, got to get them in to all these sports [teams], got to give them a voice…[that] they just take things for granted and so then life lessons are harder because we pave the way for them, we make it easy for them, and so they don't know how to experience difficulty or trauma.

Learning how to deal with adversity and gaining a sense of resiliency also serve as protective factors in helping students to manage their behavior.

Systemic interventions. One of the largest roles of a school leader, as Participant K reflected, is to establish the systems, structure, and routine of a school. When a school is unstructured, and there is a sense of chaos, this type of environment reduces students' opportunities to maximize their learning opportunities (Gregory et al., 2010). Participant C shared that helping teachers to develop appropriate classroom discipline procedures that align with the school's expectations is an integral part of her role as a school leader. Participants B, D, and F, also shared that working with teachers to develop strategies for managing students' behaviors is a fundamental intervention for helping students to develop prosocial behaviors.

However, for the school leader, the managerial side of establishing systems is not his or her only responsibility. Participant C detailed her development of other systems that served to create an environment that strives to reduce antisocial behaviors, which included the use of a parent program and a buddy bench during recess for those students who struggle to engage with others. A buddy bench serves as an established place for students to go when they are without a playmate; school personnel educate students about

inviting students whom they see sitting on the buddy bench to participate in an activity. Participant C also explained her role in organizing events such as mix-it-up days in the lunchroom, where students choose a jolly rancher and sit at a table according to their selected color. Mix-it-up days encourage students to sit with students with whom they might not normally choose to interact so that they get to know different people. Additionally, Participants E, F, and J noted that an effective intervention for reducing antisocial behaviors is when school leaders try to help all students find an outlet or a place to belong. When students feel a sense of belonging to their school, they are more likely to make behavioral choices that are prosocial in order to remain in school (APAZTTF, 2008). Additionally, one participant discussed the use of sanctions as an intervention for antisocial behavior. Participant L expressed the possibility of using social sanctions that include "little and immediate consequences…on their time… I think that's more effective, taking away the stuff they like to do" than suspension.

Changing behaviors. When children continue to demonstrate antisocial behaviors, in order to prevent the school-to-prison pipeline and to help these students become productive citizens, it is essential for school leaders to find ways to help students understand and change their behaviors. Participant C expressed that when school leaders work with students to help them change behavior, it is imperative that the strategies they employ are developmentally appropriate. Participant C shared that a conduct violation with a young child should serve as a teaching and learning opportunity, which encourages the child to focus on the poor choice and talk about why the behavior was not appropriate and how others might feel as a result of the behavior. Additionally, Participant B

suggested that identifying the student's strengths, focusing on his or her positive assets "and then [deciding] how we can use those and apply those" to help the student learn and move forward are effective ways of intervening with students' antisocial behavior. In a similar light, Participant G suggested that a suitable intervention is to help students to develop their leadership capacities so that others see them in a positive light, "the more often that they can stand up and display themselves in a positive way, the more they connect to that", and are more likely to continue to employ leadership skills and prosocial behaviors.

At the high school level, participants shared how they seek, and make use of, outside resources to intervene with students who struggle with mental health and drug and alcohol issues. Participant L discussed how the alternative high school serves to be beneficial in providing a smaller environment for students who need a more individualized and smaller learning environment. Consequently, Participant L shared:

> I have long advocated, at the middle level, for having some sort of alternative program…not all these kids fit in the same mold, you know, we're not all cut out for a comprehensive public school, whether it be middle school or high school…parents have very few options for kids at the middle school level.

Finally, Participants D, F, I, and K shared different systems they used when working with students to help intervene in their behaviors. Some of these suggestions included creating behavior checklists and behavior contracts, shortening students' days, and ensuring that the students had access to differentiated instruction and assignments. Participant K suggested that one way to get to the cause of the action and to improve the

students' behavior is to "get all the teachers together and the parents and the student and talk through the issues that are happening and try to problem-solve that way." Participant F also shared the use of meetings with all stakeholders to problem-solve situations and shared the importance of adopting a team approach when children receive consequences for antisocial behaviors:

> In one sense it's something happening to their child…that can feel disempowering to adults and parents, so bringing them on early, again, having that team concept…[letting them know that] we want to help Jonny succeed and so it's going to take all of us to get through this, and by that approach, then there's some level of empowerment.

When school leaders share a desire to work as a team, on behalf of the student, they empower families to work collaboratively to help students develop prosocial behaviors.

Summary of research question 3. Almost all participants reflected on the failed application of zero tolerance policies and expressed the need to adapt corrective action policies to meet the needs of an individual student and each unique situation. The participants described a variety of interventions that might be effective in helping students reduce their antisocial behaviors. However, with the exception of the use of the *Love and Logic* approach, there is little to no consistent use of interventions across the system.

Conclusion

In alignment with the purpose of this study, Section 2 described the appropriate research methodology to allow for the collection and analysis of data to understand

school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. An instrumental case study design demonstrated the intent to understand the phenomenon of students' antisocial behavior. Given that the study took place within WSD, the participants consisted of all 13 school leaders within the district, which constituted a purposeful sample. Section 2 also detailed the consideration of the ethical protection of participants and addressed the data collection and analysis phases in an ethical manner. Furthermore, Section 2 offered an explanation of the primary data collection technique (individual participant interviews) and data analysis methods (thematic coding). Section 2 also addressed the concern of researcher bias and the role as a researcher, along with describing the establishment of the study's accuracy and credibility and the management of discrepant cases.

The primary focus of Section 2 was to present the methodology for the study and provide a detailed description of the study's findings. A description of the findings occurred through the synthesis of data, with the presentation of those findings organized in response to the research questions according to the thematic analysis of the data. Following data analysis, the design of the ensuing project was to address a gap in school leaders' practice regarding their work with students' antisocial behaviors. This project served as a practical solution to address the phenomenon of students' antisocial behavior. Section 3 will explain the development of the resultant project in greater depth, drawing attention to how the project addressed the gap in the school leaders' practice regarding their work with students' antisocial behaviors.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Following an analysis of the study's findings, I developed a project to address the results. In this section, I describe the project, include a rationale for selecting the genre and format of the project, and review the literature that guided the project's development. Also, this section presents potential implementation suggestions for the project, an explanation of necessary resources for implementation, and a discussion of the barriers that might hinder implementation. Finally, I present a process for evaluating the project's effectiveness upon implementation and provide an explanation of the implications for potential social change. Appendix A hosts the project in its entirety.

Description and Goals

The findings of this study formed the foundation for the project, which is a position paper policy recommendation titled *Job-embedded professional development for school leaders management of students' antisocial behavior through the systemic inclusion of social-emotional learning: A call to action*. While the rationale for this project and the purpose of this paper is to provide a policy recommendation and present a position paper to the district leadership of WSD, this project might also serve as a recommendation and model of best practice for school leaders in any school district striving to reduce incidents of students' antisocial behavior. The design of the project provides a rationale for the district leadership regarding the importance of providing ongoing and job-embedded professional development to school leaders to provide them

with the necessary tools to reduce students' antisocial behaviors, for the purpose of improving student learning.

A theme that emerged from the data was the notion of pursuing professional development opportunities that aid in establishing systems for preventing antisocial behavior. Consequently, the primary goal for the project was to address a gap in the school leaders' practice of participating in on-going, job-embedded professional development to manage and provide interventions to reduce students' antisocial behaviors. The data from this study indicated that for many school leaders in WSD, they had not participated in ongoing professional development targeted at managing students' antisocial behaviors. Furthermore, participants described that their participation in professional development opportunities tended to be independent workshops or conferences rather than sustained, job-embedded, and systemic professional development. While participants all reported participating in some form of professional development, data indicated a lack of consistency between those professional development opportunities amongst the participants. *Love and Logic* was the most frequently attended professional development activity; however, not all participants participated in this training. A call to action to include ongoing, job-embedded professional development for all school leaders could provide consistency across the system, which would allow for all school leaders to utilize a common structure and deal with students' antisocial behaviors in a consistent and intentional manner.

Additionally, the data signified that interventions to manage students' antisocial behaviors were not consistent between the school leaders. The systemic development and

implementation of interventions to work with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors would allow collaboration between school leaders to determine the most efficient application of the intervention. Development and implementation of effective best practices for interventions to assist students in reducing antisocial behaviors would ultimately serve to ensure that students receive the help, assistance, and guidance necessary to modify behaviors and become productive citizens.

An additional goal for the project that arose from the data was to highlight the importance of assisting school leaders in considering social-emotional learning as core instruction. The significance that a school's faculty and staff gives to ensuring that students receive instruction in social-emotional skills may be a direct result of the importance that the school leader places on developing those skills. Consequently, school leaders should also receive adequate training to develop the skills necessary to deliver effective, ongoing professional development to the faculty and staff within their schools to ensure that social-emotional learning is part of the core instruction throughout the school, and to ensure that the faculty and staff know how to effectively instill those skills in the students.

Rationale

Following a reflection of the data collected and analyzed during the research phase of this project study, I elected to design, for the final project, a position paper policy recommendation. A significant finding from the study was a lack of professional development that is job-embedded and ongoing to support school leaders in working with students' antisocial behaviors, alongside the inconsistent use of systemic interventions to

help students change those behaviors. The development of a policy recommendation and position paper is to assist both district and school level leaders in understanding the importance of participating in targeted professional development to facilitate their work with students' antisocial behaviors; additionally, this position paper policy recommendation provides guidelines for developing systemic interventions that will benefit students, faculty, staff, and school leaders as they strive to raise academic achievement.

Given that data demonstrated that school leaders spend significant amounts of time working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors, the pursuit of intentional professional development might serve to increase their proficiency in working with these students. Likewise, collaborating to develop interventions that will serve to meet the needs of students and help those students to reduce their antisocial behaviors are necessary to facilitate school improvement and increase academic success. Within this study, participants indicated that ensuring students' social-emotional development is as important as ensuring academic success. Consequently, it is appropriate to develop a policy recommendation that suggests all school leaders should receive adequate training in order to ensure their students develop appropriate social-emotional skills. Additionally, school leaders should be in a position to provide such training to faculty and staff to ensure a systems-wide approach to developing social-emotional skills. These recommendations align with the findings of Jones and Bouffard (2012) who found that traditionally school personnel receive little to no professional development or support in assisting students to develop social-emotional skills. Jones and Bouffard explained how

integrating social-emotional learning as core instructional curriculum cannot occur solely at the building level, and recommended that "educational and public policies need to provide supports that enable these changes to occur" (p. 15). Consequently, to advocate for changing school leaders' practices in working with students' antisocial behaviors, the policy recommendation is an appropriate project.

The theoretical constructs that guided the development of the project include the theory of andragogy (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011) and Fullan's (2001) theory of change. As the position paper policy recommendation aims to influence the learning of adults and generate a change in operational behavior, these two theoretical constructs are appropriate for grounding the project's development. When school leaders work together with the intent of improving the quality of a situation, they are demonstrating a moral purpose (Fullan, 2001). Thus, the purpose for creating a position paper policy recommendation was to provide a blueprint for transforming the culture of how school leaders address their work with students' with antisocial behaviors and to suggest an alternative manner in which to facilitate the operational norms (Fullan, 2001). In order to support the implementation of a position paper policy recommendation, based upon Fullan's work there are several recommendations, which should be effective at eliciting change:

- School leaders should meet frequently with district office personnel to discuss instructional practices, intervention implementation, and student achievement and behaviors;

- School district personnel should reinforce the sharing of knowledge among all school leaders;
- Learning how to effectively manage students' antisocial behaviors should occur within a contextual framework, which will facilitate a targeted discussions and solutions;
- Workshops and conferences that focus on providing information are less effective than a collaborative, district level approach due to the lack of application that these forms of professional development provide.

Again, with the purpose of a position paper policy recommendation being to advocate for ongoing, job-embedded professional development and systemic interventions for managing antisocial behaviors, this project will require the development of adult learning. Andragogy is the theory and practice of adult learning; Knowles et al. (2011) explained, "andragogy presents core principals of adult learning that in turn enable those designing and conducting adult learning to build more effective learning process" (p. 2). The application of andragogy within the position paper policy recommendation addresses the six principals of andragogy described by Knowles et al., which will include a focus on:

- Ensuring that school leaders receive information regarding the purpose of the professional development and need for collaboration around designing systemic interventions;
- Recognizing the role that adult's self-concept plays in requiring self-direction;
- Appreciation for the diversity of experience that the school leaders will possess;

- Ensuring awareness of each individual's readiness to learn;
- Respecting the need for a life-centered orientation toward learning;
- Seeking to understand the school leaders' motivations for learning.

The design of the project aligned with the study's research problem (student antisocial behavior), which was an investigation of school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior. Through the collection and analysis of data, it was evident that WSD school leaders invested significant amounts of time working with students' antisocial behaviors. However, the school leaders' participation in professional development activities was inconsistent, and there was an absence of alignment of interventions to assist these students in improving their behaviors throughout the district. Consequently, the project will address this problem by providing a written document that will advocate for policy implementation to include ongoing and job-embedded professional development that includes developing and aligning interventions to serve all students in their social-emotional growth through a SWPBS approach.

While the project (policy recommendation) addressed the needs of the participants in this study and advocated for ongoing professional development and an alignment of interventions, it could also serve as a model for best practice for all school district leaders, not just those in the WSD. One of the concerns mentioned by the participants in this study was that suspending students from school most often fails to change the student's behavior. Working collaboratively, using a professional learning community model as a vehicle for professional development, the participants could design, implement, and evaluate interventions that are meaningful and relevant to the students

whom they serve. Additionally, the participants could work together to develop, provide, and evaluate social-emotional learning professional development opportunities to their staff and faculty throughout all schools in the district.

Review of the Literature

Within this study, data indicated that school leaders spend significant amounts of time engaging with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors and yet surprisingly they participated in very little professional development. An additional theme, which arose from the data, highlighted the importance of the role of social-emotional learning (SEL) in preventing and addressing antisocial behaviors. A school and district-wide focus on providing intentional opportunities for students to develop their SEL skills is a plausible solution for reducing students' antisocial behaviors. Consequently, a review of the literature for three topics was appropriate and included professional development, SEL, and school-wide positive behavior supports.

In order to garner the most current research on these subjects, I used databases available within the Walden University Library (ERIC, Education Research Complete, Sage Premier, Taylor and Francis Online, and Thoreau) to search for current (since 2010) research articles in peer-reviewed journals. My search included the following terms: *professional development* and *principal; professional development* and *school administrator; professional development* and *social emotional learning; principal* and *social emotional learning; leadership capacity* and *principal; school-wide behavior support* and *social emotional learning* and *leadership capacity* and *school administrator.* Additionally, the use of Boolean search operators enabled the combination and isolation

of discrete terms to narrow the literature search. This exploration allowed for the collection of articles that would help in the development of the project. Additionally, when I reviewed journal articles, I also viewed the reference list to identify any other articles that might prove relevant to my work.

While I elected to not utilize information from websites within the literature review, an examination of commercial and government websites allowed for a synthesis and analysis of effective strategies to consider for inclusion within the project. These websites offered information on social and emotional learning, school-wide positive behavior supports, and Washington State's guidelines for students' behavior management. Also, information garnered from these sources provided ideas for current practices that align with the needs of WSD.

