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Teacher Perceptions About Sustaining a Successful School-within-aSchool

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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MS, Walden University, 2006

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Attempts to restructure public high schools by establishing separate school-within-a-school (SWS) models have not endured beyond 3 to 5 years. This qualitative case study examined a SWS that has thrived for more than 12 years. The study investigated how teachers at the school explained the success of the SWS, their experience of working at the SWS, and their resilience in dealing with the challenges that led to the lack of success of other SWS schools. The theories and models of educational change developed by Fullan, Hargreaves, and Giles and Hord provided a conceptual framework for the study. Data were collected through open-ended questions in individual interviews with 8 teacher participants who each had more than 5 years of experience at the SWS. According to study results, teachers experienced the challenges that led to the closing of other SWS high schools. However, at the inception of the SWS, the leadership established a commitment to the vision of the SWS, a tradition of collaboration among the SWS teachers, and a positive reputation among parents and alumni. The faculty of the SWS maintained its commitment through multiple leadership changes, changes in school/district policies, challenges to the vision, and changes to SWS teachers' workloads and classroom assignments. Sustaining educational change depends on the strength of implementation of the change: strong leadership, stakeholder commitment to the vision, and establishment of a collaborative professional community of teachers.   These results provide guidance for educational leaders attempting to implement and sustain educational change such as the implementation of a SWS.

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Dedication

This work would not have been possible without the unwavering support and encouragement of my beautiful wife, Gail. For all of the hours she watched me research, write, transcribe, and write again, I dedicate this study to my wife, for without her being by my side throughout this journey it would have ended too soon.

All that has been and all that will come from this walk is dedicated to the only One who has given all provision for this study. Thanks to our Lord and Savior, neither my wife nor I could have completed this walk without Your Hand upon our lives and our work.

Acknowledgments

This doctoral journey has been an experience that has wrought moments of elation and times of exasperation. To travel this path towards a doctoral study required a mixture of humility and perseverance;without the support, encouragement, and affirmation of my committee the journey would not have been finished. I wish to thank Dr. James LaSpina, who filled in the gap as chair of my committee. Dr. Jerita Whaley, who always found the exact words to boost my weary soul, especially when facing what seemed to be endless rounds of revisions. I thank you for helping me maintain a humble vision. My greatest gratitude is to Dr. Nancy Maldonado, who could not see this work completed, but who was determined to redeem my years of frustration. Dr. Maldonado is missed, yet not forgotten.

To the teachers who volunteered for my study, I thank them for their eagerness to join my study. I thank them for investing their personal time and their eagerness to share a success that should have been a failure.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002) was the impetus for large scale school reform across the United States. The intent of NCLB was to improve student achievement, especially among low achieving students in high poverty schools, by implementing annual school benchmarks based on student achievement in mathematics and reading (Forte, 2010; Hess & Petrilli, 2004). To enforce the annual achievement benchmarks, NCLB (2002) required that school districts publish test scores for each of their schools. These annual test scores would be used to publicize schools' test results. Schools exceeding annual benchmarks would be designated as Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence. A school falling short of annual benchmarks would be labeled A School In Need of Improvement (Thomas & Brady, 2005).

Labeling schools using achievement scores can be misleading because of factors that are not subject to testing but that may influence scores. Forte (2010) posited that because NCLB (2002) requires all students to be included in determining adequate yearly progress, the labels assigned give no consideration to student socioeconomic levels, the extent of family transience, the portion of students who are enrolled in special education programs, or the percentage of students speaking English as their second language (NCLB, 2002). A potential consequence of this requirement is that schools with diverse student populations are more likely to fall short of attaining acceptable levels of achievement and thus are at risk of receiving a

label of a School In Need of Improvement (Forte, 2010; Price, 2010; Smyth, 2008). NCLB requirements have resulted in schools devising ways to comply with federal mandates and, at the same time, maintain a learning environment in which negative descriptions of their school and cultures can be minimized (Carey, 2007; Mintrop, 2003; Mintrop & Sunderman, 2009).

NCLB (2002) requires that each school produce student achievement at the rate of 100% proficiency in mathematics and language arts by the year 2014. The requirement of 100% student achievement proficiency created concern among education stakeholders. The Center on Educational Policy (Usher, 2011) estimated that 48% of the nation's schools would not achieve the NCLB 2014 mandated achievement benchmark. In an update of analysis of annual yearly progress data for school 2010-2011 years, Usher (2012) reported that "the percentage of all public schools in the nation that did not make AYP for 2001 was 48%" (p. 1). Usher was drawing attention to the proficiency requirement of NCLB (2002). The requirement for 100% proficiency could result in the potential of a presumed national failure of public schools.

To address the concern that schools across the nation would not satisfy the 2014 NCLB mandate, Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, devised a protocol entitled the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility (2012) to allow states to receive a waiver of the NCLB 2014 proficiency benchmarks. The waiver process requires that states apply for a waiver from NCLB. States that request a waiver are required to include in their application: (a) school choice, (b) new

designations for school achievement labels based upon intergroup achievement tests results within a school, and (c) the acceptance of common core standards for mathematics and language arts. The U.S. Department of Education (2012) has granted 37 states waivers from the requirements of NCLB, thus preventing a critical number of schools and states from failing to meet federal public education law. The relief from the NCLB (2002) requirement that 100% of students would pass annual achievement tests by 2014 would protect states federal funding and time to implement the terms required by the federal waiver.

Concurrent with federal and state school reform changes within the timeframe since NCLB was enacted, Bordertown High school (a pseudonym) was restructured to resolve a desegregation lawsuit that began in 1985. The lawsuit charged that two surrounding towns participated in promoting de facto segregation. The legal action claimed that neighboring towns, Clifftown (a pseudonym) and Two Bridges (a pseudonym), were increasing the minority population of Bordertown High school by encouraging wealthy White students to enroll in Two Bridges High on a yearly tuition basis (Board of Education of Clifftown v. Board of Education of the city of Bordertown).

In 2001, the Bordertown Board of Education devised a plan using a new state education reform law: Inter-District Public School Choice Program Act of 2002. The proposed plan was designed to increase the ethnic diversity of Bordertown High School by attracting out-of- district students to a selective career academy. Out-of-district students would not be required to pay annual tuition. The career academy

(Carraria Academe [a pseudonym]) would be a school-within-a-school (SWS) housed on the Bordertown High School campus. Carraria Academe would be modeled after the county career academy school system, which has consistently been designated as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence (United States Department of Education, 1982). As a part of the proposed plan, the Bordertown Board of Education would maintain control of Carraria Academe.

The proposal to add Carraria Academe as a SWS within the local comprehensive high school was presented to the NJ Supreme Court to end the longstanding desegregation lawsuit. The NJ Supreme Court (Education Law Center, 2005) approved the school plan as a settlement to bring to an end the decade long litigation. The result was a court-approved restructuring plan that established a SWS structure within the local comprehensive high school. The two components to the local high school were (a) the original comprehensive high school named Bordertown High School and (b) Carraria Academey which was structured as a SWS.

The majority of the staff of Carraria Academe were recruited from the county's career academy school system. The core curricula of Carraria Academe were designed as honors and advanced placement classes, fashioned after the county career academy school system. Carraria Academe offers career academies in law and public safety, information systems, pre-engineering, finance, and biomedicine. Carraria Academe is housed in one of the two campus buildings of Bordertown High School. In order to model the county career preparatory program and attract high achieving learners, admission to Carraria Academe is selective. To be accepted in Carraria

Academe, prospective students must pass an admission test, placement tests, and interview with Carraria Academe teaching staff. Students graduating from Carraria Academe receive a diploma under the name of Bordertown High School with an endorsement from Carraria Academe.

For purposes of collecting and reporting data for the annual public State School Report Card, the annual achievement test results are not disaggregated between Bordertown and Carraria Academe, but are reported only as Bordertown High School. Carraria Academe students represent approximately one-half of the student population of Bordertown High School. The published annual school report cards shows Bordertown High School's achievement results have not consistently met annual state or federal achievement requirements since 2002. In the years 2002 through 2006 and 2007 through 2009, Bordertown High School was designated as a School in Need of Improvement. To qualify for the ESEA Flexibility (2012) waiver, Bordertown High School was required to disaggregate achievement test results by student subgroup populations within the whole school. According to the disaggregation and comparison between the student subgroups for 2010 and 2011, there were achievement gaps between the highest achieving subgroup and the lowest achieving subgroup within Bordertown High School. As a result of this gap, Bordertown High School was classified as a Focus School in 2012.

Researchers who have examined the SWS model (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Greenfield & Klemm, 2001; Lee & Ready, 2001, 2007; Piper, 1994) have indicated that the model has not been successful in most settings for more than 3 to 5 years.

Raywid (1995) concluded that the SWS model was unworkable. Lee and Ready (2007) determined that most SWS models have lasted only 3 to 5 years. Giles and Hargreaves (2006) noted that most education program innovations have failed within 5 years. In contrast, Carraria Academe has been in existence for more than 12 years. As an approved choice school (Inter-District Public School Choice Program, 2010), Carraria Academe continues to attract out-of-district students to sustain the program. Carraria Academe students represent approximately one-half of the student population of Bordertown High School.

Problem Statement

It is not clear why a SWS, Carraria Academe within Bordertown High School, has operated successfully for 12 years when most SWS models continue for only 3 to 5 years. Teachers at Carraria Acdeme have exhibited persistence in working in this alternative learning environment in contrast to other high school restructuring efforts with a SWS model. In addition, restructuring was imposed upon the school by a court order, indicating a cirucumstance that could have strained the relationships of the teachers and administrators.

Bordertown, a mid-sized northeastern urban high school, underwent a court-imposed restructuring in 2002 to resolve a longstanding desegregation lawsuit between the Board of Education of Clifftown and the Board of Education of the City of Bordertown (Education Law Center, 2005). The restructuring plan used a new school choice statute, the Inter-District Public School Choice Program (2002), to increase ethnic diversity and to attract high achieving students to Bordertown High

School. Carraria Academe, the new SWS, is a selective, career-oriented academy that draws students from throughout the county. Carraria Academe was allocated one of the two buildings on the campus of the comprehensive high school, Bordertown High school.

Bordertown High School is designated as an underperforming school. The school is labeled as a Focus School and will continue to encounter State Department of Education scrutiny for the next 4 years under the terms of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, 2012 and TEACHNJ: the Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey Act (2012). This designation is a result of not meeting achievement test score requirements for all student subgroups. The designation is assigned to the school. Because Carraria Academe achievement test results are not reported separately, the label assigned to the entire school is the label Carraria Academe must share.

Researchers (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Greenfield & Klemm, 2001; Raywid, 1995; Ready & Lee, 2007) have shown that the SWS model has not succeeded beyond 3 to 5 years. Giles and Hargreaves (2006) noted that challenges contributing to the termination of the SWS included threats to longevity, staff envy of resource allocations, and teacher staff anxiety of the host school having to compete with the SWS. Greenfield and Klemm (2001) noted that growing competition between the comprehensive school and the SWS contributed to the decline of the SWS model in a high school in Hawaii. Teachers in the high school studied in Hawaii became concerned about the possibility of involuntary interschool transfers of teachers

between the host school and the SWS.Raywid (1995) found that the key factor that affected the lack of success of a SWS program in Harlem, New York was the deterioration of collegial interaction caused by changing leadership. Teachers expressed growing concerns about their diminishing autonomy pertaining to curriculum and school policies. The breakdown in staff relations, community dissatisfaction, and changing missions by administration resulted in the dissolution of the Harlem SWS.

There are additional factors that have been shown to impact the perception of a school's rate of achievement. Ross, Hogaboam-Gray, and Gray (2004) reported that a school's history of prior student achievement has been shown to be predictor of teacher collective efficacy and commitment. Zambo and Zambo (2008) noted that the classification of a school as a School In Need of Improvement (NCLB, 2002) had a negative effect on the teachers in the designated schools. Zambo and Zambo found that teachers in schools not labeled as underperforming perceived that their influence was a factor in the school's overall achievement results. For schools designated as In Need of Improvement, teachers' perceived that they had little influence because of the socioeconomic levels of students, percentage of special education students, and the numbers of students speaking English as their second language at the school.

Carraria Academe (CA) continues to attract new students each fall. The number of applications have exceeded the number of available student seats since the inception of CA. CA has an enrollment of approximately 485 students and is the single largest Inter-District School Choice program in the state. Schools that have had

schools embedded within the larger established schools have shown to be unsustainable (Raywid, 1996). CA has shown to successfully grow and sustain their SWS for more than 12 years. CA represents an anomaly as an SWS.

Nature of the Study

The study was a qualitative case study of a Northeastern urban high school structured as a SWS. The study examined the perceptions of teachers who work in a successful SWS. Fulltime teaching staff of CA, with five or more years of experience, were recruited to participate in the study. Data for the study was gathered through personal interviews of 8 volunteer participants. All interviews were transcribed verbatim. Data analysis for this study used Miles and Huberman's (1994) methods for coding and analyzing data.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were used to determine what made CA a success when so many other SWS programs have failed to continue beyond 3 to 5 years. CA represents an anomaly in SWS research because CA has been operating successfully for more than 12 years. An overall research question of this study was the following: Why has Carraria Academe been able to sustain their success?