Professional Development

By virtue of their role, school leaders continuously work to increase their leadership skills in order to facilitate school improvement efforts and increase student achievement. Professional development (PD) refers to the formal learning opportunities in which practicing school leaders participate in order to improve their craft (Goldring et al., 2012). Many of the school leaders within this study indicated an absence of participation in specific PD targeted toward improving their abilities to work with students' antisocial behaviors, and believed that their skill development was a result of trial and error experiences from the management of different situations. Cray and Weiler (2011) presented a reminder to school district officials that newly hired, novice school leaders will have deficiencies in their practice; consequently, PD is especially important

for helping new school leaders become highly effective leaders. However, Cray and Weiler also considered it to be the responsibility of the school district to invest in developing all school leaders' skills and noted a concern that often the responsibility for engaging in PD opportunities is left to the individual school leader. Additionally, as district leaders actively support the development of their school leaders, they should recognize that individuals would likely be at different career stages and as such, PD should be differentiated to ensure that it meets the need of all school leaders (Goldring et al., 2012; Kesson & Henderson, 2011).

PD may occur in a variety of formats, such as stand-alone workshops, conferences, or seminars, one-on-one mentoring or coaching, and collaboration within small professional learning communities; additionally, PD covers a variety of different topics that are relevant to the work of school leaders (Enomoto, 2012; Goldring et al., 2012). For PD to be effective, the alignment of the PD should meet the contextual needs of the school leaders and provide them with opportunities to experience and adopt best practices (Goldring et al., 2012; Kesson & Henderson, 2010). Additionally, researchers advocated that for PD to be effective in informing and improving the school leader's practice it must be job-embedded, collaborative, ongoing, sustainable, and allow for practical application (Coggshall, Osher, Colombi, 2013; Enomoto, 2012; Goldring et al., 2012; Pounder, 2011). Also, when school leaders actively engage in the PD, the opportunity to receive feedback from a supervisor or coach and to reflect on their practice best facilitates a change in practice (Coggshall et al., 2013; Enomoto, 2012). The receipt of feedback and engagement in reflective practice supports school leaders in both

understanding their learning and how to implement any changes that allows for a gradual refinement in practice, rather than an immediate change, which might be difficult to sustain (Barnes, Camburn, Sanders, & Sebastian, 2010). When PD encourages open communication with all school leaders in the district that communication encourages members to share their knowledge, thus developing the capacity of the individual school leader, as well as that of the group (Carmeli, Gelbard, & Reiter-Palmon, 2013).

Stand-alone PD opportunities, such as workshops fail to serve as the most effective forms of PD because they generally do not connect to the daily reality of a school leader's job, nor do they provide for collegial networking (Goldring et al., 2012). Grissom and Harrington (2010) recommended that as districts work to increase PD for their school leaders, they should first evaluate current opportunities for PD. Accordingly, district facilitation of effective PD should focus on the establishment of a supportive environment, along with the application of professional learning communities, study groups, or mentoring (Cray & Weiler, 2011; Enomoto, 2011). Goldring et al. (2012) noted that leadership has the potential to be lonely, due to the authoritative position that accompanies the role and general lack of peer support within the building. Consequently, when school districts facilitate PD for school leaders, the sessions should focus on the practical application of skill development, offer opportunities for leaders to network with each other and with their supervisors, and provide a chance for receiving feedback and reflecting upon their work (Enomoto, 2011). District facilitated PD, however, presented several challenges within the literature. For example, Enomoto (2011) explained that due to changes in district leaders' schedules the delivery of PD did not occur, or as a result of

an unforeseen circumstance, the district leaders made changes to the agenda. However, district-based PD integrates best practices into procedural knowledge for the school leaders, which results in a refinement in their practice (Barnes et al., 2010). Moreover, district leaders who encourage their employees to participate in collaborative PD demonstrate a commitment to the value of sharing knowledge (Carmeli et al., 2013). Finally, ensuring the protection of time established for PD sessions demonstrates a district-level commitment to supporting school leaders in their work.

While numerous forms of PD activities exist, three themes emerged as best PD practices within the literature: mentoring, university courses, and collaboration. One advantage of mentoring as a form of PD is that it allows for differentiation in order to meet the needs of the individual school leader, is job-embedded, and allows for continual support as the school leader grows and develops professionally (Goldring et al., 2012). Grissom and Harrington (2010) found a strong positive relationship between mentoring and the effectiveness of a school leader's performance. Given that mentoring has the potential to be an ongoing, job-embedded form of PD, it would be worthwhile to considering providing mentoring opportunities to the WSD school leaders. Specifically, principals could serve as mentors for assistant principals, and veteran school leaders could provide mentorship to school leaders new to the district.

Collaborative PD allows members of the group to benefit from the shared and collective knowledge of the group as a whole, which serves to build individual capacity (Carmeli et al., 2013). Within collaborative PD opportunities, members of the group are able to consider initiatives, problems, or practices and discuss methods to address and

improve practices or routines that further promote individual leadership capacity (Barnes et al., 2010). Also, Enomoto (2012) postulated that collaborative PD encouraged the establishment of relationships among the group members, which served to allow individuals to get to know each other on both a personal and professional basis. Enomoto suggested that these relationships further encouraged networking among the group members.

A traditional form of PD for school leaders is the pursuit of university-based coursework. Of concern is that Grissom and Harrington (2010) found that school leaders who participate in university PD received lower ratings for their effectiveness at improving schools, likely due to the time commitment that this PD requires in comparison to district-based PD opportunities. However, Grissom and Harrington suggested that while university-based PD might appear to be less valuable, school leaders might gain other benefits from engaging in this form of PD, such as increasing job satisfaction and reducing their desire to leave the profession. It is possible that while in the short-term university-based PD might result in less effective school leadership, in the long-term, the school leader might benefit from increased knowledge.

For many school leaders, the PD opportunities typically pursued focus on school academic improvement efforts, rather than student behavior; however, the presence of antisocial behaviors prohibits schools from maximizing students' potential. An improvement in the strength of students' social and emotional skills reduces the demonstration of antisocial behavior, and a reduction in antisocial behaviors correlates to an increase in academic achievement (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). PD is important for both

raising students' achievement and effective implementation of school reform efforts and serves to guide school leaders' practice by raising their leadership proficiency (Goldring et al., 2012; Kesson & Henderson, 2010). Consequently, in order to raise student achievement it is essential to advocate for the pursuit of PD opportunities that focus on increasing students' social-emotional skills, in addition to the traditional skills that have an association with school leadership.

Building capacity. Many school leaders experience feelings of isolation and consider the school leadership role to be too demanding and overwhelming (Enomoto, 2010). Consequently, building individual leadership competencies and capacity might help reduce the negative experiences of school leadership and provide a structure from which to support the school leaders as they strive to improve student learning. Likewise, an increase in leaders' competencies and capacities might provide the necessary skills to assist students in improving their academic and SEL skills, which will benefit them in the future (Coggshall et al., 2013). Marchant, Chistensen, Womack, Conley, and Fisher (2010) cautioned that the isolation often experienced by school leaders could lead to initial concerns about sharing their skills and practices; school district personnel might limit those concerns through their acknowledgment of feelings and expressing confidence in the school leaders' practices.

The recommended competencies to improve both academic and SEL include: maintaining positive relationships, establishing high expectations for learning, modeling appropriate social-emotional behaviors, providing a safe and supportive environment, and using positive behavior strategies (Coggshall et al., 2013). Consequently, a primary goal

of district-based PD should be to identify the necessary skills that school leaders need in order to improve both academic and SEL and subsequently provide the appropriate support to facilitate the professional growth (Grissom et al., 2010). Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, and Peetsma (2012) found that an improvement in the leadership skills of school leaders assisted in motivating teachers, promoted ongoing professional learning, and led to organizational improvements. Additionally, an increase in the school leader's capacity led to an increase in the use of distributed leadership, which had a significant positive impact on student learning and school improvement (Heck & Hallinger, 2010).

Social and Emotional Learning

The primary mission of a school is to raise students' levels of academic achievement. However, schools also play an important role in helping students to acquire and strengthen their social and emotional skills (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). While SEL within the school setting might occur both implicitly, as a result of modeling, and explicitly, through targeted SEL lessons, it is essential for school leaders to realize the strong interconnection between social, emotional, and academic skills (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Jones and Bouffard (2012) posited that SEL comprises three conceptual categories: (a) emotional processing, (b) social and interpersonal skills, and (c) cognitive regulation. Whereas Protheroe (2012) considered SEL to encompass five competencies: (a) self-awareness, (b) social awareness, (c) self-management, (d) interpersonal relationships, and (e) decision-making. Overall, SEL is the process by which individuals learn how to operate their social and emotional processes in order to adhere to the prosocial behavioral norms of society (Harlacher & Merrell, 2010). Elias and Moderi

(2012) further explained that SEL is not merely a collection of skills and competencies, but it "implies a pedagogy for building those skills and an intervention structure to support…the skills over time and across contexts" (p. 424). Intentionally teaching students social and emotional skills will assist students in establishing and maintaining positive relationships and provide for their psychological and physical health and well-being (Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2013). Consequently, a school or classroom that actively seeks to enhance students' SEL would present a culture of positive relationships, support, respect, and sensitivity towards individual needs (Hagelskamp et al., 2013). Thus creating an environment that is conducive to learning.

Despite current educational reform policies focusing on academic achievement, school leaders continue to recognize the importance of ensuring that schools offer a safe and supportive environment (Jackson, 2012; Protheroe, 2012). Additionally, there is a developing interest in the value of SEL for developing students' character and providing moral education, largely as a result of school-based incidents of violence and conflict (Thurston & Berkeley, 2010). Espelage, Low, Polanin, and Brown (2013) discovered that middle school students who participated in a SEL intervention program decreased their physically aggressive behaviors by 42%. However, while Jones and Bouffard (2012) cautioned that intentionally including SEL into the school curriculum would not thwart acts of violence, ensuring that students receive SEL opportunities might provide students with effective strategies to handle conflict and support the development of healthy, prosocial behaviors. As Jackson (2012) stated, an absence of social-emotional competence prohibits individuals from effectively managing tension and conflicts in daily

interactions. Therefore, students with strong social-emotional skills are less likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors.

Integration of SEL. School leaders who wish to implement a SEL component within their schools should consider all options when choosing appropriate SEL intervention and prevention programs. Specifically, when selecting appropriate SEL programs, the school leader should ensure that there is an inclusion of strategies for implementing meaningful and sustainable school-wide integration (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). The acquisition of social and emotional skills does not occur in isolation; it is the horizontal and vertical, across content and grade levels, integration of SEL skills that supports the sustainability. Therefore, identifying the essential SEL elements and determining how to connect these skills within the core academic program and routines of the school may effectively meet students' needs (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). School leaders should ensure the vertical alignment of the development of social and emotional skills; for example, elementary schools could establish foundational SEL skills, and secondary schools build upon those strategies and skills (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Conversely, Harlacher and Merrell (2010) found a branded SEL curriculum to be effective in developing students SEL skills; students who participated in a branded SEL curriculum demonstrated greater levels of application and knowledge of SEL skills. Additionally, Morris, Millenky, Raver, and Jones (2013) found that students who participated in a SEL curriculum demonstrated an increase in their self-control, ability to focus, and class participation. Students' exposure to SEL should include the development of empathy, the ability to emotionally regulate and resolve inter-personal conflicts, the

appropriate management of anger, and improve problem-solving skills (Espelage et al., 2013; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Consequently, students could benefit from both the implementation of a research-based SEL curriculum and an integrated approach to teaching SEL across the curriculum.

An integrated approach to explicitly and implicitly teaching social and emotional skills is a pre-requisite for preparing students for life beyond high school and in helping them to become productive and responsible citizens (Carstarphen, 2012; Marchant et al., 2010). A school leader's active and intentional approach to ensuring that SEL is a key component of a school culture is essential for reducing students' academic barriers; effective social and emotional skills equip students with the skills necessary to learn at a high level (Elias & Moderi, 2012; Protheroe, 2012). Consequently, Jones and Bouffard (2012) supported this notion and asserted that students with strong SEL skills were those who performed well in school. Subsequently, students who lack social and emotional skills tend to experience greater conflict with their teachers, which might result in a diminishment of instructional quality (Morris et al., 2013; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Spilt, Koomen, Thijs, & van der Leij, 2012). A reduction in the quality of instruction has a negative impact on all students' academic achievement, not just those who lack social and emotional skills (Hagelskamp et al., 2013).

Student-teacher relationships and SEL. The relationships that teachers establish with their students plays a significant role in assisting their development of social and emotional skills; specifically, Jones and Bouffard (2012) claimed, "relationships are the soil in which children's SEL skills grow" (p. 9). When teachers

cultivate positive relationships with their students, those relationships potentially serve as a protective factor by promoting prosocial behavior regulation, increasing academic achievement, and encouraging social competence (Coggshall et al., 2013; Hughes, 2012; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Also, Hughes (2012) suggested that students who had a positive and supportive relationship with a teacher experienced more positive relationships with their peers. Similarly, the relationships between faculty and staff, as witnessed by the students, influences student behavior; therefore, school leaders should encourage all adults within the school community to serve as positive role models for how students should act by using appropriate prosocial skills and establishing positive interpersonal relationships with students (Charmaraman, Jones, Stein, & Espelage, 2013). Consequently, Hughes recommended that school leaders cultivate ways in which to identify students who experience difficulty in forming a positive relationship with an adult, while also providing professional development for teachers to help them initiate relationships with the more challenging students. When students who typically struggle in school feel a connection to an adult within the school community, the sense of support that they garner might help them to navigate the challenges of school and elect prosocial behavior.

Implementation of SEL. In order for schools to effectively help students in their development of social and emotional skills, school leaders must clearly indicate that developing students' social and emotional skills is non-negotiable and a responsibility of all school personnel (Osher, 2012). Setting SEL as a priority requires school leaders to identify and address the factors that inhibit any cultural change toward including SEL as

a core component of the school's mission (Osher, 2012). In addition, school leaders might need to embark on their own PD to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to lead the incorporation of SEL into the school's daily practices (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Lane, 2012). The effective integration of SEL into a school's mission requires the school leader to lead a systems-wide approach, which would align with the individual school context, needs, and other improvement efforts that focus on providing a safe and supportive school climate (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Protheroe, 2012).

Establishing a school team to facilitate the school-wide implementation of SEL is critical for determining the methods for delivering SEL that is systematic and implemented by all personnel in the school community (Marchant et al., 2010). This team should accept responsibility for collecting data on students' SEL skills and the progress of skill acquisition, along with student discipline data, which will enable an evaluation of the successes and limitations of the implementation efforts (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Furthermore, it is important that this team identifies any requisite PD that the educators might need to facilitate the successful adoption of the new SEL paradigm; Marchant et al. (2010) stated that "training will support these individuals in being effective change agents within the school as the…strategies are introduced and implemented" (p. 41). Jones and Bouffard (2012) expressed there are four key components that serve to guide school leaders in their adoption of a school-wide SEL approach; these included: (a) maintaining continuity and consistency, (b) ensuring the interdependency of social, emotional, and academic skills, (c) providing for a social contextual development of the skills, and (d)

the systemic operation of all aspects of the school. Consequently, as school leaders strive to integrate SEL they should use these components to guide the implementation efforts.

Continuum of support. Given the importance of SEL, school leaders must plan to meet the needs of all students as they acquire these skills (Lane, 2012). School leaders should develop a continuum of support for all students that aligns with the response to intervention process to academic instruction, which provides for a three-tiered approach to supporting students' learning (Harlacher & Merrell, 2010). This continuum of support should approach SEL from different levels, and from within individual aspects of the school. For example, this process should include the review of school-wide routines and organizational structures that focus on respect, building a positive culture, and culminate in the provision of intensive support to the few students who require such interventions (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Marchant et al., 2010). The primary emphasis on including SEL as a school-wide initiative should be to ensure the provision of core SEL instruction for all students (Harlacher & Merrell, 2010; Lane, 2012; Marchant et al., 2010). For students who continue to exhibit antisocial behaviors following the adoption and integration of SEL skills school-wide, these students should receive supplementary supports that serve to meet their individual needs and deficits, and further address subsequent behavior issues (Lane, 2012; Marchant et al., 2010). Not all students acquire social and emotional skills at the same developmental rate; consequently, planning for and providing additional services is essential for supporting students who continue to demonstrate antisocial behaviors.