The central research questions that guided this study were

1. How do CA teachers explain the success of their SWS?

2. What have been the experiences of CA teachers working in a SWS

3. What are CA teachers' perceptions of their continued desire to work in a SWS?

Purpose of the Study

In this study, I investigated the success of a SWS that has existed since 2002. Most SWS models lack longevity as the average existence of such school designs is 3 to 5 years (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Lee & Ready, 2007). The purpose of the study was to understand the anomaly of a successful SWS that has established a history of success for more than a decade. Stake (2010) asserted that qualitative scholars place an emphasis on individual perceptions and understandings within a specific setting. In line with Stake's assertion, I investigated teachers' perceptions of working in a sucessful SWS and their resilience to continue in such an educational environment.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study included sustaining educational change through three required stages as proposed by Fullan (2007): (a) initiation, (b) implementation, and (c) continuation. Each stage leading toward sustaining educational change is influenced by internal and external factors within a school community. The three stages are defined as (a) initiation, the stage in which the school community decides to adopt change and move forward with the change (a critical dilemma of initiation is that the proposed change is often top-down and fails to gain commitment and ownership from the members of the learning community who must implement the change); (b) implementation, the stage during which the faculty and staff begin to put the change into operation (the manner in which a change is put into practice determines how well the initiative will progress); and (c) continuation, the final stage in which the adopted change has generated a critical mass

and becomes embedded into the ongoing system. However, Fullan emphasized that proposed educational changes rarely attain the stage of continuation because change agents focus on formal requirements and structures with no attention toward a learning community's cultural values and practices.

In a framework for sustaining educational change, Giles and Hargreaves (2006) reported three factors that affect sustaining educational change in educational communities: (a) anxiety among competing school communities means that the addition of a new school within an existing school challenges existing values, resources, and traditions of the host school; (b) a historical cycle of the change is an evolutionary process where changing leadership, gradual attrition of faculty, changing demographics of the student body draw the SWS toward the conventional values and traditions; and (c) historically critical incidents cause shifts in power and policy. Giles and Hargreaves noted the effects of large-scale reform strategies as an example of a historically critical incident. Large-scale reform efforts tend to displace local community initiatives in order to reassert the traditional system.

Instituting organizational changes to a school involves careful attention to the present needs of the school before implementing a restructuring initiative. According to Hord (1997), school restructuring requires processes for addressing the needs of students, teachers, and administrators in a school community. Hord presented the following processes as necessary elements for changing a school: (a) shared and supportive leadership, (b) supportive conditions – relationships and trust, (c) a values and vision, (d) supportive conditions – structures, and (e) collective learning and

application. For a change initiative to be sustainable, the present community must be a part of a continuous collaborative process from initiation through implementation.

Educational change initiatives have not been sustainable. There is no lack of initiatives, there is a lack of understanding how change unfolds. Noell and Gansle (2008) asserted that there is a disconnect between planning educational change and the actual implementation of educational change. There has been little progress made in sustaining educational change because reform agents become motivated by the prospects of change, yet limit their focus on the processes of implementing change. In a study of 13 schools within one school district from 2002 through 2005, Datnow (2005) reported that six of the 13 schools had eliminated the reform programs, two schools continued the reform programs on a limited basis, and the remaining schools opted to continue the reform programs despite minimal success. Hargreaves (2003) warned that "Any system … that does not attend to sustainable improvement is a system waiting for disasters to happen" (p. 75). Fullan (2007) pointed out that neglecting the process of change will ultimately lead to little sustainable progress in producing positive educational change. Many reforms fail because change agents lack the understanding of how individuals experience change. Careful attention to the implementation during the process of change can result in experiencing success in promoting educational change (Fullan, 2007).

Restructuring public education has been a topic of national debate since the Union of Soviet Socialist Repulic (USSR) successfully launched the first unmanned spaceship. Our nation was shocked to discover that another country could surpass the

United States in terms of ingenuity and innovation (New York State Education Department, 2007).   For several decades, Moffett (2000) asserted that implementating and sustaining educational change have been elusive. Moffett questioned why policies have been counterproductive considering that educational change initiatives have been occurring in successive waves since the 1990s. Moffett added that the sheer number of new policies, programs, and curricula has created the appearance of education change. Although a number of policies and programs have emerged under the guise of educational change, the condition of educational change remains largely unchanged (Elmore, 2007).

Operational Definitions

The following terms and definitions are provided for the purpose of this study:

Blue Ribbon School of Excellence : A designation given to schools in which the achievement results in mathematics and language arts of all students in a school are in the 15% of all the schools in a given state (United States Department of Education, 1982).

Focus school: A school identified as having achievement gaps between the highest and lowest performing sub-groups within a school based on annual achievement test scores. The subgroups that are compared are African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, economically disadvantaged, Hispanic American, limited English proficiency, Native American, and student with disabilities (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965; Flexibility, 2012; Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey Act, 2012).

*Inter-district public school of ch*oice: A school approved by the commissioner of education to accept students who do not reside in the school district at no cost to parents (Inter-District Public School Choice Program Act, 2002, re-enacted in 2010).

School in need of improvement: The designation assigned to a school that does not make federal annual yearly progress for 2 consecutive years in the same content area (NCLB, 2002).

School-within-a-school (SWS): Giles and Hargreaves' (2006) effort to improve education by creating customized, smaller units within a school to provide personalized attention for students in the way of a smaller school, while offering the resources of a larger school. The purpose was to improve student achievement for students who needed more direct attention.

Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. The participants would be willing to participate in the study.

2. The participants volunteering for the study would respond to questions honestly.

Limitations

A limitation of this study concerned generalizability because the study was confined to teachers in one SWS. While teachers at CA were the unit of study, it is possible for other schools to learn from the findings of this study. Other educators who review the study will need to understand the uniqueness of this case and to consider how findings might apply to other settings (Stake, 2010). Another limitation

of the study was that the accuracy of the data collected was reliant upon self-reported data.

Scope of the Study and Delimitations

The scope of the study was limited to the perceptions of CA teachers who had worked for at least 5 years in a SWS in the Northeast United States. I study did not compare the perceptions of teachers at CA to the perceptions of teachers at any other academy or SWS. I study did not evaluate CA or its teachers.

Significance of the Study

Because there is a lack of current research about successful SWS models, gaining an understanding of how teachers' perceptions contributed to the continued success of a SWS will fill a gap in the current literature. The results of the study add to the literature about a SWS that persisted for more than 12 years when most schools reported in research lasted for only 3 to 5 years. Gaining an understanding of factors affecting teachers' persistnace in working in a SWS provides an understanding of how to sustain a successful SWS. The implications from this study include more knowledge for teachers, school leadership, policymakers, and other researchers who are seeking direction in understanding how to sustain educational change initiatives. The findings of this study could lead to educational change through determining a SWS model that will improve student achievement and graduation.

Summary

Section 1 provided an introduction to the study, background of the school in the study, and a description of the problem. The purpose, assumptions, delimitations,

and significance of the study were also presented. Operational terms special to this study were defined, and the implications for positive social change were discussed. In Section 2, I present a review of the scholarly literature about the lack of educational change, SWS, teachers' perceptions, school choice, and the impact of educational change on teacher resiliency. In Section 3, I will explain the research design and methodology of the study. Section 4 will include a discussion of the findings of the study. In Section 5, I reflect on and provide an interpretation of the findings, discuss the implications of the findings, and provide recommendations for possible actions and further research.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review includes a summary of the available scholarly literature about the lack of sustained educational change, schools designed as a SWS, school choice, shared leadership, and why teachers persevere in a reform environment. The literature pertaining to educational change includes the historical review of how educational change reform initiatives have not been sustained. Scholars have not addressed the effects of NCLB (2002) for a SWS design as a reform initiative. A SWS structure represented a critical part of this study. Consequently, it was necessary to include studies older than those customarily found in a doctoral study to discuss the historical accounts of SWS. I discuss the history of the development of a SWS structure within different regions of the United States (Lee & Ready, 2001, 2007). The literature review includes a description of how interdistrict school choice provisions (NCLB, 2002) have led to the restructured school of this study. I also explore the development of a SWS as a school choice reform initiative and the impact of school choice and shared and supportive leadership on teacher commitment. The focus of the review is on reviewing the published literature on sustaining educational change, SWS design, and teacher perceptions of working in a SWS.