Despite the knowledge and evidence of the benefits of including SEL skill development in schools, there remains an absence of such instruction in many schools. While countless educators do not debate that SEL skills are important, worthwhile, and necessary to help students acquire prosocial behavior competencies and develop into productive citizens, they do not believe that there is significant time or resources available to support SEL (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Elias and Moderi (2012) cited that the reluctance of school leaders to include SEL as a core part of the school's mission is a lack of clarity regarding how SEL should look when it is a part of the school culture. Additionally, Elias and Moderi expressed that there is an absence of SEL skills training in both teacher and school leader preparation programs; consequently, SEL is a foreign concept for many educators. Likewise, Morris et al. (2013) noted that a substantial barrier to the inclusion of SEL is a lack in the capacity of teachers to manage students' disruptive and antisocial behaviors. A role of the school leader should be to help teachers build their capacity to work with challenging students.

Barriers to SEL implementation. When school leaders embark on implementing a school-wide approach to SEL development, an awareness of the barriers that limit successful implementation might assist with their planning and implementation of a framework. For example, (Jones & Bouffard, 2012) shared that the most common pitfalls to SEL reform efforts were the lack of duration of the intervention, failure to make SEL skills part of the core mission and school values, and fragmenting or marginalizing the programs. Also, Jones and Bouffard (2012) claimed that SEL skills implementation efforts were less effective when SEL skills were limited to classroom-based instruction,

and when faculty and staff members did not receive PD or support to teach and reinforce SEL strategies. This lack of PD for non-certificated school personnel is concerning given that these individuals mostly work with students during unstructured time and activities, and in which times positive social and emotional skills are most critical and when most antisocial behaviors occur (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Accordingly, school leaders should provide SEL PD for all school personnel.

Professional development. The provision of ongoing PD to support school personnel in implementing SEL skills within their classrooms and throughout the school is essential for SEL to become a part of the school's mission. PD should include opportunities for school personnel to increase their knowledge and awareness of SEL, as well as provide them with the skills that will enable them to create and maintain positive relationships with students (Hagelskamp et al., 2013; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Additionally, to enhance the capacity of faculty and staff in managing students' antisocial behaviors, school leaders should provide opportunities for school personnel to reflect and receive feedback on their practice, their modeling of social and emotional behaviors, and their encouragement of their students' use of these skills (Hughes, 2012; Osher, 2012; Spilt et al., 2012). When school leaders provide for these forms of PD, they are demonstrating the value of SEL as a core part of the school's mission.

In order to build the capacity of teachers so that they are in a position to help students develop SEL skills, it is essential that school leaders provide adequate and ongoing support (Stormont, Reinke, Newcomer, Marchese, & Lewis, 2014). School leaders should make time to provide opportunities for school personnel to collaborate and

utilize each other for support during the implementation phase (Wanless, Patton, Rimm-Kaufman, & Deutsch, 2013). Likewise, school leaders should provide the appropriate resources necessary for successful implementation of any SEL program (Stormont et al., 2014). When school leaders ensure that change is manageable, support the school personnel, provide resources and access to collaborative opportunities, it is highly plausible that SEL program implementation will occur successfully and with fidelity (Osher, 2012). Above all, school leaders must remember that adults within the school setting have differing levels of social and emotional competence and require varying amounts of support in order to effectively develop and use their own skills (Espelage et al., 2013; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). One way for school leaders to offer support to the adults in either developing their own social and emotional skills or developing those of their students is to utilize school personnel as instructional coaches (Stormont et al., 2014). A primary role of a coach is to observe adults interact with students and providing appropriate support and feedback to increase the educator's ability to develop SEL skills (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Stormont et al., 2014). An additional role of a coach is to demonstrate and model effective practices for developing SEL skills; Wanless et al., (2013) explained, "seeing coaches implement practices with the teachers' own students made it possible to believe practices would work" (p. 47), which increases the likelihood that the teacher will adopt and implement effective practices, thus modeling these skills for their students. An instructional coach would most likely be a veteran or experienced master teacher from within the school system who is on a special assignment; this individual would either receive a stipend from the district or release time from their

teaching contract to provide the necessary and appropriate support to his or her colleagues.

Adult social and emotional skills. The social and emotional behaviors demonstrated by a teacher within a classroom determine the tone for students' behaviors and establish a climate for learning; therefore, the teacher's behavior will either "facilitate desired student outcomes or exacerbate poor student outcomes" (Coggshall et al., 2013, p. 436). It is important for school leaders to be aware that when teachers experience stress in their lives or feelings of low efficacy it is possible that they will experience a corresponding reduction in their instructional effectiveness (Morris et al., 2013; Spilt et al., 2012). Consequently, when school leaders ask these teachers to reflect on their practice, this reflection might escalate that stress because they are likely to be cynical of their ability to manage antisocial behaviors (Spilt et al., 2012). Interestingly, Morris et al. (2013) found that providing teachers with PD opportunities to manage students' antisocial behaviors actually increased their ability to identify these behaviors, while also increasing their capacity to provide effective interventions with their students. Additionally, working with teachers to improve their skills to work with students with antisocial behaviors also raised the teacher's cognizance regarding the importance of student-teacher relationships, which encourages positive interactions that might reduce the school-to-prison pipeline (Coggshall et al., 2013; Spilt et al., 2012). When school leaders assess the social-emotional health of all school personnel, they will be in a position to determine how to support these individuals best for the benefit of the students. School leaders might informally assess the social-emotional health of their teachers by

taking time to talk to each teacher on an individual basis as a form of checking-in with how they are doing, with the purpose to understand immediate issues or concerns. Additionally, school leaders could perform more formal social-emotional health checks using surveys, and if necessary, accessing personnel from the district's human resources department to provide additional assistance in determining the social-emotional health needs of a teacher.

Fidelity of SEL implementation. A final consideration for school leaders as they assist students in developing and strengthening SEL skills is to ensure implementation fidelity. Specifically, Wanless et al. (2013) noted that the fidelity of implementation, that is how school personnel deliver the program in the appropriate manner, is essential for guaranteeing the efficacy of a SEL program. It is the fidelity and quality of the SEL program employment, alongside the level of support and provision of requisite structures for accomplishment, which will determine the effectiveness of the program, as opposed to the actual program selected for implementation (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Stormont et al., 2014). A school leader should assume responsibility for ensuring the fidelity of SEL implementation.

Systemic Behavior Intervention

In order to reduce students' antisocial behaviors and create a safe and supportive environment that is conducive to student learning, published literature highlights the importance of school leaders creating systemic interventions that build a positive school climate. Specifically, researchers indicated that a school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) approach could serve as a credible, evidence-based framework from which

school leaders might establish such systemic, school-wide behavior interventions to address students' behavioral needs (McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; McIntosh et al., 2014; Ross et al., 2012). McIntosh and Bennett (2011) and Horner, Sugai, and Anderson (2010) articulated that SWPBS serves as a framework and not a formal SEL curriculum; within the framework, school teams determine which research-based behavioral interventions would most likely meet the needs of their students. The purpose of SWPBS is to assist schools in altering their culture by replacing unproductive practices, which do not meet the needs of the students, and developing positive and predictable expectations that support students' prosocial behaviors; thus, helping students improve behaviorally and academically (McIntosh et al., 2014). The adoption of SWPBS should result in a change to the school's culture and affect a reduction in exposure to the potential risk factors that impede a student's learning and increase their access to academic protective factors, such as improved relationships with adults (McIntosh, Filter, Bennett, Ryan, & Sugai, 2010).

The implementation of SWPBS requires PD, support, and training for school leaders, who will likely lead the reform and implementation efforts with their staff. Horner et al. (2010) explained that the development and installation of behavioral interventions required an increase in the school personnel's capacity to lead those reform efforts. The effective development of interventions is an ongoing process that might take several years before full implementation, and which requires school leaders to support teachers as they work to not only teach SEL skills, but also shape the culture (Ross et al., 2012). A key component of the SWPBS framework includes the direct teaching and articulation of expectations for prosocial behavior that occurs within all settings of the

school and that establishes a continuum for supporting such behavior (Horner et al., 2010; McIntosh et al., 2010; Ross et al., 2012). Thus, all students should know what to expect from all school personnel regardless of their setting.

SWPBS continuum of support. After school personnel define and teach prosocial behavior expectations to all students, students should receive positive reinforcement for using prosocial behaviors and acquire instructional consequences for antisocial behavior (McIntosh et al., 2014). A SWPBS approach functions as a three-tiered model of intervention, in which the type and intensity of an intervention approach aligns with the type and intensity of behavior (Ross et al., 2012). Ross et al. (2012) found that, in general, 80% of students would respond appropriately to a universal, primary prevention behavior intervention, with approximately 15-20% of students needing secondary interventions that target demonstrated antisocial behaviors, and less than 5% of students requiring a tertiary form of intervention. The implementation of a primary antisocial behavior prevention approach should occur throughout the whole school, and all adults should teach students the expectations (Horner et al., 2010). Secondary interventions should focus on providing small groups of students with strategies to encourage a reduction in antisocial behavior, with tertiary interventions occurring on an individual basis to target specific students' behavioral challenges; students who require tertiary levels of support should undergo a functional behavior assessment to determine what influences a child's behavior (Horner et al., 2010). Using data to determine the needs of both the entire student body and individual students is essential for school

leaders to offer appropriate levels of behavior supports that will provide students with the tools that they need to be successful in school and in life.

Furthermore, SWPBS antisocial behavior prevention should serve as an integrated model of intervention; for example, discrete intervention strategies should merge into a single and cohesive program without reducing the reliability of each individual strategy (Domitrovich et al., 2010). However, it is essential to fuse the selected intervention strategies into one overarching program in order to provide a systemic method from which to teach social and emotional skills to prevent antisocial behaviors (Domitrovich et al., 2010). When school leaders implement behavior interventions as stand-alone units of instruction, without taking a systems-wide approach to prevention and intervention, they fail to develop an integrated approach to SWPBS, which is likely to prevent a change in the building's culture (Domitrovich et al., 2010). A careful analysis of available prevention and intervention programs, along with a focus on determining a few important skills and expectations is the most appropriate way to equip students with a range of social and emotional skills to handle conflict and life's challenges (McIntosh et al., 2014). Domitrovich et al. (2010) explained that an integration of intervention strategies allows schools to deliver multiple programs at the same time, which compounds the benefits of each program due to the opportunity for the core components of each program to interact with synergy. Additionally, a systems-wide approach is essential for helping students to increase their SEL competency; the utilization of a handful of positive behavioral expectations that represent core SEL skills, will help to establish the foundation for demonstrating prosocial behavior throughout the school community

(McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; McIntosh et al., 2010). When students understand behavioral expectations they are more likely to respond appropriately and strive to meet those expectations.

SWPBS systemic needs and support. As a result of SWPBS not serving as a formal curriculum, it is possible to align behavior prevention and intervention efforts to the individual needs of the school (McIntosh & Bennett, 2011). Consequently, the school leadership team should use data to determine the school's specific needs, develop an action plan to meet those needs, and establish an evaluation method for determining whether the intervention requires modification (McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; McIntosh et al., 2010). School leaders should use a variety of data to analyze the effectiveness of the interventions in order to make decisions regarding any necessary modification of those interventions (McIntosh et al., 2014). Thus, the use of data to drive prevention and intervention programs will allow a school leader to adopt and modify programs that meet the needs of an individual school.

One concern of implementing SWPBS is the requirement that all school personnel receive adequate and appropriate training to ensure that the implementation is systemic and successful. McIntosh and Bennett (2011) found workshops to be an ineffective way of building support for SWPBS implementation. Instead, several researchers noted that when school leaders established systems to support school personnel in building their capacity to lead the reform efforts and provided ongoing support during the implementation phase, the school leaders experienced greater success with changing the school's culture (Fallon, McCarthy, & Sanetti, 2014; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Ross et

al., 2012). Also, school leaders should monitor the fidelity of the SWPBS implementation; if the delivery and implementation of practices are not effective, the school leader should address those concerns in order to protect the integrity of the SWPBS approach (Fallon et al., 2014). Furthermore, Fallon et al. (2014) noted that in general, defining, teaching, and reinforcing SWPBS expectations is not difficult; however, the effective integration of those expectations into instruction, along with upholding appropriate consequences for antisocial behavior proved more difficult for school personnel. In contrast, Ross et al. (2012) found that when teachers had access to SWPBS interventions, they experienced both increased instructional efforts and better mental health. These improvements to school staff's efficacy, health, and effectiveness may directly benefit the students.

Outcomes of the implementation of SWPBS. A concern regarding the implementation of SWPBS largely focuses on the time that it takes to provide interventions for SEL (Domitrovich et al., 2010). For example, Domitrovich et al. (2010) denoted that school personnel were reluctant to provide instructional time to implement SWPBS and the teaching of social and emotional skills because the perception is that these skills do not relate to academic achievement. Conversely, researchers established that schools with SWPBS demonstrated greater levels of student achievement, increased time on-task, greater student participation, and a higher incidence of teachers providing instruction (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012; McIntosh et al., 2011). Likewise, schools that had SWPBS found reduced levels of student antisocial behaviors, increased use of coping strategies, and an increase in perception of school safety (McIntosh et al., 2010; McIntosh

et al., 2014). In addition, McIntosh et al. (2010) discovered that school leaders with SWPBS reduced their use of exclusionary discipline practices and found that teachers were better able to manage students' behaviors within the classroom. Consequently, investing the time to teach SEL skills and develop SWPBS pays dividends in developing a climate that is conducive to learning (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012). Students who attend a school with SWPBS are more likely to develop the SEL skills to become successful students and productive citizens.

A SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention also provides benefits to teachers. For example, Kelm and McIntosh (2012 and Ross et al. (2012) demonstrated how teachers in SWPBS schools, compared to teachers in non-SWPBS schools, had higher levels of self-efficacy, lower levels of burnout, increased confidence, and a higher probability of continual effort to improve their performance. Also, a school that adopts a SWPBS approach will "provide teachers with a shared sense of purpose" (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012, p. 144). When school personnel work together to develop and implement the school's mission and vision and create a supportive culture they strengthen their collaborative and team-work skills and acquire the skills to utilize effective practices (Ross et al., 2012). Finally, a SWPBS approach enables adults in the school setting to build more positive relationships with students and with each other as a result of the growth in their own interpersonal and social and emotional skills (Ross et al., 2012). Therefore, for school leaders to assist teachers in refining their practice, the development of SEL skills through a SWPBS approach has the potential to create a culture that is conducive to learning and that increases students' academic success.

Policy Recommendations

While support for the initiation of the application of a SEL program to assist students in reducing their antisocial behaviors, Carstarphen (2012) argued for the establishment of district, state, and national standards, together with the establishment of policy recommendations to ensure the systemic sustainability of these skills. The development and implementation of policy stands to help schools strategically alter organizational process (Heck & Hallinger, 2010). Jones and Bouffard (2012) expressed that school leaders should address the barriers that impede systematic implementation of SEL skills and establish a vision to overcome these barriers. In addition, Jones and Bouffard advocated that policy recommendations should specifically address the development of SEL standards, ways to assess and measure attainment of those standards, and articulating how the standards connect across content areas. Also, the establishment of policy to ensure the inclusion of SEL into administrator and teacher training, along with instituting opportunities for networking to allow for continuous learning and improvement would further support both the inclusion of SEL as core curriculum and the integration of SEL into school's missions (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). For these reasons, a policy recommendation for the inclusion of SEL as part of the core curriculum is timely, necessary, and important for the healthy development of children.