In preparation for the literature review, I conducted an extensive literature search using the following databases: Academic Search Premier, Education Research Complete and Education, Sage full text, PROQUEST, PsyARTICLES, PsyBOOKS, PsycINFO, and SocINDEX databases through the library of Walden University.

Searches were conducted using keywords such as *educational change, school choice, school reform, teacher commitment, teacher resilience,* and *schools-within-schools*. Databases were searched until saturation occurred and no new information appeared in search attempts.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is focused on the sustainability of educational change. This study incorporated several concepts for sustaining educational change. First, Fullan (2007) proposed that sustaining educational change requires three stages. Each stage leading toward sustaining educational change is influenced by internal and external factors within a school community. The three stages are (a) initiation, (b) implementation, and (c) continuation is the final stage in which the adopted change has generated a critical mass and becomes embedded into the ongoing system. However, Fullan emphasized that proposed educational changes rarely attain the stage of continuation because change agents focus on formal requirements and structures with no attention toward a learning community's cultural values and practices.

The framework for sustaining educational change of Giles and Hargreaves (2006) contributes three essential concepts that contribute to understanding the historical lack of educational change for schools-within-schools. Giles and Hargreaves reported three factors that impinge sustaining educational change in educational communities: (a) anxiety among competing school communities means that the addition of a new school within an existing school challenges existing

values, resources, and traditions of the host school; (b) a historical cycle of the change

is an evolutionary process where changing leadership, gradual attrition of faculty,

changing demographics of the student body draw the schools-within-schools (SWS)

toward the conventional values and traditions; and (c) historically critical incidents

cause major shifts in power and policy. Giles and Hargreaves noted the effects of

large-scale reform strategies as an important example of a historically critical

incident. Large-scale reform efforts tend to displace local community initiatives in

order to reassert the traditional system.

The third framework for sustaining educational change integrated Hord's

(1997) processes for changing a school community. Hord proposed the following

processes as necessary elements for changing a school and sustaining the change: a)

shared and supportive leadership, (b) supportive conditions – relationships and trust,

(c) shared values and vision, (d) supportive conditions – structures, and (e) collective

learning and application delineates the necessary attributes a school community must

incorporate to initiate and sustain change.

Shared and Supportive School Leadership

Leaders who desire to institute change initiatives need to understand the

school staff, history, and how changes initiatives will be addressed. Goddard and

Salloum (2012) studied teacher perceptions of a school's organization to understand

the relationship of school structure and teachers' desires to share in decision making

in a supportive environment. Goddard and Salloum indicated that school

organizations developed an internal social network within the school that provided

the necessary interactions to foster collegial trust. Goddard and Salloum reported that the school's organizational structure often affects opportunities to collaborate. Leaders who cultivate an empowering environment will increase faculty sense of ownership. School leaders, a component in a school's organizational structure, should take an active role in providing opportunities for teacher to collaborate (Huffman, 2011). Collegial collaboration provides a shared accountability for teaching staff to solve school problems, foster trust, and promote a commitment to the school.

A school's history and traditions are an important area for leaders to understand (Galletta & Ayala, 2008). Ross, Hogaboam-Gray, and Gray (2004) asserted that a school learning community is comprised of shared goals, school wide collaboration, perceptions of leadership, and shared teacher responsibility. After surveying teacher perceptions of the learning community, Ross et al. found that a school's history of achievement scores postitively affected teacher engagement and commitment to the school. A school's prior history of positive achievement scores provided a positive influence of teacher commitment. When a school's prior history of achievement was considered poor, there was a negative influence on teacher commitment (Ross, et al, 2004). However, in the schools where leadership provided opportunity for teachers to share in school decisions and goals, empowering leadership had a more positive influence than prior achievement, especially in schools with poor prior historical achievement (Ross et al, 2004). Enhancing teacher commitment to a school requires leadership to invite teachers to share in decision

Collaborative leadership is reciprocal with increased teacher ownership of a school's unified goals, mission, and commitment (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011).

Various school leadership styles affect educational change (Olivier & Hipp, 2006; Ross & Gray, 2006a). For example, when school leaders intentionally distribute leadership capacity, staff perceptions of their ability to move into leadership positions are strengthened. Ross and Gray (2006b) tracked the effects of distributed leadership and found that when leaders distribute leadership roles to teachers, there is a positive influence on teacher commitment to the school and community. The combined results of the positive influence have a spiraling positive effect on student achievement (Ross & Gray, 2006b).

Leadership style has an effect on successfully initiating change and sustaining change (Fullan, 2007; Ware & Kitsantas, 2011). Van Maele and Van Houtte (2009, 2011) recommended that principals and leaders in underperforming schools understand and use distributed leadership. In their study of 84 elementary and secondary schools in Flanders, Van Maele and Van Houtte found distributed leadership to be effective because this leadership model focuses on how school leaders promote and sustain conditions vital to implementing and sustaining change. Principal and school leadership behavior is more decisive in sustaining change than in organizational school characteristics, such as school's culture, size or socioeconomic level (Ross & Gray, 2006b; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009, 2011).

Supportive Conditions – Relationships and Trust

As change is initiated, leadership needs to devote time and effort to building

trust with stakeholders within the learning community so that teachers,

administrators, and others share the same vision for continuous improvement. Bryk

and Schneider (2004) demonstrated that faculty trust is an essential ingredient for

effecting change and sustained improvement. Hargreaves (2002) conducted a study of

50 Canadian teachers in 15 elementary and secondary schools to examine the effects

and nature of the antithesis to trust – betrayal, (i.e., a breach of trust, or perceived

breach of trust, whether intentional or not). Hargreaves concluded that as incidences

of leadership distrust grew, the learning community tended to withdraw its support

for any efforts for change. Increasing perceptions of betrayal may be the agents that

destroy professional interaction between leadership and the learning community.

Sustainable educational change depends on strong, trusting professional communities

to thrive. Hargreaves asserted that it is essential to understand organizational

conditions and policies that increase professional trust in leadership, thus avoiding the

caustic effects of betrayal. If a school is to become a strong learning community,

leadership must take actions that will minimize incidences of perceived betrayal. The

consequences of perceived teacher betrayal is the tendency for teachers to seek

isolation and avoid interaction.