Summary of the Review of Literature

Data from this study drove the review of literature in preparation for developing the project (position paper policy recommendation). Participants indicated that an area of school leaders' practice that is lacking is the access to specific, ongoing, job-embedded

PD for working with students' antisocial behaviors. Additionally, while the school leaders described potential interventions and strategies and skills that enable them to work successfully with these students, it was evident that there is not a systemic prevention or intervention program that is district- or school-wide. Consequently, a review of the current literature regarding effective PD, the inclusion of SEL skills, and a systemic, SWPBS was appropriate for development of the resulting project.

PD for school leaders should be two-fold. First, PD should serve to strengthen the school leader's capacity to effectively work with students' antisocial behaviors to provide the necessary support, along with appropriate corrective actions, to result in a change in the student's behavior. Second, school leaders must develop their own capacities, through PD, to provide adequate PD to assist teachers in improving their behavior and classroom management practices and to build relationships with their students. School leaders should also consider adopting a SWPBS approach to behavior prevention and intervention, which would require their access of PD and the provision of PD across the system. By collaborating with other school leaders, PD could be ongoing and relevant to the culture of the individual district, while also meeting the individual needs of each school.

The literature indicated that SEL is a requisite factor for students to be successful both academically and in social situations. Students who develop appropriate SEL skills build more positive relationships with their teachers and peers, and also develop protective factors that allow them to access the academic curriculum and achieve academic success. The successful integration of SEL into a school's culture requires a

systems-wide approach; an appropriate framework from which to develop this cultural shift is through a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. Teaching students social and emotional skills should be the responsibility of every adult within the learning community and should be fully integrated into the culture of the school, both within and across content areas. An effectively implemented SWPBS approach would include the development of a three-tiered continuum of support, which provides primary prevention efforts for all students, supplementary supports, and then tertiary supports for those most in need.

Implementation

As a result of this study, the ensuing project is a position paper policy recommendation. This project presents an appropriate method from which to advocate for both the inclusion of PD aimed at strengthening school leaders' skills in working with students with antisocial behaviors and for a systems-wide SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention with the inclusion of SEL. Implementation of the project would require the superintendent of WSD to agree to recommend the policy recommendation to the school board, and, accordingly, the school board to agree to implement the policy. In order to advocate for the adoption of the policy recommendation process to commence, a meeting with the superintendent to present and discuss the study's findings, the proposed policy recommendation, and a prospective implementation plan is necessary. However, the school board's successful implementation of the policy recommendation would also rely upon several factors. For example, adoption will likely be dependent on the superintendent presenting, to the school board, a clear, well-written

policy recommendation that is free from jargon, easy to understand and implement, and that is credible, as evidenced by the inclusion of research and examples of best practice within the document. Assisting the superintendent in understanding the importance of advocating to the school board for implementation of the policy recommendation, and, subsequently, supporting the school leaders in their professional growth would be reliant on an examination of the potential barriers and supports toward implementation, along with an analysis of the requisite resources and responsibilities of the key stakeholders.

Furthermore, an evaluation plan should also accompany the policy recommendation. Specifically, designing an appropriate method for systematically evaluating the policy implementation over time (both formative and summative evaluations) is essential to ensure that the policy recommendation adequately meets the needs of the school leaders and serves to assist the enhancement of their practice. Given that the school leaders would likely be responsible for collecting and analyzing data, as Spaulding (2008) suggested, a participatory-oriented evaluation would provide information about the impact that the policy has on the school leaders.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

Resources. Again, the most appropriate resource of this project is the actual policy recommendation document. A well-written document supported by empirical research and examples of best practice will provide the WSD Superintendent with a blueprint from which to make changes that are relevant to the school leaders. In order to make the policy recommendation user-friendly and easy to implement, the document includes a comprehensive reference list, which offers additional resources should there be

an interest in delving deeper into an area of the policy recommendation. Furthermore, in addition to the reference list of journal articles, I also provide a collection of website addresses, and a summary of each website, that highlight the key issues presented in the policy recommendation; these websites offer numerous additional resources and support, which might afford extra guidance for the implementation efforts of the policy recommendation.

The successful implementation of the policy recommendation would require the support and commitment of the WSD Superintendent, and subsequently the support of the district leadership team (cabinet). The superintendent and cabinet would lead the policy recommendation implementation effort and guide the work of the district's school leaders. For example, the superintendent and cabinet would need to create time for the school leaders to participate in PD activities and support their implementation efforts. This PD should be ongoing and job-embedded and should operate using the professional learning communities (PLC) model as outlined by DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2008). DuFour et al. explained that to improve student learning, school personnel must work collaboratively and interdependently in "an environment that fosters shared understanding, a sense of identity, high levels of involvement, mutual cooperation…emotional support, and a strong sense of belonging as they work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone" (p. 20). Ongoing PD within a PLC is a model of best practice that would address the school leaders' gaps in practice and help to improve their work with students' antisocial behaviors.

Also, within the policy recommendation, to facilitate implementation, I included an implementation and evaluation plan timeline to assist the superintendent in planning for this work. Without the support of the superintendent and cabinet, enactment of the policy recommendation would not be possible. However, an additional resource that is essential for implementing this policy recommendation is that of the school leaders themselves. If the school leaders do not commit to the policy recommendation, implementation of the policy would be unproductive and ineffective.

Additionally, the school board has primary responsibility for the adoption and adherence to any school district policy. The school board would need to understand the need for a policy recommendation and agree to support its adoption. It would be important for the school board to receive a copy of an executive summary of this study so that they could understand the need for adopting this policy recommendation. Without the support of the school board, upholding policy would be difficult.

Finally, presentation of the findings from this study at the state or national principals' conferences would increase the exposure of the need for school leaders' PD, the inclusion of SEL in schools, and the adoption of a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. Publication of a summary of the findings in peer-reviewed journals, which either focus on educational policy or student behavior, is a potential way to increase the dissemination of information from this study. By sharing the findings and recommended policy, other school districts could benefit from this work and better serve students with antisocial behaviors.

Existing supports. The greatest existing support for this policy recommendation is the school leader participants in the study. The findings indicated that the school leaders are keen to improve student behavior. Additionally, the data denoted that the participants have an interest in participating in ongoing PD to understand and collaborate about potential best practices that they could adopt and implement.

Likewise, within the WSD cabinet, there is evidence of strong support for working with the school leaders to improve student learning. PD, in the form of a PLC, is already a practice within the district; however, there has not previously been an inclusion of student behavior within this PD model. The cabinet maintains a regular PLC model with the school leaders, so a meeting schedule is currently part of the school leaders' calendar; including student behavior as an ongoing agenda item would be feasible. The cabinet has a strong connection and working relationship with the school board and representative committees to the school board, so engaging these stakeholders in the work to include a focus on improving students' behavior is possible. Finally, the data showed that there is a small group of school leaders passionate about investigating the phenomenon of antisocial behavior and striving to reduce those behaviors. From within the group, there is already some expert knowledge about many of the possible interventions that could serve as a foundation for improving student behavior throughout the system. For example, several school leaders are experts in *Love and Logic*, others have knowledge of SWPBS, and two of the school leaders hold certification as school counselors who have extensive knowledge of children's developmental trajectories. These individuals could serve as facilitators for the development and implementation of

systems-wide procedures. Finally, I am also a school leader within the WSD team, and my completion of extensive research into this topic from existing empirical evidence and research would provide a foundation from which to build the capacity of all school leaders.

Potential Barriers

Undoubtedly, the greatest barrier to implementing the policy recommendation is time. This policy recommendation advocates for the inclusion of behavior specific PD and a focus on including SEL skill development and a SWPBS approach. Consequently, school leaders would be adding another initiative to their repertoire of responsibilities. Regular meeting schedules would need adjustment to include enough time to discuss student behavior and policy implementation factors, which might require either having to remove another key initiative from the agenda, or shortening the allotted time on agenda items; thus, potentially reducing the quality of the impact of the policy. Should the district leaders decide that the implementation of the policy recommendation require more time than is possible within the regular meeting schedule, finding additional time slots might prove difficult. For example, school leaders might not be available all at the same time, and it might be challenging to be absent from the building on another occasion. In addition, while the launching of the policy recommendation could occur during the leadership team's summer academy, the superintendent might not be willing to add this to the schedule. These barriers might reduce the importance of the policy recommendation and, therefore, limit its effectiveness.

An additional barrier to implementation is the associated potential cost with providing the appropriate PD. School leaders might need to attend workshops or conferences to gain skills and knowledge necessary to understand the programs, such as *Love and Logic* or SWPBS, which all encounter conference registration fees, travel expenses, and potential lodging expenses. Furthermore, evidence indicated that stand-alone workshops are ineffective at meeting the needs of most school leaders (Goldring et al., 2012). The WSD could elect to bring experts in to the district to provide on-site PD; however, this would also carry a financial cost, including fees for the trainer, travel expenses, lodging expenses, and time out of the school leaders' day. Additionally, when school leaders then present PD opportunities to their individual school personnel, in order to be able to implement SEL skills and a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention, providing this PD also endures expense. For teachers to participate in PD, they either likely receive financial compensation for work outside of their contract day, or substitute teachers receive payment for covering for the teacher so that he or she might attend to the PD, or school leaders must relinquish time from meetings; thus, they will have to determine what to replace to provide SEL and SWPBS PD. Finally, school leaders might need to purchase additional resources, such as SEL curricula to implement the SEL and SWPBS effectively.

Another potential barrier to implementing the policy recommendation is that of participant interest. First, the superintendent and cabinet have to express an interest in focusing on the work of including SEL and SWPBS systems-wide and providing PD to support this work. Second, the school leaders themselves must buy-in to the need for

SEL, SWPBS, and PD; without their interest in improving the quality of this work, the implementation of the policy recommendation will be ineffective. Third, implementation of the policy recommendation must be timely and well planned; school leaders need to understand the implementation timeline and have enough time to grapple with the logistics and both receive and provide the necessary support to enable implementation.

A final barrier is that of the perception of expertise. To allow ongoing PD through the collaborative PLC process, it is imperative that leadership and expertise emerge within the group. If the school leaders do not consider themselves to be experts, then it would likely prove difficult to create trust and buy-in within the group. Not all school leaders need to be experts in all areas; however, those who have the greatest working knowledge about a practice must step forward to lead and guide the work for implementation to be successful.

Potential solutions to barriers to implementation. The first barrier to implementing the policy recommendation is that of time. One solution is to include behavior management, SEL, and SWPBS as standing agenda items in the current district-wide leadership team meetings. Another suggestion is to focus on this policy recommendation during the summer leadership team academy, in which 3-days are spent planning for the upcoming school year; it might be possible to dedicate some of this time for providing PD and planning for implementation of this work. One final solution for overcoming the time barrier would be to offer a stipend to one of the school leaders to facilitate this work.

The second barrier to implementation is the financial cost. First, one solution is to use the school leaders expertise to guide the PD. Also, it might be possible to request that experts within the field of SWPBS, *Love and Logic*, or SEL come to the district and provide in-house PD; this would potentially reduce the cost of district leaders going to conferences, and would also reach all school leaders; therefore, all school leaders would benefit from the PD opportunities. Furthermore, under Washington State law, students with disruptive behaviors qualify for learning assistance program (LAP) services; consequently, districts could utilize LAP funding to provide PD. Finally, utilizing the PLC model and in-district expertise to guide the work would encounter no financial burden, with the exception of the school leaders' time. Again, LAP funding would also be available for purchasing resources that have the intention of working to reduce disruptive and antisocial behaviors. An additional solution is to seek grant funding to support this work; writing and applying for grant dollars is a possible method to secure additional finances.

The final two barriers toward implementing the policy recommendation are participants' interest and expertise. Given that the findings of this study indicated that participants have a desire to participate in PD that focuses on SEL development and some form of a SWPBS approach, interest in adoption of the policy recommendation should not be a significant barrier. Providing a suggested timeline for implementation might also reduce the apprehension and anxiety about conducting this work. Also, sharing evidence from the literature regarding why this policy recommendation is an example of best practice and should be a serious consideration for the district to adopt and implement

would further reduce the barrier to implementation. Finally, building the school leaders' capacity to lead their colleagues in this PD would encourage the election of experts from within the group, and the PLC model would also support the collaborative efforts of the whole group.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

Prior to any level of implementation of this policy recommendation, a meeting with the Superintendent to determine the feasibility of implementing the policy and a discussion of the district's needs, mission, and vision should take place. If the Superintendent is agreeable regarding implementing the policy recommendation, a collaborative effort should follow to determine the appropriate implementation plan that will align with the needs of the district. However, for the purpose of this paper, Table 3 provides an example of an implementation timeline that operates under the assumption that the process would begin at the conclusion of the school year.

Table 3

Proposed Timeline of Policy Recommendation Implementation

Month	Activity
July	Disseminate knowledge and findings from the study to the entire leadership team. Determine the necessary PD steps (utilize a Google Survey to gain information regarding the participant's knowledge of SEL and SWPBS, as well as potential PD needs). As a team, develop the foundation for a K-12 SEL curriculum and implementation plan. Provide examples of best practice to assist with this selection and utilize a sub-committee to conduct this work to bring suggestions back to the whole group in August.
August	Either have school leaders attend *Love and Logic* and SWPBS conferences, or bring experts in the field to the district to provide PD. If not all school leaders attend it is essential for those who did participate in this PD to share their knowledge with the wider team. Develop a plan for providing ongoing PD opportunities for all school leaders. School leaders should select their school teams to lead the development of SEL and SWPBS school-wide. School leaders should develop their SEL and SWPBS implementation plans with their school teams. School leaders should operate within the PLC model and continue sharing with each other their successes and limitations, and provide ongoing support to each other. Develop an evaluation and data collection plan to evaluate the success of the policy recommendation implementation.
September	The school teams should implement and teach the SWPBS approach and SEL skills throughout all buildings. School leaders and their teams should participate in ongoing PD, which should include the evaluation and refinement of the implementation efforts, using data to guide decision-making processes.
October to January	School leaders and their teams should continue the implementation of SEL, SWPBS, and PD, using data to reflect on the successes and limitations. The teams should meet on at least a bi-monthly basis using the PLC model to provide PD and ongoing support. Teams should identify any limitations and develop plans to address those limitations, utilizing other teams for support.
February	Teams should all conduct a mid-year formative evaluation, and develop a plan for the continuation of their work.
February to June	Teams should participate in ongoing PD, in the form of a PLC, to formatively evaluate the implementation efforts.
June	The district and school leaders should review the appropriate data to collect and analyze. A summative evaluation of the implementation efforts of the policy recommendation should occur at the conclusion of the school year. This information would provide data on the outcome of the policy and include an analysis of data such as exclusionary data, student achievement, and perception surveys.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

Student. As the person who developed the policy recommendation, it would be my primary responsibility to provide a model policy recommendation that was easy to understand and provided guidance for implementation. An additional responsibility would include working collaboratively with the superintendent to ensure his or her understanding of the policy recommendation, and to refine the policy recommendation as appropriate to better meet the needs of the district. Another responsibility would be to provide access to relevant research and resources that would ensure that the policy recommendation meets empirical examples of best practice; this might include journal articles, website addresses, and conference dates, locations, and prices.

Superintendent. Should the superintendent elect to support implementation of the policy recommendation, he or she would agree to support the work that implementation would require, including supporting the school leaders by providing PD opportunities and emotional support during the process. However, the initial responsibility of the superintendent would be to request that the school board adopts the policy recommendation. Following an agreement to implement the policy recommendation, the superintendent would need to provide time to implement the PD and ensure the protection of this time. In addition, the superintendent might need to provide funds to support the work, such as LAP funds, or other funds to pay school teams to meet, or for individuals to attend relevant conferences. As the leader of the organization, the superintendent would need to spearhead and lead the work of the school

leaders as they strive to implement the policy recommendation. Finally, the superintendent could assist the school leaders in identifying their individual PD needs and supporting their growth in those areas.

School board. It would be the duty of the school board to establish school district policies. Following the recommendation to the school board of the superintendent for the policy recommendation, the school board would need to agree to adopt and implement the policy recommendation. Subsequently, the school board would have oversight of the policy recommendation and should be apprised of implementation successes and limitations. The school board should also be aware of both formative and summative evaluation outcomes of the policy recommendation, and work with the superintendent to make adjustments to the policy recommendation as appropriate.

School leaders. The primary responsibility of the school leaders is to buy-in to the importance of this work. Similarly, school leaders must be willing to participate in the PD opportunities and commit to improving their own professional knowledge of SEL and SWPBS. Finally, an obligation of the school leaders is to lead the work of their school teams in developing SEL skills and a SWPBS approach within their schools, and both monitoring and supporting the work of their personnel. In order to maximize their effect, school leaders should work collaboratively, embrace the PLC model, and model best practices.

Parents and students. Two key stakeholder groups, of which the policy recommendation will have an impact, are the parents and students. Consequently, both the school district and school leaders should plan to inform the parents and students of

the policy recommendation and the implications that implementation will likely have to the students and the operational procedures of the school and district. For example, there are several ways to communicate this information to parents, which might include providing an informational session during a back-to-school night, during student registration, or providing information in the summer newsletter, with follow-up information during the school year. The students would receive information, as developmentally appropriate, at multiple opportunities, such as during whole school assemblies, within classrooms, and informally during the regular daily operational procedures.

Project Evaluation

Given that this policy recommendation is not a project, per se, a program evaluation in the traditional sense is not appropriate. However, an evaluation of the policy at different levels and at different points in time is appropriate. As Spaulding (2008) explained an "evaluation is conducted for decision-making processes" (p. 5); as a result of the desire to make decisions for implementation of the policy recommendation, an evaluation of the policy should occur.

Prior to any implementation effort of the policy recommendation, an expertise-oriented evaluation should take place. The conduction of this type of evaluation utilizes a content expert who evaluates the policy based upon content-specific criterion and using their expertise as an evaluator for the purpose of judging the quality, appropriateness, and legal aspects of the policy (Spaulding, 2008). The evaluators for this policy

recommendation could potentially include the Superintendent, the school district's attorney, or school board members.

Following implementation of the policy recommendation, a participatory-oriented evaluation would serve as an appropriate evaluation model. The purpose of the participatory-oriented evaluation is to gain information about the individuals whom the program (policy) affects (Spaulding, 2008). Spaulding (2008) explained that in a participatory-oriented evaluation the people involved in implementing the policy would be a part of the evaluation; possibly, those individuals would be responsible for collecting and analyzing data. For the purpose of evaluating the policy recommendation, both formative and summative evaluations would be necessary.

The initial expertise-oriented evaluation would serve as a summative evaluation in which an evaluation of the logistical matters of the policy would allow for any fine-tuning of the policy prior to implementation. During the initial stages of policy recommendation implementation, a formative, participatory-oriented evaluation would be relevant. Formative data collection and analysis would occur during the implementation phase, and the Superintendent should receive a copy of the findings for the purpose of monitoring and adjusting the policy recommendation (Spaulding, 2008). This process would provide timely information regarding concerns or issues about the policy recommendation; therefore, it would be possible to make changes or improvements to the policy during the implementation phase (Spaulding, 2008).

On completion of the implementation of the policy recommendation, most likely at the conclusion of the first year of implementation, a summative participatory-oriented

evaluation should take place. The purpose of a summative evaluation is to collect and analyze data to measure and judge the overall success of the policy recommendation (Spaulding, 2008). In this situation, the purpose would be to determine whether implementation of the policy recommendation effectively provided PD for the school leaders, whether school leaders were able to develop students' SEL skills, effectively implement a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention, and whether there were positive changes to the school climate. The school leaders should determine what data would be relevant to collect that would elicit meaningful analysis of the policy recommendation.

Implications Including Social Change

The purpose of the policy recommendation is to improve and strengthen school leaders' abilities and capacities to manage students' antisocial behaviors. This project has the potential to create social change by improving the school climate and reducing the use of exclusionary discipline through the targeted implementation of SEL and SWPBS. As a result, student academic achievement may improve, and students could develop the skills necessary to become successful and productive citizens. Through the data collection and analysis of this study, school leaders indicated a lack of PD around students' antisocial behavior and also provided evidence that there was an absence of a district-wide approach to prevention and intervention efforts. As a result, this project has the potential to elicit social change for these participants. While the design of this project is to meet the needs of the WSD leaders, modifications could occur to meet the needs of any school district that wishes to address students' antisocial behaviors. Also, this project

contributed to the research on SEL, SWPBS, and the importance of ongoing, job-embedded PD for school leaders heading this work.

The potential measureable outcomes could include the following:

- School climate: Using perception survey data for all stakeholders;
- Exclusionary discipline: Using exclusionary discipline data;
- Job satisfaction of school leaders: Using survey or interview data;
- Improvement in students' SEL skills: Using observation or perception (survey) data;
- Job satisfaction and burnout rates of teachers: Using survey or interview data;
- PD opportunities: Using PD logs, and effectiveness surveys;
- Curriculum maps: For SEL and SWPBS;
- Implementation plans: Maintaining documentation of the implementation process.

Key stakeholders. Stakeholders would likely benefit from the adoption of this policy recommendation. At the local level, WSD stands to benefit from this study's research and resulting project because it gathered data that was meaningful and relevant to the participants. However, this project has relevance on a larger scale, and could be of assistance to any school district that is targeting improving students' antisocial behaviors. For the purpose of this study, the key stakeholders and their individual responsibility for the success of the project include:

- The Superintendent: This individual has overall responsibility for all students' achievement, the graduation rate, and the success of policy implementation;

- The school board: This group has overall responsibility for adopting district policy and ensuring the upholding of all school board policies;
- The cabinet: These individuals are responsible for facilitating PD, for supporting school leaders in their work, and for providing resources and assistance to school leaders so that they can accomplish tasks;
- School leaders: This group is responsible for leading the implementation efforts of school reform within the school building. School leaders are also responsible for participating in PD opportunities, leading the implementation of SEL skill development efforts within their building, and facilitating the adoption of a SWPBS approach;
- Teachers: The teachers are responsible for ensuring SEL, potentially through the provision of SEL activities and delivering a curriculum. Additionally, all adults in the school are responsible for ensuring that students receive education on the SWPBS approach and understand the expectations of the approach;
- Students: The students are responsible for maintaining appropriate behavior to ensure a safe climate, developing their individual SEL skills, working to improve their academic achievement, and decreasing incidents of personal antisocial behaviors.

Local Community

The design of this project was to meet the needs of the school leaders in the WSD. The project was a result of the data, which indicated a lack of PD for managing students' behaviors and an absence of a unified approach to SEL and SWPBS across the district.

The policy recommendation advocates for ongoing, job-embedded PD, a focus on inclusion of SEL within and across the curriculum, and the adoption of a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention that is consistent throughout all schools in the district. While the project met the specific needs of the participants in this study, modifying the policy recommendation to meet the needs of any school district would be possible. The purpose of this project was to elicit change within my own school district to meet the needs of my fellow school leaders and our students. The desire is to provoke social change by providing school leaders with the skills necessary to enhance students' SEL and adopt a SWPBS approach through ongoing, job-embedded PD.

Far-Reaching

A goal of this project was to develop a policy recommendation to improve students' SEL skills, implement a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention, and provide PD for school leaders. Following successful adoption and implementation of the policy recommendation, sharing of this work could possibly assist other districts with leading change efforts to reduce incidents of antisocial behavior. In the larger social context, outside of the WSD, a potential area for growth would be to advocate for the inclusion of formalized classes on antisocial behavior management and the creation of a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention efforts in principal preparation programs. School leaders would benefit from additional preparation and training on effectively managing students' behaviors.

Conclusion

Section 3 described an application of the study's findings through the development of a project. Consequently, Section 3 described the project and its development, with Appendix A presenting the completed project in its entirety. The purpose of this project was to develop a deliverable product that addressed the gaps in practice identified within the data. Specifically, the data denoted that the school leader participants from the WSD lacked ongoing, job-embedded PD for their work with students' antisocial behaviors, developing SEL skills, and maintaining a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. Following an analysis of the study's findings, the development of a policy recommendation was a natural product to address the gaps in the participants' practice. The policy recommendation advocates for school leaders to receive ongoing, job-embedded PD that targets SEL skill development and a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. The policy recommendation also serves as a blueprint and executive summary of the case study, which highlights background information of the phenomenon (students' antisocial behavior) and a summary of the analysis of data and findings of the study. Support for the policy recommendation occurs through the presentation of evidence from empirical research, alongside the findings from this case study. The policy recommendation provides suggestions as to possible methods for implementation, which aligns to evidence from the research literature. In order to support implementation, the policy recommendation concludes with a short reference list of appropriate online resources as fundamental references, as well as a more detailed reference list.

The design of this project was a result of a desire to meet the needs of the WSD school leaders; however, the broadness of the policy recommendation and its contents allows for modification by other school district leaders. The intent of the project is to elicit social change by reducing students' antisocial behaviors through the provision of ongoing, job-embedded PD to school leaders. At a more global level, the policy recommendation could also serve as a blueprint from which to advocate for the inclusion of managing students' antisocial behaviors in principal preparation programs.

The following section describes a reflection of the entire doctoral project study journey. Specifically, Section 4 presents an analysis of the project's successes and limitations, a reflection of personal learning and growth as a result of completing this work, and consideration of the study's potential for creating social change. Within Section 4, I conclude the doctoral study journey by summarizing the entire process.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behavior utilizing an instrumental case study design. Data collection occurred through individual participant interviews, and following the analysis of data the findings guided the development of a policy recommendation to address gaps in the local practice that emerged from the findings. Specifically, the shortfalls proved to be a lack of ongoing, job-embedded professional development for school leaders in managing students' antisocial behavior. Additionally, participants indicated that there were no consistent intervention or prevention programs throughout the system for helping students to develop their SEL skills, and there was an absence of a unified SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention.

This section provides a reflection of my doctoral project-study journey and includes concluding remarks regarding the successes and limitations of the project that resulted from the data collection and analysis. Also suggested within this section are potential alternative project approaches that might serve as other ways in which to apply the study's findings. Additionally, this section presents an analysis of my personal learning and professional growth as a result of completing this project study and provides a reflection on the significance of the study for creating social change. Also included is a suggestion for the direction of future research as a result of the findings and ensuing project.

Project Strengths

The most significant outcome from this study was the development of a policy recommendation to address the gap of the local environment in school leaders' participation in ongoing, job-embedded PD, along with the inclusion of a systems-wide approach to developing SEL skills and a SWPBS approach. The final project that emerged is a policy recommendation: *Job-Embedded professional development for school leaders management of students' antisocial behavior through the systemic inclusion of social-emotional learning: A call to action*. Coggshall et al. (2013) explained that the effective development and implementation of educational policies had the potential to create safe environments that meet the physical and emotional needs of students. Additionally, a focus on strategic action that leads to the establishment of policies that are meaningful and relevant to the organization are likely to alter the organizational processes and lead to improved climates and instructional outcomes (Heck & Hallinger, 2010). However, the effective design and application of any policy requires that educators receive adequate PD to ensure the success of the policy (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Consequently, this supports the inclusion of the provision of PD to school leaders as they work to develop SEL skills and a SWPBS approach within this policy recommendation. Finally, the theory of change, as explained by Goldring et al. (2012), described the need for a reciprocal relationship between theory and practice. Therefore, it is essential that while grounding the policy recommendation in theory, a strong consideration and reflection of the application of that theory in practice should ensue prior to implementation efforts.

In the development of this project, the combination of empirical research along with the experiences of the school leaders within the study was essential in the creation of a policy that would shape organizational change. The participants indicated that there is an absence of PD, focus on SEL skills, and a uniform systemic SWPBS approach. Consequently, this project presents a document that addresses the needs of the school leaders and the gaps in their practice in the local setting. The document is also relevant to any other school district that has an interest in improving how school leaders manage students' antisocial behavior.

The participants within this study are all currently practicing school leaders within the WSD. These individuals are all responsible for managing students' behaviors, working with students in correcting and reducing antisocial behavior, providing corrective action for violations of the school's codes of conduct, and for working with teachers to ensure their effective management of student behavior. The findings from this study signified a lack in ongoing, job-embedded PD opportunities and a lack of a consistent approach toward working with these students across the system. Consequently, the experiences of the participants guided the policy recommendation to address the gaps in their practice.

An additional strength of the policy recommendation is that it advocates for school leaders at both the school and district levels to adopt best practices that will help to facilitate students' academic achievement. The empirical literature implied that participation in ongoing, job-embedded PD, adoption of a SWPBS approach, and explicitly integrating the teaching of SEL skills would create an environment that is

conducive to learning and would enhance the practice of educators (Coggshall et al., 2013; Enomoto, 2012; Hagelskamp et al., 2013; Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Protheroe, 2012). While the intent of the policy recommendation is to meet the needs of the study's participants, adaptations to the policy could easily occur to meet the needs of other school districts. The three key components (PD, SEL, and SWPBS) of this policy recommendation receive consistently association with an improvement in school climates and an increase in student achievement.

Another strength of this project at the local level is that it is the participants' desire to address students' antisocial behaviors and reduce their use of exclusionary discipline practices. At the district level, a PD structure already exists, which could accommodate the inclusion of PD for student behaviors within that structure. The policy recommendation also makes use of experts from among the school leaders in SEL skills and SWPBS approaches, such as Love and Logic, to facilitate the PD opportunities and to lead a systemic approach to change. Also, SEL and SWPBS are well-known educational approaches that facilitate safe schools. Consequently, external workshops as well as the potential for providing on-site PD are readily available and relatively low cost, especially given the possible use of LAP funds to address students' antisocial behaviors.

In addition to the low-cost effect of implementing this policy recommendation, very few resources are necessary to prevent inhibiting factors from embracing the policy recommendation. Given the expertise of the school leaders, the PLC approach to PD would serve as an effective model should school leaders not be able to attend workshops

or conferences. The support that is available from the Internet should also serve to mitigate any limitations due to the inability to attend external PD opportunities.

However, because there is an absence of an expertise-oriented evaluation of this policy recommendation, it is likely that there are additional strengths and important aspects of the policy recommendation that I am neglecting. Perhaps these strengths would emerge following the scrutiny of an expertise-oriented assessment. An additional strength is the potential for encouraging the school leaders' collaboration to refine and strengthen the policy recommendation prior to and during implementation. For example, by working alongside the superintendent, and other experts, additional relevant components to the policy recommendation might emerge that would strengthen its potential impact to student achievement on implementation.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

The design of this policy is to meet the needs of the WSD school leaders. The policy recommendation is a result of the emergent findings from the data collection and analysis processes, which included all 13 of the school leaders from the WSD. Despite the policy recommendation serving to provide guidance in addressing gaps in the school leaders' practice, a limitation is that the perspectives discussed within this study include school leaders' perceptions from one district. Additionally, the policy recommendation does not address other limitations to individual school leaders' practices. For example, while individual participants had their own needs, unless other participants discussed the same issues, the policy recommendation did not reflect these individual needs, they remained, however, in the discussion of the findings.