Establishing faculty trust is more than a moral decision. Creating an

environment in which there is a communal desire will enhance change initiatives

(Strike, 2004). Coleman (2012) studied the relationship of faculty trust in leadership

and the depth of shared values and mission. Coleman, using interviews with 49

school leaders, found that faculty trust in leadership is a prerequisite in order for

leaders to consistently model shared values and mission. Faculty trust is imperative in

promoting sustainability of the shared values and mission for the learning community.

In order to sustain educational change within a learning community, Coleman

concluded that developing faculty trust in leadership is an essential task that school

leaders must attend to. To facilitate trust and collaboration in leadership, school

leaders should foster strategies that take into account (a) faculty ownership change,

(b) honest exchange of information, (c) a stable environment that facilitates change,

and (d) reduced levels of conflict between administration and teachers (Coleman,

2012

Shared Values and Vision

The seminal work of Hord (1997) about implementing and sustaining

educational change showed that there are essential features a learning community

must cultivate. Leaders desiring to implement sustainable change must consider the

following: a) shared and supportive leadership, b) designing an environment that

supports relationships and trust, c) collaborate to instill shared values and vision, d)

encourage collective learning that enhances the school climate. In order for a learning

community to initiate change, the entire learning community must be included in the

development of goals, values, and visions. The community members must have a

deep understanding of the process to ensure fidelity in the implementation of values,

goals and vision. Undertaking this shared process develops the necessary

interdependence between staff and leadership and forms the basis of what Ross, and Gray (2006a) describe as transformational leadership. Hipp, et al (2008) later revisited two of the original schools Hord had included in her original study and concluded that leaders who incorporated the essential features Hord presented were leading school communities that sustained change.

McKnight (2011) stated that for teachers to commit to the values, vision, and goals established by school leadership,, the learning community must identify with the goals through a collaborative involvement with leadership. McKnight (2011) wrote, "When leaders do not honor teachers' voices…without asking for their thoughts or suggestions they communicate the message that they do not trust teachers to think for themselves" (p. 35). A learning community must have the opportunity to share common values, goals, and mission. Teachers need to know that leaders value their efforts in moving the vision, mission, and goals of the learning community forward (Sarason, 1982). Further, the teachers must perceive that the actions undertaken by school leaders are consistent with the shared common values, goals, and mission of the school. Lacking the opportunity for shared values and vision, the needed collaborative efforts of the faculty are unlikely to be implemented reliably or result in sustainability (Bryk & Schneider, 2004).

A learning community is recognized by its ethos, or the permanence of its actions which are grounded in the goals and visions established. Strike (2004) mentioned that sustaining a successful learning community requires four critical traits

a community must cultivate collaboratively. The four traits are: (a) coherence, (b) cohesion, (c) care, and (d) contact.

Members must be firmly rooted in a shared conception of the community's vision. A central trait of a successful learning community is coherence, the shared vision of the learning community. Through reflective discussions there emerges reasoned consensus, and diminished role struggles of perceived power because decision making procedures are community property. (Strike, 2004). Further, the practice of consensus to pursue shared goals affords individual community members a personal stake in the success of their learning community (Lunenberg, 2010).

Cohesion is the sense of community that results from the shared pursuit of goals and vision through the collaborative activities. The community develops a shared language that the members of the community use to describe shared practices. A result of the collaborative interaction is the developed sense of caring for community members who have formed a shared vision. The interdependence of community members deepens as the group's success occurs in each shared activity. The sensitivity of care forms the bond of collegiality needed to sustain the learning community when activities may not be successful (Strike, 2004).

A learning community has operational concerns which include such features as size, schedules, and resources that facilitate the capacity to pursue the shared vision and goals. It is important for a learning community that members have opportunities to be in regular contact with one another. When learning community members have opportunities to meet, this builds understanding, trust, and

perseverance to continue to strive when encountering resistance or unsuccessful activities (Hord, 2009).

In order for a school to effect and sustain change in values and vision, leadership must ensure that the intended change fits with the belief structure of the learning community; this is accomplished through a shared effort and buy- in by all members of the learning community (Chance & Chance, 2002). Florian (2000) stated that ongoing engagement and development of shared relationships are necessary for the process of change to have a possibility of success. Leaders, as change agents, need to understand that the learning community members must perceive an unbending professional perception of leadership commitment toward shared values and mission (Coleman, 2012).

Obstacles to Change

Educational change has been impeded by two organizational structures. Often the absence of a school or district leaders' understanding of the complexitiy of educational change leads to an obstacle for the implementation of the processes of change (Noell & Gansle, 2008; Payne, 2008). Payne (2008) reasoned that educational change at times has been impeded because of the achievement gap between students in affluent schools and students in schools of less affluence. Students in schools who have a lower socio-economic level and less funding are less likely to the have monetary or community resources to sustain educational change. Harris (2011) pointed out that underperforming schools are forced, through federal legislation, to impose interventions which may actually widen the achievement gap. Harris reported

that many underperforming schools have mandated interventions without ensuring there was adequate capacity of staff or resources. Organizational structures that do not support teachers have resulted in a collective depression of teachers manifested in a perceived demoralization of the profession (Payne, 2008). Payne points to poorly implemented reform efforts often tied to confusion from competing policies stemming from federal, state, and local entities. The perceived collective teacher demoralization emerges from top down allocation of priorities and resources while ignoring the values and priorities of a school learning community.

Leaders must take responsibility for removing barriers that prevent teachers from accomplishing intended goals of change initiatives (Chance & Chance, 2002). The individuals affected by change initiatives must be actively recruited and engaged in the processes of problem-solving, communication, and self-reflection in order to have a connected structure of the beliefs, values, and norms that define a learning community's culture. Leadership members need to train learning community members about the need to change and convince the community members of the long term benefits of change (Hipp, et al, 2008; Huffman, 2011).

A study of high school teachers noted many teachers' frustrations about change concerned the conditions under which change initiatives were mandated (Chong & Kong, 2012). A major concern that Chong and Kong reported was the lack of school organizational structures that could support change efforts. Collaboration between school leaders and faculty is a necessary ingredient for implementing and sustaining change (Chong & Kong, 2012). Teachers interviewed noted that time was

not allocated by their school leaders for them to collaborate and develop strategies to implement change initiatives. Chong and Kong reiterated that leadership must provide organizational structural supports that promote the change process. They contended that a school structure should build into the schedule adequate time for teachers and administrators to collaborate in decisionmaking to bring about necessary changes.

Collective Learning Within the Learning Community

Learning communities provide a way for teachers to collaboratively work to achieve a school's improvement goals. (Chong & Kong, 2012) Establishing an effective learning community requires a thoughtful approach. Nelson, LeBard and Waters (2010) discussed the benefits of administrators and teachers initiating and supporting the processes for continuous improvement within a professional learning community. Nelson et al. provided guidance in focusing on shared areas of improving practices, designing a common plan of action and establishing a shared means to implement the a groups' plan of action. Time and resources are needed to encourage, support, and engage a learning community in the business of collaborative inquiry.