The policy recommendation is currently only a suggested application of the findings in the form of a project as a result of determining how to apply the findings from this study. Consequently, the school leaders who would potentially benefit from this work have yet to view the policy recommendation or benefit from its implementation. The project's design only focuses on currently serving school leaders, and not potential school leaders. Therefore, it does not serve to help better prepare future school leaders for embarking on working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors. The purpose of this study was to explore school leaders' perceptions of their ability to manage students' antisocial behavior within the construct of self-regulation theory, from a small, rural school district in Washington State. Consequently, the findings from the data analysis drove the project, which focused on reducing the apparent gap in WSD school leaders' practice in working with students' antisocial behaviors. The implications from the study provided an indication of an area of limitation in both principal preparation programs, along with a limitation in PD when school leaders are performing their work.

A significant limitation of this study was its restriction to one school district and use of only 13 participants. Increasing the scope of this study (additional districts and participants) would address this limitation. This would also provide the opportunity to understand whether the gap in practice regarding the participation in ongoing, job-embedded PD, SEL skill development, and a SWPBS approach to intervention and prevention is an issue on the larger, global, context.

While the findings from this study will be available for review to the participants and the WSD leaders, there is not an expectation that they will implement the policy

recommendation. In order to overcome this limitation, conducting research, such as this, that is at the request of a district that desires to make changes to the practices of improving school leaders' capacity to work with student behavior management. Thus, in a situation where the district leadership requests the study, the likelihood of implementation of any policy recommendation would occur.

An additional limitation of this study is its geographical location. Conduction of this study took place in a small, rural school district in the Pacific Northwest. This district does not have a notable level of ethnic diversity, nor is there a high level of poverty. Accordingly, while numerous researchers focused on the disparity of racial inequity in exclusionary discipline, this was not a topic brought forward by any of the participants (Gregory, Skiba, et al., 2010). The lack of attention of ethnicity or poverty in this study could be a result of the homogeneity of the district. Subsequently, repeating this study in a large, urban district, or a district with a significant level of diversity might potentially provide very different results.

Conducting this study on a larger scale, including diverse school districts would be appropriate to gain greater insight into the need for PD and improving the school climate. Given that this project resulted from a need to address a gap in current school leaders' practice, the study noted that ongoing, job-embedded PD and a focus on improving SEL skills through a SWPBS approach is important for enhancing the work of a school leader. Further research might also indicate whether the inclusion of student behavior management should be a part of principal preparation programs.

Within this study, the participants shared various skills, strategies, and interventions that they use when working with students with antisocial behaviors. Consequently, participation in a PLC model of ongoing, job-embedded PD would enable these school leaders to share and improve their practice. This format for PD would also allow the school leaders to bring other student behavior issues to the collective group so that they might collaboratively problem-solve situations.

Scholarship

As a scholar, I particularly enjoy reading and synthesizing educational research with the intent to improve my practice. While I had a prior opportunity to conduct quantitative research, this was the first time in which I conducted qualitative research. To listen to the participants' experiences and perceptions provided an opportunity to comprehend the power of understanding how an individuals' experience shapes his or her work as a school leader.

My interest in this topic is a result of my role as an assistant principal and the time in which I invest in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors, their teachers, and their families. At first, I experienced a level of apprehension regarding familiarity with the phenomenon of study and the necessity to remain impartial and not inject bias into the research. Throughout the process, however, my interest in the topic facilitated passion for completing the work and improving the conditions for students and staff in the WSD. Furthermore, the information shared by participants contributed to my professional growth through the acquisition and understanding of different ways to

approach working with these students, including increasing my repertoire of the skills and strategies necessary for successfully managing students' behaviors.

As an individual who elected to participate in the Fast Track to Graduation Pilot Program this opportunity provided a way to acquire new skills and added a level of accountability for timely completion of the study. As a self-directed learner, it was not an issue to develop a plan for completing each step of the process; however, at times it was easy to misjudge the amount of time that each stage of the research process might consume. However, staying true to the process and learning to not rush the product was an important way to retain focus on the end goal. Also, it was challenging to narrow the focus of the study and to know when I achieved complete saturation of the literature or data; this was especially the case when reviewing and synthesizing the relevant scholarly literature.

As a school leader, this process assisted with increasing my leadership capacity. Throughout my research, I reflected on daily practices that became a critical component of my role as a school leader. I also found ease in implementing other school leaders' recommendations of effective skills and strategies in my practice. I began to advocate more strongly for helping students who exhibit antisocial behaviors and for finding effective ways to reduce those antisocial behaviors within the school context.

Project Development and Evaluation

As a result of the data collection and analysis process of this study and a discussion with my committee chair, a position paper policy recommendation appeared to be the most appropriate outcome to address the gap in practice of the WSD school

leaders. The findings suggested that a gap in practice is the lack of ongoing, job-embedded PD that specifically addresses school leaders' management of students' antisocial behaviors, along with the absence of a systems-wide approach to integrating SEL and a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. While the purpose of the development of the policy recommendation was to meet the expectations of the doctoral study, a review of the policy recommendation in the form of an expertise-oriented evaluation would be necessary prior to any decision to implement the policy recommendation. Due to the fact that the project creation occurred in isolation and with the absence of collaboration with those who the policy recommendation would influence, all stakeholders should participate in developing the policy to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole group.

Following the data analysis, it was a challenge to design the ensuing project. Largely, this challenge was due to a more traditional project formats not appearing to align with the findings. For example, the development of a specific professional development plan did not seem to be appropriate due to the need for the PD to remain flexible, through an ongoing, job-embedded, PLC format, in order to meet the current and immediate needs of the school leaders. Also, a curriculum plan did not look to be relevant either. The implementation of a SWPBS approach and integration of SEL skill development throughout the system is relevant; however, the design of such an approach would be more appropriate for the school leaders to develop in a collaborative effort, so that they ensure the strategies meet the needs of their individual schools.

In addition to the challenge of aligning a project to meet the findings and the needs of the participants, another obstacle was determining an appropriate evaluation method for the project. Again, because the project is not an academic program, a traditional program evaluation did not align with the policy recommendation. However, after reviewing Spaulding's (2008) work it became evident that two evaluation methods would serve to meet the needs of evaluating a policy recommendation: an expertise-oriented evaluation and a participatory-oriented evaluation. Throughout this process, it was apparent that evaluating a policy recommendation is as important as reviewing a curriculum plan or professional development plan in order to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of the policy recommendation. Without evaluating the policy recommendation, it would be impossible to understand whether its design meets the needs of the entire system and whether implementation is manageable. The goal of this project is to provide access to ongoing, job-embedded PD that focuses on improving SEL and implementing systems-wide SWPBS approaches. Without evaluating the policy recommendation following its implementation, it would be impossible to know whether the project served to meet the needs of the school leaders without conducting a participatory-oriented evaluation.

Even as late as the conclusion of the data analysis, I was unsure about the direction of the subsequent project. I anticipated developing a project that was more practical, such as a curriculum map or a professional development plan; however, this anticipation largely stemmed from a personal interest in seeking pro-active methods to apply knowledge. Following writing the findings, it was apparent that these approaches

would not meet the needs of the participants. It became clear that I needed a more formal way to address the challenges of students' antisocial behavior that was not a one-time approach, but that would be continual and would adjust to meet current needs; consequently, a policy recommendation that brought the importance of improving students behavior, in order to improve academic achievement, to the forefront of the school leaders work is relevant and the most appropriate form of project. Throughout this process, I learned the importance of allowing the data guide the work, and not attempting to fit the work into a personal preference. Keeping an open mind and looking at situations from different perspectives is essential for leading school reform and change efforts.

Leadership and Change

In reflection, this doctoral study process expanded my leadership capacity and helped in the acquisition of skills and strategies that enhanced my practice as a school leader. Engaging the participants in the interview process allowed me to listen to their stories and glean examples of best practices that are implementable. As a result, I increased my efficacy at working with students' antisocial behaviors and developed alternatives to the use of exclusionary discipline practices. Additionally, learning from other school leaders led to the refinement of discipline referral processes and improved my ability to assist teachers in their management of students. Through sharing the findings from this study, both from the extensive literature review as well as the synthesis of the participant data, it is an expectation that others will also be in a position to improve their practices and increase their leadership capacity.

Improving the skills of a school leader should not solely focus on instructional skills necessary for academic achievement. Often, when school leaders strive to improve student learning, it is easy to forget the importance of improving students' SEL skills and SWPBS approaches to prevention and intervention. However, as a school leader, when I do not help students to develop SEL skills, the chances of their being subject to exclusionary discipline increases, which has a negative impact on their academic growth. In order to improve academic achievement, I realize that SEL and academics are not mutually exclusive; therefore, if I focus my work on improving SEL and implementing SWPBS, I should enhance my instructional leadership and ability to lead reform efforts.

For this project to result in change efforts in the larger educational context, it will require the sharing and dissemination of the findings at a level wider than just the WSD. The data indicated that in principal preparation programs there is an absence of training in managing students' antisocial behaviors, and yet this role controls much of a school leader's time. Consequently, advocating for reform at the university level in order to include positive behavior management in principal preparation programs would be appropriate. However, as a currently practicing school leader, and not a university professor, this might prove challenging. Given that my sphere of influence is clearly within the role of school district leadership, presenting the study's findings to school leaders is more appropriate. In order to extend the impact of this project beyond the WSD, I plan to condense and publish the key findings from this research in a peer-reviewed journal that highlights either educational policy or student behavior.

Additionally, to increase the sphere of influence and reach a greater audience of school leaders, the research, findings, and project could become a part of a presentation at a state or national conference. For example, the annual summer Washington State Principal's conference would be a suitable venue to share the findings and provide research-based strategies for improving the management of students' behavior to practicing school leaders across the state. Also, the annual International Bullying Prevention Association hosts an annual conference that focuses on reducing bullying behaviors in schools. Given that bullying is an antisocial behavior, and one that effective SEL skills can dissipate, this might also be an appropriate venue for sharing the results of this study (Lewis et al., 2013).

Analysis of Self as Scholar

The greatest challenge of the doctoral process was learning to relax and trust the process. I appreciated the advice, input, and suggestions of the Walden faculty during the navigation of the study, and yet also valued the ability to be able to self-manage the direction of the study. Collaboration played an important role in developing a quality study that provided an accurate synthesis of the research and development of a meaningful and relevant project outcome. An anticipation of the doctoral study journey was that it would be lonely; however, with the Blackboard classroom and interaction with my chair and second committee member, the process was rewarding and far from lonely. At times, progress felt slow; however, it became evident that the ebb and flow of the project study allowed for a break in the schedule, which provided for reflection and an opportunity to decide how to progress.

The greatest aspect of my growth as a scholar was in the expansion of my ability to examine and synthesize a wide variety of data, from scholarly literature to the participant interview transcripts. Turning the raw data into a document that was cohesive, readable, and that had potential for application in other settings proved to not be overly challenging. I learned that when I conduct literature reviews, in order to synthesize the data I utilize a coding process much like the coding process used in the qualitative data analysis process; consequently, the familiarity to how I synthesize literature made the data analysis user-friendly and straight-forward. As a scholar, I came to appreciate the importance of disseminating the findings of the study so that others might benefit from, expand upon, or critically examine the research.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As a practitioner, I learned the importance of staying current on best practices for improving student learning, and realized that those best practices do not only surround academic areas. In order to improve student learning, a focus on improving students SEL and providing a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention efforts is critical. Through this process, it became evident that frequently practitioners work in isolation. It is imperative that in the same manner in which school leaders ask teachers to work in PLCs for PD, school leaders should also participate in the same PD efforts, and include students' behavior as a topic of that PD.

Sharing ideas, skills, and strategies for working with students and improving their behavior may allow school leaders to improve their efficacy at managing behaviors and improving the school climate. While much of a school leaders 'day, according to the

findings of this study, includes working with students' antisocial behavior, by participating collaboratively in the search for ways to improve students' behavior, all students may find benefit. The implementation of strategies that are effective at reducing antisocial behaviors may provide school leaders' with more time to conduct other instructional tasks.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

Developing a project that provided for an appropriate application of the findings was a daunting prospect. However, by letting the data and the findings dictate the direction of the project, the actual project development was not difficult. The findings of this study pushed me outside of my comfort zone in search of a project that would meet the needs of the participants. I prefer to employ practical ways to apply knowledge; consequently, to develop a policy recommendation was not an activity or outcome that was an anticipated result of this study. However, the process showed me that by paying attention to the data, the findings would drive the project. While, at times, it felt as though the project would become merely an executive summary of the findings, it was apparent that a policy recommendation was appropriate to meet the needs of the participants and elicit social change for the members of this group. This project would require the provision of both the background of the literature and a summary of the findings to advocate for the implementation of a policy recommendation. Without this information, the policy recommendation would lack the strength and credibility for implementation. Without the level of detail, which included background information and examples of best-practice, it became obvious that the policy recommendation would not

be beneficial or receive consideration for implementation. The skill I gained in this study, utilizing data to drive the development of the project, will be useful to me in my role as an educational leader.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

The project that resulted from the findings has the potential to produce social change for the school leaders in the WSD. The development of a policy recommendation provides a document that advocates for the WSD to attend to a gap in school leaders' practice. School leaders noted an absence of ongoing, job-embedded PD that specifically focuses on improving students' antisocial behaviors, developing SEL skills, and providing a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. The adoption of district policies ensure that school leaders will have the support to meet students' needs and create a school climate that is both physically and emotionally conducive to learning (Coggshall et al., 2013). The policy recommendation that resulted from this study advocates for meeting a need to provide school leaders with the necessary PD to improve students' behavior within their schools, which may have a positive impact on student learning and academic achievement. While the development of a policy recommendation in itself will not provide a change in the school leaders' abilities to manage students' behaviors, it provides a foundation to advocate for the need to address this concern.

Additionally, when school leaders increase the focus on managing students' behaviors, increasing opportunities for students to acquire SEL skills, and focusing on establishing a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention, social change may be possible. For example, when school leaders facilitate these improvement efforts, they will

need to also provide PD to their teachers to assist in the program implementation. Consequently, the teachers will improve their capacities to manage students' behavior and hold students accountable to school-wide expectations, which could produce social change. The teachers will benefit from working in an environment that focuses on learning and experience a reduction in antisocial behaviors that impede their work. Further, students will also benefit from the improvements in the school climate and in instructional activities as their teachers may have more time available to provide quality instruction. Consequently, these strategies provide the opportunity for social change to occur as students gain more academic skills, achieve higher standards of learning, and reduce the exhibition of antisocial behavior.

While the potential impact of this project might be minimal and relevant to a small school district, through dissemination of the results, by either presenting the findings at a conference or publishing the findings in a peer-reviewed journal, the potential impact to student learning and reduction in antisocial behaviors could be substantial. Also, if the findings of this study reach personnel who are responsible for maintaining university preparation programs for school leaders, this work could have an even greater positive impact on student learning and behavior. Therefore, the university preparation programs could provide research-based training to prospective school leaders about how to manage students' behavior and create positive school climates. For this work to have the greatest possible impact on student learning and behavior, it is essential that I disseminate the results of the study and do not consider that my work is complete at the conclusion of this study.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The findings from this study indicate that school leaders spend significant amounts of time working with students who exhibit antisocial behavior and yet participate in little to no PD to improve their capacities in working with these students. As a result, the findings from this study indicated that district leaders need to consider increasing their support to school leaders for working with students' antisocial behaviors. This support could be in the form of ongoing, job-embedded PD using the PLC model. While this study addressed the needs of currently serving school leaders, the findings have the potential to drive educational reform at the university level in the principal preparation programs. Ongoing, job-embedded PD would allow school leaders to discuss and problem-solve the current needs of their students and work collaboratively to develop systemic interventions to serve all students throughout the district.

Future research should expand the scope of this project. Specifically, it would be beneficial to conduct this study in a larger school district, in an urban area, and in settings that have significant levels of ethnic and socio-economic diversity. These studies would generate substantial insight that would indicate whether there is a global need for providing school leaders with ongoing, job-embedded PD, the development of SEL skills, and a SWPBS approach is necessary and relevant, not for just those school leaders in the WSD.

The findings from this research also provided examples of best-practices in regards to the skills, strategies, and interventions that are effective for working with students' who exhibit antisocial behaviors. The development of these insights into a

menu of examples of best practices is another potential avenue to direct future research. It is critical that researchers continue to evaluate the needs of school leaders and find ways to support those needs in order to ensure that students can develop into successful, productive citizens.

Conclusion

This study has the potential for altering the way in which school leaders work with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors. When I embarked on this study, it was as a result of a personal interest in reducing the exclusion rate and helping students to reduce their antisocial behaviors. As a result of conducting this case study, I discovered a gap in my local school leaders' practice that, if addressed, could potentially reduce students' antisocial behaviors throughout the district. Through the identification of a gap in practice, the development of a policy recommendation might serve to address this gap and improve practice.

Additionally, this study contributed to the existing literature on students' antisocial behavior, exclusionary discipline, and school leader PD. While the resultant project addressed the needs of the participants in this study, there is potential to modify the policy recommendation to meet the needs of other school districts that strive to reduce students' antisocial behaviors. Also, publication of the findings might increase awareness of the need for providing ongoing, job-embedded PD to practicing school leaders for the purpose of managing students' behaviors, developing SEL skills, and adopting a SWPBS approach. While this project is the finale of my doctoral journey, it also serves to

formalize my desire to continue advocating for improved practices to help students learn to manage their behaviors in a socially acceptable context.

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Appendix A: The Project

Job-Embedded Professional Development for School Leaders' Management of Students' Antisocial Behavior Through the Systemic Inclusion of Social-Emotional Learning: A Call to Action

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December 2014

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Executive Summary

In 2013, Washington State legislature modified the laws regarding how school leaders work with students with antisocial behaviors (OSPI, n.d.a). The legal changes had an impact on exclusionary discipline practices, due process, and student re-engagement (OSPI, n.d.a). Specifically, due process changes dictated that schools may no longer exclude a student for a period greater than 12-months and the conversion of an emergency expulsion must occur within 10-days (OSPI, n.d.a). Additionally, following the institution of a long-term suspension, within 20-days schools must host a re-engagement meeting and develop a re-engagement plan with the intent to return the student to the educational environment (OSPI, n.d.a). OSPI (n.d.a) also stated that all staff who is responsible for disciplining students must receive training to ensure that corrective action is nondiscriminatory.

Managing students' antisocial behaviors is an essential role and responsibility of a school leader in order to ensure the operational effectiveness of a school that facilitates a safe environment and academic success. When students violate the school's code of conduct, these negative behaviors have the potential to compromise the integrity of the learning environment for the student and others. Data from the Washington School District (WSD) indicated that there is a high occurrence of exclusionary discipline. The completion of a qualitative case study considering school leaders' perceptions of antisocial behaviors provided an understanding of the problem. The research findings identified some gaps in the local school leaders' practice that, if addressed, could result in a reduction in the use of exclusionary discipline.

The findings from the qualitative case study would not only assist in improving the practice of the WSD school leaders, but also would provide guidance in meeting the new legislative requirements. As a result of the study, this policy recommendation provides a blueprint for reducing the gaps in the school leaders' practice, which may lead to an improvement in student academic and social-emotional outcomes. Specifically, the inclusion of ongoing, job-embedded professional development (PD) would allow the school leaders to continue to reflect upon, refine, and improve their practices in working with students' antisocial behaviors. Furthermore, the policy recommendation advocates for the systemic inclusion of students' social and emotional skill development and the adoption of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) approach to prevention and intervention methods.

Background

Antisocial Behavior

Antisocial behavior is deviant and in violation of societal norms, interferes with the rights of others, or causes physical or emotional harm (Brooks, Narvaez, & Bock, 2013; Burt, 2009; 2012; Malti & Krettenauer, 2013; Murray, Farrington, & Sekol, 2012; Osvat & Marc, 2014). Student behavior that is antisocial in nature often results in the student's removal from the educational setting, which has a negative impact on his or her learning. The classification of antisocial behavior falls into three categories: covert, overt, and authority conflict. Overt behaviors include those that include aggression, bullying, and fighting

Antisocial behavior often results in a student's removal from the educational setting; thus having a negative impact on his or her learning.

(Connell, Cook, Aklin, Vanderploeg, & Brex, 2011). Covert behaviors comprise acts such as lying, fraud, and stealing (Vaaland, Idsoe, & Roland, 2011). Finally, authority conflict behaviors include stubbornness, defiance, and avoidance (Vaaland et al., 2011). School leaders encounter antisocial behaviors from each of the three areas; however, the most common behaviors that disrupt the classroom are authority conflict behaviors (Vaaland et al., 2011).

Additionally, the students' peer group potentially has an impact on a student's antisocial behavior. Students who lack popularity might not have the necessary social skills to appropriately contribute to the group dynamic; thus, lacking the ability to contribute to prosocial group goals, which influences these students to associate with other delinquent peers (Veenstra, Huitsing, Dijkstra, & Lindenberg, 2010). However, students who have numerous interests and involve themselves in school activities tend to refrain from antisocial behavior (Charles & Egan, 2009). An additional protective factor is the quality of the relationship between the student and an adult, particularly a parent (Connell et al., 2011; Fosco, Stormshak, Dishion, & Winter, 2012). Parental interest in the child, involvement in the child's activities, and disapproval of antisocial behaviors encourage students to refrain from participation in delinquent activities (Cook, Buehler, & Henson, 2009).

Local and Global Concerns

This study arose from a concern about the increase in the use of exclusionary discipline, as a result of antisocial behaviors, in the WSD. According to Table 1, OSPI data

The number of exclusions from incidents of violence without injury and drug and alcohol violations are rising.

indicated that student exclusions are rising, especially in the areas of student violence without injury and drug use. For example, from 2005 to 2012, exclusions as a result of drug violations increased 492%. Additionally, while it appeared that incidents of violence without injury were decreasing over time, there was a stark increase in these incidents during the 2011-2012 school year to 156 incidents. Finally, Table 2 presents the district's weapons report; the possession of weapons at school increased from 17 incidents in 2006 to 27 in 2012.

Table 1

WSD Student Behavior Report

Year	Enrollment	Bullying	Tobacco	Alcohol	Drugs	Violence no Injury	Violence with Injury	Total
2006	5555	43	–	29	12	129	13	226
2007	5625	72	–	27	36	102	0	237
2008	5495	70	–	14	45	80	2	211
2009	5527	33	–	14	33	64	0	144
2010	5479	57	8	14	49	92	2	222
2011	5452	66	7	9	46	82	3	213
2012	5318	54	12	19	71	156	1	313
2013	5507	30	31	11	29	110	2	213

Note: The violence with injury category presented exclusions with the need for medical attention. A dash indicates non-reported data. This table was developed from "County/District Student Behavior Data" by OSPI (n.d.b) and OSPI (2013).

Table 2

WSD Weapons Report

Year	Handgun	Rifle or Shotgun	'Other' Firearms	Knife or Dagger	'Other' Weapon	Total
2006	–	1	1	12	3	17
2007	–	–	1	10	8	19
2008	–	–	–	12	4	16
2009	–	–	–	12	2	14
2010	1	–	1	10	4	16
2011	–	–	–	21	4	25
2012	–	–	–	21	6	27

Note: A dash indicates non-reported data. This table was developed from "Weapons in Schools Report" by OSPI (n.d.c).

Students' antisocial behavior is not a problem that only the WSD experiences; there is also a national and global concern about student behavior impeding academic success and preventing schools from maintaining safe environments. For example, 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data indicated that globally 32% of principals considered student disruption to be concerning, and in the United States 16% of principals considered this to be a concern (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2013). However, 32% of students globally and 30% in the United States considered classrooms to be noisy and disorderly (OECD, 2013). Additionally, 22% of students throughout the world and 18% in the United States did not believe that they could work well in their classrooms (OECD, 2013).

30% of students in the United States consider their classrooms noisy and disorderly.

Zero Tolerance Policies

Exclusionary discipline practices, as a result of zero tolerance for antisocial behavior, are a commonly employed form of corrective action by school personnel (Theriot, Craun, & Dupper, 2010). In many cases, exclusionary corrective action is a result of a student threatening the authority of a teacher, rather than because he or she poses a threat to the safety of the school (Dupper, Theriot, & Craun, 2009). The use of zero tolerance policies came into effect following the attempts to combat drug use throughout the nation (Teske, 2011). Schools adopted these zero tolerance policies to take a stance against antisocial behaviors and deter other students from copying negative behavior; however, the use of exclusionary corrective action presented numerous negative implications for students (Martinez, 2009; Teske, 2011). For example, excluding students alienates individuals from their peers, inhibits academic success, provides a school-sanctioned vacation, and contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline (Heitzeg, 2009; Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Schools should seek to create a culture of accountability versus a culture of punishment and find alternatives to exclusion (Bear, 2012, Gregory et al., 2010).

Zero tolerance policies are a result of the 1980's effort to combat drugs.

Seek a culture of accountability, not a culture of punishment.

Interventions and Alternatives to Exclusion

While exclusions that are a result of antisocial behavior and code of conduct violations serve as a social sanction for some students, exclusion poses a risk of isolating students, which, if continued, might result in additional antisocial behaviors (Bear, 2012;

Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, & Rime, 2012; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Exclusion, however, is a temporary solution to a more significant problem that does not address the root of the problem that influenced the behavior (Dupper et al., 2010; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Ryan & Goodram, 2013). Alternatives to exclusion should focus on supporting the student rather than serving as a punitive sanction; when school personnel exhibit empathy, seek to understand the root of the problem, and build positive relationships with challenging students, they are more likely to learn from and not repeat those behaviors (Gregory et al., 2010; Ryan & Zoldy, 2011).

Academic interventions are more common than behavioral interventions, and yet both are essential for academic success. In order to reduce the exclusion rate, schools must develop alternatives to exclusion that focus on improving students' social-emotional skills (Rapp-Paglicci, Stewart, & Rowe, 2011). For example, school leaders should also consider the importance of providing PD to teachers that focus on classroom and student management, as well as relevant cultural or social concerns (Theriot et al., 2010; American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). A failure to intervene in changing students' behaviors indicates that those antisocial behaviors are acceptable, which increases the risk for continual delinquent behavior (Oșvat & Marc, 2014). Alternatives to exclusion should meet the needs of the individual student and the school. Some alternatives to exclusion include social skills training, conflict resolution, restorative justice, service-learning, and in-school-suspension programs.

Relationships

The relationships, which teachers build with students, play a significant role in assisting students' to develop social and emotional skills. The cultivation of positive adult-student relationships has the potential of serving as a protective factor by promoting students' prosocial behavior regulation, increasing academic achievement, and encouraging social competence (Coggshall, Osher, & Colombi, 2013; Hughes, 2012; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). When students who traditionally struggle in school, with academic or social-emotional regulation, or both, have a connection to an adult within the school community, the sense of support that they garner might help them to navigate the challenges of school and elect prosocial behavior.

Building positive relationships with students can serve as a protective factor and reduce incidents of antisocial behavior.

Overview of the Study

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial behaviors to understand the problem in order to reduce antisocial behaviors, reduce the exclusion rate, increase academic success, and contribute to social change.

Study Design

The use of an instrumental case study design provided an in-depth understanding of the issue through the exploration of school leaders' perceptions of students' antisocial

behavior. A case study allows a researcher to explore a phenomenon (antisocial behavior) within its natural setting (Yin, 2014).

Purpose of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research provides an opportunity to understand the meaning that participants attribute to their experiences through an inductive process of analysis that allows for a rich description of the issue under study (Merriam, 2009). More specifically, a case study allows a researcher to develop and provide an in-depth description of a phenomenon within a bounded system (Merriam, 2009).

Study Participants

For this study, the bounded system included the school leaders in the WSD, which included all of the building-level school leaders: two alternative school principals, four elementary principals, two middle school principals, a high school principal, and four assistant principals.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study. These included:

- What are the experiences of school leaders in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?
- What are the experiences of school leaders regarding the skills they need to effectively manage students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?
- What are the perceptions of school leaders regarding the necessary interventions for students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection occurred through individual semi-structured interviews with each participant who provided consent to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary. Verbatim transcription of all interviews occurred following each interview and participants had the opportunity to review the transcripts for accuracy. Data analysis followed an inductive, iterative analysis process, which used a thematic coding method to allow themes to emerge from the data (Glesne, 2011).

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1

Almost exclusively, school leaders indicated that they spend significant amounts of their day working with students' antisocial behaviors. Participants described those students with typical antisocial behaviors as hardened, injured, or damaged, or shared that in their experience, these students typically come from backgrounds that are chaotic, often lacking a support network in their home-lives. The typical antisocial behaviors that the participants encountered include low-level disruption, insubordination, and harassment, intimidation, and bullying behaviors; the severity of these behaviors appeared to increase alongside the students' development. Most often, antisocial behaviors occurred during unstructured time, in which limited supervision is available to help students manage their behaviors.

Hardened; damaged; injured; non-supportive homes.

Disruption; insubordination; harassment, intimidation, bullying.

Research Question 2

The most commonly discussed skill that the participants found essential for managing students' antisocial behaviors was the ability to build relationships with students. Many of the participants shared that they use the *Love and Logic* approach when working with students and that this approach is particularly effective in helping students reduce antisocial behaviors. The data indicated that the participants considered the establishment of systems and procedures to be essential for creating a safe climate that is conducive to learning. However, there was no evidence from the data that there was a consistent, systemic, district-wide system to address and manage antisocial behaviors. An additional area of interest that arose from the data was the absence of the participants' involvement in ongoing, job-embedded PD to improve their capacities for working with students' antisocial behaviors.

Call for action: professional development and district- and school-wide systemic interventions.

Research Question 3

Almost all participants noted that zero tolerance policies to manage antisocial behaviors are ineffective, and expressed the importance of adapting corrective action policies that will meet the needs of the individual student and situation. Participants described a range of interventions that might be effective in reducing antisocial behaviors. However, with the exception of the use of *Love and Logic*, there is little to no consistent use of interventions across the system.

Zero tolerance policies are ineffective. Call to action: corrective action policies that meet individual needs.

Recommendations

Several themes emerged from the data in this study. As a result, this policy recommendation addresses a gap identified in the data in the school leaders' practice of participating in on-going, job-embedded PD to manage and provide interventions to reduce students' antisocial behaviors, which includes SEL development and the adoption of a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention. Providing targeted PD would also allow school leaders to work collaboratively for the purpose of developing and implementing best practices that reduce students' antisocial behaviors.