When collaborative environments are focused on specific topics, a benefit for the learning community is the power of interdependence (Nelson, LeBard & Waters, 2010). Establishing the opportunity for collaborative planning, will build trust between and among the learning community members and school leadership. Members of the learning community are then more apt to support risk-taking amongst group members toward a shared vision. (Chong & Kong, 2012**).** Leaders must

understand how distributing responsibilities among members of the learning community provides a basis of relational trust and strengthens connections to a shared vision that benefits the entire community (Ross & Gray, 2006b). When leaders are committed to encouraging the learning community to undertake a serious collective inquiry for strategies, this provides the impetus for the collaboration to move beyond initiation to a sustaining effort (Nelson, LeBard & Waters, 2010).

A school learning community works with a shared vision, mission, and goals to address contemporary concerns of schools such as to improve and sustain student achievement and professional development. (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker & Many, 2006).Through the development of shared norms, the learning community can address divergent views among members and cultivate a consensus focused on collaborative strategies about shared values for students' thinking, and learning (Lujan & Day, 2010). Teachers interviewed in the Lujan and Day study stated that the establishment of the processes for a professional learning community reduced teacher isolation and increased the opportunity for teachers to share ideas for mediating learning for students through instructional strategies gleaned from the group. The overall effect of the processes for considering student work and planning instruction and assessment to meet the needs of students improved student achievement.

Linder, Post and Calabrese (2012) conducted a study to identify the factors that lead to successfully establishing a professional learning community that includes university faculty within an elementary school and middle school. Three university professors each joined one of three learning community groups who were focused on

improving student achievement. Teachers and administrators involved with students in grades 3 through 5 met with a professor who was an expert in elementary level pedagogy. Another professor met with teachers and administrators to improve instruction for students in a middle school. The third professor met with teachers and administrators to improve instruction for students in a k-5 school. The learning community groups met regularly throughout the school year. The university professors attended the group meetings, checked the minutes, and reviewed the collaborative activities of the learning groups. The findings of the research study determined that a prerequisite for implementing a successful learning community was the school's leadership commitment to the process for the learning group members to engage in common goals and support the learning group members' efforts.

Linder, et al. (2012) reported that a PLC learning groups' engagement in common goals developed a perception of group autonomy resulting from the collaborative decision making capabilities within each of the respective learning communities. Linder, et al, further observed that group members showed an ownership of their collaborative activities. Members of the learning communities developed a sense of empowerment as a result of their shared projects. Learning community members reported that meeting regularly and having access to current scholarly literature on current topics provided the opportunity to study contemporary topics in depth. Additionally, the university presence furthered group discussions and focus.

There are noted roadblocks that must be considered when establishing a learning community. Lujan and Day (2010) assert that the roadblocks of (a) time restraints, (b) perceived isolation among teachers, (c) conflict resolution must be considered during the process of implementation. These roadblocks can undermine the sustainability of the collaborative work of a learning community. Lujan and Day (2009) conducted a qualitative study of 37 elementary school teachers to examine the obstacles teachers encountered when establishing a learning community. Data resulting from interviews of the learning community members indicated that two critical obstacles were overcome. The first obstacle overcome was establishing a collaborative culture. The second obstacle that was overcome was ensuring the longevity and sustainability of the learning community's vision. Establishing a collaborative culture requires that the members establish and understand the need for creating group norms. This process for establishing a collaborative culture should facilitate the establishment of a learning community where divergent views will be discussed and the members can come to consensus in the development of a vision and goals for the learning community. Lujan and Day cautioned that when there is a lack of sufficient time for regular meetings, a learning community will only cooperate in superficial ways which will diminish the sustainability of the learning community's efforts.

Additionally, learning communities that engage in collaborative shared activities showed concern for the future sustainability of the learning community. Lujan and Day 's study noted that a recurring concern for new members to the school

or group is that they receive proper induction through training and professional development about the process for collaboration. Administrators and other school leaders need to make certain that new teachers understand the processes of the learning community, as well as its shared values, vision, and goals. Successful learning communities are vested in not only longevity but are committed to the sustainability of their community efforts (Lujan & Day, 2009).

History of Research On Sustaining Educational Change

Since the publication of the United States National Commission on Excellence in Education report, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), educational change initiatives have been a national topic. Prior to 1983, the Rand Corporation conducted a study on whole school curriculum change (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978.) The purpose of the study was to determine what curriculum models would produce sustainable change, and what happens when federal funding is diminished. Berman and McLaughlin observed that many of the models were not implemented according to the planned strategy. The researchers reported that the problem of sustaining change was not any inadequacy of the curriculum models studied. Berman and McLaughlin stated that a cause for the lack of sustainability was the complex bureaucratic characteristics of education systems. Since the planned changes were initiated from the top-down and externally influenced, the implementation of programs was challenging. In order to initiate curriculum change, Berman and McLaughlin stressed that necessary leadership components for change to succeed must include; (a) school leadership that actively promotes the proposed change plan, (b) school leadership that creates a supportive

organizational climate for the proposed change initiative, (c) school leadership that ensures that teachers are clear about the goals and principles of the proposed change, and (d) teacher collaboration in the decision making process. Successfully maintaining change begins with the process of initiation. Effecting change cannot gather momentum if implementation stalls at the initial stage. Moffett (2000) asserted that the struggle to find ways to implement and sustain educational change have eluded change agents.

The drives for educational changes have been occurring in successive waves since the 1990's (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). The sheer number of new policies, programs, and curricula has created the appearance of education change. In spite of many policies and programs under the guise of educational change, there is often little change (Elmore, 2007). Even with legislative pressure for educational change, such as NCLB, schools often have not been able to implement sustainable change (Fullan, 2007).

After the 1978 Rand study other studies were conducted on school change: Whole School Reform (Datnow; 2005), innovative curriculum programs (Giles & Hargreaves; 2006), school-within-schools (Raywid; 1996, Hargreaves & Gooson; 2006) and strong legislated policies (NCLB, 2002), yet sustaining educational change has not been very successful. Florian (2000) investigated the sustainability of federally subsidized reform initiatives in four school districts, ten years after the initial federal funding. The purpose of the study was to determine the factors that sustained or hindered the reform initiatives. The study showed that the federally

funded reform initiatives were retained but often not as originally planned. This confirms Berman and McLaughlin's (1978) observation that the implementation of large-scale reforms often does not follow the planned strategy. Florian concluded that the key reasons the change programs were not sustainable were because of competing policies between state and federal bureaucracies, changing political demands, and inconsistencies of policies and resources resulting from leadership changes during the study.

Whole school curriculum reform initiatives were studied by Datnow (2005) and Sterbinsky, Ross and Redfield (2006). Datnow (2005) examined six specific whole school curriculum initiatives at 13 elementary schools in a single state. Sterbinsky, Ross and Redfield (2006) studied a multi-site whole school reform initiatives that covered several states and six different curriculum reform initiatives. Both Datnow and Sterbinsky, et al. reported that federal and state policies became competing forces that shifted policies from implementation of reform initiatives to test preparation. Both studies noted that the possibility of losing continued funding created an unwillingness of districts to engage in change programs because the districts could no longer support the initiatives from district funding after federal funds were stopped.