Focus Areas

Professional development. This policy recommendation advocates for the inclusion of targeted, ongoing, and job-embedded PD. PD is the formal learning opportunities that practicing educators pursue to improve their craft (Goldring, Preston, & Huff, 2012). The PD should aim to strengthen school leaders' skills in working with students with antisocial behaviors, and include the development of a systems- and school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) approach to prevention and intervention with the inclusion of social and emotional skill development. The primary goal of providing district-based PD should be to identify the necessary skills that school leaders need to improve both academic and SEL competencies, and subsequently provide the appropriate support to facilitate the professional growth (Grissom & Harrington, 2010). There is evidence to demonstrate that by supporting school leaders' professional growth and subsequently improving their

> PD should predominantly occur through the PLC model; however, attendance at conferences of workshops might be appropriate to gain specific skills and knowledge.

leadership capacity, teacher motivation increases when there is a continual promotion of ongoing professional learning, which results in increased organizational improvements (Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, & Peetsma, 2012).

While there are a variety of formats for PD, the main structure should assume the DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2008) professional learning communities (PLC) model. The PLC model calls for the school leaders to work collaboratively and interdependently, with a high level of involvement, cooperation, and mutual support to improve student learning (DuFour et al., 2008). In order to reduce students' antisocial behaviors, PD must be ongoing, job-embedded, and timely; the opportunity to work collaboratively to develop a SWPBS prevention and intervention approach and to adopt social and emotional skill development programs must occur on a regular basis. Within the PLC meetings, school leaders who have expertise in specific areas of students' antisocial behavior or intervention and prevention methods should share their knowledge in an intentional manner and provide training for their colleagues. For example, outlining a professional development focus for the year (see suggestion in the implementation section below) would allow the district leaders to draw on the expertise of individual school leaders. The use of data, such as student discipline reports, climate surveys, and academic data, should drive the work of the PLCs.

Data must drive the work of the PLCs.

Additionally, school leaders might need to attend PD opportunities, such as conferences or workshops, to gain additional expertise in specific areas. Not all school leaders would need to attend every PD opportunity; however, school leaders should

expect to share their learning and knowledge from these external PD when they return. Furthermore, if the school leaders identify a promising practice of which they lack expertise within the group, it might be beneficial for the district to bring an expert in to work with the school leaders directly; this way all school leaders would have access to the training. Goldring et al. (2012) cautioned educators about the value of attending workshops and conferences because they lack a connection to the daily reality of a school leader's job and often do not provide networking opportunities. However, if the intent and purpose of attending workshops or conferences is to share knowledge within the PLC, the concerns of Goldring et al. would likely be invalid.

Conferences and workshops might serve to strengthen knowledge and expertise.

During the PLC meetings, an area of focus should also be on developing PD opportunities for the school leaders' staff and faculty. This focus should help school leaders to deliver effective PD within their schools to ensure that SEL is part of the core instruction throughout the school. Also, it is important for school leaders to ensure that the faculty and staff know how to effectively instill SEL skills in their students.

Social and emotional learning. In order to reduce students' antisocial behavior, the district should consider and include the development of social and emotional learning (SEL) skills as core instruction. SEL includes three conceptual categories: (a) emotional processing, (b) social and interpersonal skills, and (c) cognitive regulation (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). SEL guides individuals social and emotional processes in order to adhere to the prosocial behavior norms of society (Harlacher & Merrell, 2010). When implementing a SEL component within a school, school leaders should be careful to

avoid the quick adoption of branded curriculums because they lack meaningful and sustainable school-wide integration (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

The alignment of SEL skill development should occur both horizontally and vertically to encourage sustainability of practices. The vertical alignment of SEL skills should include elementary schools establishing the foundational skills, with the secondary skills building on those skills (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). The horizontal alignment of SEL skills should occur across the curriculum, with SEL skill connections occurring within the core academic program and routines of the school (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

SEL horizontal alignment: across the curriculum and throughout the school. Vertical alignment: between grade bands.

SWPBS. A SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention could serve as a credible, evidence-based framework from which school leaders might establish such systemic, school-wide behavior interventions to address students' behavioral needs (McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; McIntosh, Ty, & Miller, 2014; Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012). The purpose of SWPBS is to help schools alter their culture by replacing unproductive practices, which do not meet the needs of the students with positive and predictable expectations that support students' prosocial behaviors; thus, helping students improve behaviorally and academically (McIntosh et al., 2014). The SWPBS framework provides a three-tiered continuum of support and interventions for supporting positive behaviors (Ross et al., 2012). In general, 80% of students will respond to a universal, primary prevention program, 15-20% of students need a

SWPBS is a framework to provide positive and predictable expectations that support prosocial behavior.

secondary interventions, with less than 5% requiring a tertiary form of intervention (Ross et al., 2012). Primary interventions should occur on a school-wide basis and all adults should teach the expectations (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). Secondary interventions should provide small groups of students with additional strategies to reduce antisocial behavior, with those students who need additional support receiving a functional behavior assessment to determine how to identify specific influences on the behavior (Horner et al., 2010).

Overview. Through targeted, ongoing, and job-embedded PD, the school leaders will be in a position to effectively include the development of SEL skills and adoption of a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention within their individual schools. However, this successful change in practice requires the adoption and adherence to an implementation plan. Modification of the following implementation plan would be acceptable in order effectively to meet the needs of the district and school leaders. However, if the district makes modifications to the PD schedule, the district should maintain a record of the delivered content for the purpose of maintaining accuracy and allowing for reflection on the success of the policy recommendation (Enomoto, 2012). Finally, the importance of maintaining a schedule for delivering PD is critical for implementation fidelity of the policy recommendation (Enomoto, 2012).

Implementation Plan

Prior to implementation of this policy recommendation, it is essential that the district and school leaders collaborate on the implementation measures and confirm that the policy is in alignment with the district's needs, mission, and vision. In addition, the

allocation of frequent time to facilitate the PD sessions is essential for its success. It would be beneficial to begin the policy recommendation implementation prior to the beginning of a school year. Additionally, by initiating the policy recommendation in the summer, school leaders would have the opportunity to engage in initial PD through PLC meetings to develop a plan that is personal and meaningful to their work.

Financial plan. The district must set aside funds to allow school leaders to attend conferences or workshops, or to invite a guest speaker to present at PLC meetings. Additionally, as the school leaders develop a plan for implementing SEL skill development programs or SWPBS approaches to prevention and intervention programs, funding should be available to assist in these efforts. It would be helpful for the district to include supporting PD for assisting students' antisocial behavior improvement as a budget item and provide a budget to the school leaders; this information would assist their planning when developing programs and systems to benefit the students.

Implementation timeline. The proposal of two timelines is essential for implementing the policy recommendation. The first timeline, Table 1, presents an overview of the recommended implementation plan. The second timeline, Table 2, presents an overview of potential topics to cover within the PD sessions.

Table 1

Proposed Timeline of Policy Recommendation Implementation

Month	Activity
Summer Year 1	Disseminate knowledge and findings from the study to the entire leadership team. Determine the necessary PD steps (utilize a Google Survey to gain information regarding the participant's knowledge of SEL and SWPBS, as well as potential PD needs). As a team, develop the foundation for a K-12 SWPBS framework and implementation plan. Provide examples of best practice to assist with this selection and utilize a sub-committee to conduct this work to bring suggestions back to the whole group in August. Develop a plan for providing ongoing PD opportunities for all school leaders.
Fall and Winter Year 1	Either have school leaders attend *Love and Logic* and SWPBS conferences, or bring experts in the field to the district to provide PD. If not all school leaders attend it is essential for those who did participate in this PD to share their knowledge with the wider team. School leaders should operate within the PLC model and continue sharing with each other their successes and limitations, and provide ongoing support to each other.
Spring Year 1	School leaders should select their school teams to lead the development of SEL and SWPBS school-wide. School leaders should develop their SEL and SWPBS implementation plans with their school teams.
Summer Year 2	Develop an evaluation and data collection plan to evaluate the success of the policy recommendation implementation. The district and school leaders should review the appropriate data to collect and analyze.
Fall Year 2	The school teams should implement and teach the SWPBS approach and SEL skills throughout all buildings. School leaders and their teams should participate in ongoing PD, which should include the evaluation and refinement of the implementation efforts, using data to guide decision-making processes.
Winter and Spring Year 2	School leaders and their teams should continue the implementation of SEL, SWPBS, and PD, using data to reflect on the successes and limitations. The teams should meet on at least a bi-monthly basis using the PLC model to provide PD and ongoing support. Teams should identify any limitations and develop plans to address those limitations, utilizing other teams for support.
February Year 2	Teams should all conduct a mid-year formative evaluation, and develop a plan for the continuation of their work.
February to June Year 2	Teams should participate in ongoing PD, in the form of a PLC, to formatively evaluate the implementation efforts.
June Year 2	A summative evaluation of the implementation efforts of the policy recommendation should occur at the conclusion of the school year. This information would provide data on the outcome of the policy and include an analysis of data such as exclusionary data, student achievement, and perception surveys.

Table 2

Proposed Outline of Topics to Cover Within the PD Sessions

Session	Activity
July #1	Dissemination of study results Discuss findings Establish norms of a PLC
July #2	Determine PD timeline; based from proposed outline
August #1	Establish areas of expertise within the group
August #2	Define SWPBS
September #1	Identify SWPBS best practices
September #2	Present on *Love and Logic*
October #1 & #2	Present on other SWPBS
November #1	Define SEL
November #2	Identify SEL best practices
December #1	Present on SEL
January #1 & #2	Present on SEL
February #1 & #2	Interventions—Tier 1
March #1 & #2	Interventions—Tier 2
April #1 & #2	Interventions—Tier 3
May #1 & #2	Develop plan to roll out SWPBS and SEL—K-12
June #1 & #2	Begin to plan PD for school teams and schools

Evaluation plan. An evaluation of the policy recommendation should occur during the implementation phase (a formative evaluation) and at the conclusion of the first year of implementation (a summative evaluation). The purpose of an evaluation is to make decisions for the continual application of the policy recommendation (Spaulding, 2008). The use of a participatory-oriented evaluation is relevant for examining the effectiveness of the policy recommendation because it allows for the access of information about the individuals who the program (policy) affects (Spaulding, 2008). In a participatory-oriented evaluation, the participants involved in implementing the policy would be responsible for collecting and analyzing data (Spaulding, 2008).

Participatory-oriented evaluation.

During the initial phases of implementation of the policy recommendation, a formative, participatory-oriented evaluation should occur. In this formative situation, data collection and analysis would provide timely information regarding concerns or issues about the policy recommendation and its effectiveness (Spaulding, 2008). A formative evaluation would allow the district and school leaders to make changes or improvements to the policy during the implementation phase (Spaulding, 2008).

A formative evaluation allows for changes or improvements to the policy recommendation during implementation.

At the conclusion of the first year, a summative participatory-oriented evaluation should take place. The purpose of a summative evaluation is to collect and analyze data to measure and judge the overall success of the policy recommendation (Spaulding, 2008). The summative evaluation would serve to determine whether implementation of the policy recommendation effectively provided PD for school leaders, whether school leaders were able to develop students' SEL skills, effectively implement a SWPBS approach to prevention and intervention, and whether there were positive changes to the school climate. The school leaders should determine what data would be relevant to collect that would elicit meaningful analysis of the policy recommendation.

A summative evaluation provides information on overall the success of the policy recommendation.

Online Resources

Social and Emotional Learning

The *Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning* (CASEL) is a national organization that advocates for the inclusion of SEL as core instruction. Research-based, CASEL conducts research and identifies best practices that help to transform schools. The website offers webinars and articles designed to educate about the importance of SEL, the application of SEL in schools and in bullying prevention, and advocates for SEL policy development. The URL is: http://www.casel.org

Love and Logic

Love and Logic is an effective method of working with students that focuses on building positive relationships between educators and students and is a method of establishing SWPBS The *Love and Logic* website provides numerous resources, including articles that provide advice and information about working with children and using the strategies. In addition, a staff development curriculum is available for purchase for $900 that would be appropriate for the school leaders own PD, as well as providing PD to their staff and faculty. Also, in February, 2015, there is a *Love and Logic* workshop in the local area to WSD, which only costs $99 for registration; because of the location, no accommodation would be necessary. The URL is: http://www.loveandlogic.com

SWPBS

There is a National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which is a subsidiary of the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. This website provides countless

resources for implementing PBIS within a school. Specifically, this resource offers information on the three-tiered continuum of support, mental health, and bully prevention. Resources available include articles and videos, which could be used both with the school leaders and with their faculty and staff to provide PD. The URL is: https://www.pbis.org

Additionally, there is a subsidiary of PBIS in the local area, the Northwest PBIS Network. While this website is not as comprehensive as the PBIS National web site, it provides information that is readily available and targets the local area. Also, there is a regional conference in Oregon in March; the conference lasts for 3 days and costs $325 per participant. However, this would also require three night's accommodation, meals, and transportation costs, which could potentially add another $800 to the cost of registration. The URL is: http://pbisnetwork.org

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Within Washington State, students who exhibit chronically disruptive behavior now qualify for Learning Assistance Program (LAP) services. Currently, a panel of experts convened by OSPI is putting together a menu of best practices and strategies to use with LAP students struggling with behaviors. The purpose behind the work of OSPI is to develop strategies that schools might readily implement when working with students who predominantly need interventions from the tier-two continuum of support. Also, it is a requirement that annually school districts report to the state district behavior reports (exclusion data) and weapons violations. The URL for disruptive behavior is:

http://www.k12.wa.us/LAP/RDBPanel.aspx; the URL for behavior is http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Behavior/default.aspx

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Appendix B: Interview Questions

In alignment with the central phenomenon, student antisocial behavior, and the research questions for the study, the following interview questions will guide the study.

Research Question One

What are the experiences of school leaders in working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

Interview questions:

- Could you describe the typical student antisocial behaviors that you most frequently encounter?
- In your school, in which location, or locations, do you think most students' antisocial behaviors occur?
- What has been your experience working with teachers whose students' exhibit antisocial behaviors in their classrooms?
- What has been your experience working with families of students who receive in-school suspensions? How about out-of-school suspensions?
- What has been your experience working with students who receive an in-school suspension for antisocial behavior? How about those students who receive an out-of-school suspension?
- What changes in student discipline issues, if any, have you noticed since you've been in the district?
- How would you describe those students who receive multiple exclusions?
- Describe the most challenging discipline situation you've encountered?

- Approximately how much time do you spend working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

Research Question Two

What are the perceptions of school leaders regarding the skills they need to effectively manage students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

Interview questions:

- What strategies do you rely upon using when working with students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?
- Describe some skills that you believe are essential for managing students' antisocial behaviors?
- What do you think the role of a school leader should be for helping students to reduce their antisocial behavior?
- What specific professional development have you taken to prepare for addressing student antisocial behaviors?
    - What were the benefits of the professional development training?
    - What professional development would be helpful to you in the future?

Research Question Three

What are the perceptions of school leaders regarding the necessary interventions for students who exhibit antisocial behaviors?

Interview questions:

- What do you think are some protective factors that prevent some students from exhibiting antisocial behaviors?
- There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching academics; how could school leaders adopt this approach when working with students who exhibit antisocial behavior?
- Could you describe any interventions that would help to reduce incidents of antisocial behavior?

Conclusion

Interview question:

- Is there anything you would like to add?

Interview Probes

As Bogdan and Biklen (2007) recommended, as the participant responds to each of the interview questions, I will ensure that I listen attentively to their responses and take opportunities to seek additional information by using one or more of the following probes:

- Could you explain what you mean?
- I am not sure that I follow your response, could you please repeat your thoughts?
- Would you please explain your response further?
- Could you share what happened next?
- Could you recall and describe what you were thinking at that time?

- Please could you give me an example?
- Please, tell me about your experience.