Innovative change initiatives attempted in schools in the United States and Canada were studied to determine factors that would sustain educational change. Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) conducted interviews with 200 teachers and administrators who worked in eight schools considered innovative because of

attempts to implement a school-within-a-school. The study conducted in the United

States and Canada in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's included eight high schools

located in the United States and Canada.To initiate change, promoters ignored the

influences of political and historical shifts in educational policy. According to

Hargreaves and Goodson five forces influence educational change. The five forces

are: (a) waves of reform, (b) changing student demographics, (c) teacher generations,

(d) leadership succession, and (e) school culture. Hargreaves and Goodson noted that

waves of reform are those historical periods of reform initiatives that influence the

acceptance or rejection by various career generations of a school. As a local school

district experiences demographic shifts in school size and economic swings, the

generational makeup of teaching staff may influence change efforts. For example, the

researchers noted that mid-career and late career teachers tend to resist change. In

addition, the influence of shifting demographics and economic swings may alter

student populations within a school thus impacting community involvement and

acceptance of change efforts.

Changes in school leadership, over the past decade, reported Hargreaves and

Goodson, has been the result of a generation of teachers readying for retirement as

pressures for schools to produce rapid improvement. A consequence of frequent

leadership changes is that teacher resistance to change becomes embedded in the

culture of the school. A planned leadership change where a succeeding team of

leaders have been groomed to the take helm of leadership is not common. More

frequently leadership changes are unplanned with little or no formal succession plans

other than the recruitment of new leaders (Hargreaves, 2005). Unplanned changes in

leadership tend to foster disruption in a school's path of change. Hargreaves and

Goodson noted that sustainability is not often possible when leaders do not take into

consideration the five influences of educational changes.

Noell and Gansle (2008) observed that the disconnect between research for

planning educational change and the actual implementation for educational change

has been recognized, yet there has been little progress made in addressing the

pragmatic issues of sustaining educational change. The focus of sustaining

educational change according to Fullan (2007) should address activities, structure, or

policy if it is to be maintained. Hargreaves (2003) stated "Any system … that does

not attend to sustainable improvement is a system waiting for disasters to happen" (p.

75). Fullan (2007) warned that neglecting the process of change will ultimately lead

to little sustainable progress in producing positive educational change. Careful

attention to a small number of fundamental details during the process of change can

be a positive influence on the change. The manner in which education change is

initiated will determine how sustainable a change will be. Fullan concluded that

educational change fails because the process of sustainable change requires 5 to 10

years. The initial phase requires a great deal of preparation and clearly understood

motives by stakeholders. Fullan (2007) asserted that change initiatives require 2 to 3

years for the change to become practice. Sustainability occurs when the reform

becomes built into the ongoing culture. However, history has shown that "schools are

more likely to implement superficial changes in contents, objectives, and structures than changes in culture..." (Fullan, 2007, p. 79).

History of a School-within-a-School Design

The history of the school-within-school model (SWS) has shown that this school structure is difficult to implement and sustain. The SWS concept was an outgrowth of the small school movement of the 1990's (Lee & Ready, 2007). A key figure of the small school movement was Meier (1995) who successfully implemented several non-traditional small schools in New York City and Boston. Meier (1987) founded Central Park East elementary school in Harlem, New York in 1987. He then went on to establish Mission Hills elementary school in 1997 in Boston, Massachusetts, and later Central Park East High school in Harlem, New York (Tyner-Millings, 2012). The schools Meier established began as separate programs within existing public schools, and have served as models for other attempts to utilize a small school approach in education. Muncey and McQuillan's (1991) study, based on interviews with students in four high schools with SWS in Rhode Island, concluded that the benefits of school-within-a-school model offers a smaller intimate school community. Piper (1994) reported a successful implementation of SWS for an elementary school in Hawaii. The school, Kapaa' elementary school, had enlisted the assistance of Raywid to reorganize the school. A key recommendation Raywid (1996) provided was the development of volunteer collaborative teacher teams working as facilitators with school administration and teachers to establish and maintain processes of change. The model proved to be successful in bringing processes for

change to an underperforming school. However, the SWS was not sustained and the records of the Hawaii Department of Education (2014) indicate that the school classification list reports Kapaa' elementary as a Focus School because of consistently low achievement scores.

School reform can address the structure and purpose of a school. When a larger comprehensive high school is restructured to add smaller academy units within the existing school, a school-within-a-school is created (McAndrews & Anderson, 1992). A SWS is a distinct program sanctioned by the board of education. The SWS plans its own curriculum, has its own staff and students… who are affiliated with the school-within-a-school as a matter of choice" (Dewees, 1999, p. 21). A career academy structure allows students to select a discipline based upon individual preferences within the choices available. The purpose of such an approach is to foster student commitment and increase their engagement with their school (Ready, Lee & Weiner, 2004).

Muncey and McQuillan (1991) studied the SWS structure in four Providence, Rhode Island high schools and concluded that such a model offers a smaller intimate community. Parental support and involvement for the smaller school tends to be strong (McAndrews & Anderson, 1992). Yet research has shown there are some serious considerations with the SWS model. Raywid (1996) found that an imposed SWS structure can create deep discord among faculty since a SWS school structure typically realigns faculties and changes existing faculty relationships. McAndrews and Anderson (1992) cautioned that when a smaller school is imposed within a larger

school, staffing issues tend to appear. The researchers noted that a key faculty concern was the possibility of involuntary assignment. Another point that requires attention with the SWS structure is the effect of harmony between SWS and the host school and the role of the principal (Dewees, 1999). Conflicts arise concerning allegiances to the larger school versus to the smaller school unit, thus creating unforeseen rivalries between faculties and students (Raywid, 1996). Raywid observed these phenomena in her study of the Wadleigh Complex in Harlem, New York.

The original Wadleigh Complex in Harlem, New York was closed as a result of poor student achievement and a deteriorating facility. The Wadleigh Complex was re-opened as three middle schools and a high school housed in one facility. Each middle school was structured with a theme: a) visual and performing arts, b) writing and publishing, c) and science technology. The whole school was under the aegis of two different agencies. The community school district was responsible for the middle schools while the high school was reporting to the NYC High School Division. Raywid (1995) noted that the school design was not community driven, since community members were not included in the planning of any aspects of the middle schools or the high school. Within two years of inception of the Wadleigh Complex, the school programs became the object of internal strife between staff, administration, and the local community. Raywid (1995) concluded that the ultimate downfall of the program was the lack of inclusive planning on the part of the administration, staff, and community. Developing a school-within-a-school requires careful planning (Raywid, 1995).

Small schools and the SWS model were studied on a large scale by Raywid (1996). The study included 22 schools that restructured larger schools to include smaller schools within the existing structure of the schools. The matter of separate entities within the same facility was a noticeable problem. Raywid reported that the staffs of the SWS were determined to maintain autonomy of their own programs. The SWS staffs took dramatic steps to build and maintain a collective identity to ensure that a distinguishable difference existed between the SWS and the host school. Any attempt to dilute the distinct attributes of the SWS was met with severe tension. The addition of the SWS created other noticeable difficulties for the whole school. Rivalries grew between faculties regarding allegiances with the host school versus the smaller SWS. In later studies of the SWS model in high schools, Darling-Hammond, Ancess & Ort (2002) confirmed that the school-within-a-school was an unfeasible model when two bureaucracies within the same school created competing policies.

Darling-Hammond, et al. (2002) studied an attempt to restructure five high schools using the SWS model in New York City in the late 1980's. Darling-Hammond et al. reported success in improved attendance, improved academic achievement in reading and mathematics, and increased graduation rates. Despite the improvements in reading and mathematics scores and increased graduation rates, the researchers questioned whether the SWS could be sustained because of competing policies between the host school and the SWS. Over the course of the seven year study, the conflict of differing policies between the host school and SWS became a source of competition. There were considerable policy exceptions made to

accommodate the SWS, which differed from the established polices of the larger host school. Policy exceptions included such things as hiring, scheduling, curricula, and grading policies. The policy exceptions were inconsistent with the established and traditional policies of the host schools, and often of short duration that favored the SWS programs. Darling-Hammond, et al. recommended that policy exceptions for SWS should not be considered unless there is a long term commitment by leadership and teachers. Experimenting with policies on a short term basis or allowing discontinuity in the application of policy serves to undermine the commitment of the teachers and community to the program.

Ready, Lee and Welner (2004) studied five California high schools from 1998 to 2001. The study indicated that the SWS model was not successful. The high schools under study did not succeed after two years, replicating the difficulties found in the Wadleigh Complex study (Raywid, 1995). Ready, et al. stated that the teaching staff and administration found it difficult to sustain the SWS within the comprehensive high schools. The high schools selected for the addition of the SWS model within a host school were low performing schools that had specific programs designed to attract a higher achieving student base. The challenges of altering the social and academic traditions associated with the original schools proved to be difficult to overcome. The programs began with high expectations that quickly decayed, resulting in the loss of the very student base that was planned for.

Ready, Lee and Welner (2004) also noted that the literature leading up to 2004 used the small school concept as a justification to experiment with schools-

within-schools. Ready, et al. questioned whether small school research could be transferred and applied to SWS. The concept of development and sustainability of embedding separate programs within an existing school was studied by Giles and Hargreaves (2006) at two Canadian schools and one U.S. school. The schools were public schools in large communities that had many other public schools. The thrust of the study was to determine what attributes impede or facilitate change, and what affected the sustainability of the SWS schools. The three schools experienced varying levels of success in establishing the school-within-a-school structure and processes in the respective schools. The study revealed that three critical factors were evident. First, the very fact that there was a different school embedded within the local school created rivalries for resources, attention, and identity which confirmed Raywid's (1996) earlier findings concerning the Wadliegh Complex SWS.

Giles and Hargreaves (2006) also reported that a second factor in successfully implementing a school-within-a-school structure was the evolutionary process of cyclical change. Cyclical change processes include phases of aging and decline in organizations. In addition, changing leadership, shifts in district policies, and shifting student populations all contribute to the evolutionary process of change. The third factor that impedes change that Giles and Hargreaves emphasized was the effects of current large scale education reforms. Large scale reform initiatives, such as NCLB in the United States, have established far-reaching education policies that are applied to all publically funded schools based on annual achievement targets. The effect of state and federal policies exerted negative influences on sustaining the distinct identities

and cultures of the schools as the pressures to produce higher achievement scores led to shifting focus to test preparation. Matthews and Kitchen (2010) compared SWS structures and processes for gifted students in Canadian and U.S. schools. Their study yielded similar results to Giles and Hargreaves (2006) study.

The selected schools in Canada were all held in high esteem due to each school's consistent academic achievement results prior to embedding gifted and talented programs in them (Matthews & Kitchen, 2010). The selected host and SWS had independent teaching staffs, schedules, and course offerings. The results of student and teacher interviews revealed that tensions existed between the host school and the SWS that involved the planning and implementing of schedules for teachers and students that did not conflict or overlap between the host school and the SWS, the division of resources that were often limited, and decisions about which rooms within the facility would be used for each entity.

Teachers of the host school disclosed that the ill feelings were based on their perceptions that the new school structure because of the host school's unwillingness to accommodate SWS students in course electives. The host school teachers resented the SWS faculty because they thought the SWS faculty received special priveledges when it came to dividing students and resources. Teachers in the host school felt that the SWS school was taking the best students from their classroom while commandeering an unfair share of the school's resources. The resentment of the teachers of the host school remained strong and were responsible for a continuing tension between the teaching faculty of each school. Since the reform efforts for the

establishment of a SWS were initiated from administrators at the top without input from teaching faculty members of either the host school or the SWS there was little support for the SWS reform effort from either faculty. Matthews and Kitchen (2010) questioned the value of such reform efforts when a community becomes divided.

To better understand SWS models to see if there was a way to implement the model without faculty resentment and other barriers to school reform, Lee and Ready (2007) conducted research on SWS models in large US cities. The potential benefits and pitfalls for structuring a SWS was the subject of an extensive study encompassing five high schools located in a New England suburb, two Mid-Atlantic urban centers, a Northwest working class suburb, and a southwest urban center. The study began in 1998 and concluded in 2001. At the inception of this study, Lee and Ready stated that during the time of the study small school size was considered a popular reform topic. They decided that a school-within-a-school model could encourage a small school environment within the large high schools.

Lee and Ready (2007) noted that a SWS, as an innovative change initiative, presents the potential for improved student achievement within an environment with the benefits of a smaller school and the resources of a larger school. The smaller size of the SWS affords the opportunity for interdisciplinary instruction and offers extended instructional time. Teachers and students are commonly grouped for the duration of the program, so solid teacher-learner relationships appear more developed. Parent involvement in a SWS is consistently stronger than parental involvement for a larger comprehensive high schools. Another advantage of SWS is a

flexibility for matching relevant instructional programs to student interest much more easily than larger comprehensive high schools. Yet, the SWS high schools studied encountered unintended consequences that eventually eroded the enthusiasm for this reform approach.

The results of Lee and Ready's (2007) study indicated that a SWS may intentionally or unintentionally stratify the school along social and academic lines. The schools-within-schools in the study required that students apply to enter the school. Lee and Ready questioned if this might not be soliciting students from differing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and promoting an elitism in the SWS. For example the SWS marketed their distinction in curriculum or program features to attract desireable students. The recognition afforded to the SWS students was evident to the whole community, while the host school faculty and students sometimes felt that they were treated as though they were less valuable than the SWS students and faculty. An example of this perception by faculty and students provided by Lee and Ready were the theme based SWS programs, such as pre-engineering or pre-med. These programs separated the students in the host school by the very nature of the program purpose.

Lee and Ready maintained that a host school and a SWS needs to be viewed from a whole community perspective. The traditions of the host school are part of the identity a community cherishes (Galletta & Ayala, 2008). A community identity can be lost because of education reform efforts. When a school is restructured, the

community perceives that its identity will be erased in an effort to develop a new identity.

Teacher Resilience

The national percentage of public school teachers remaining in the profession during the first five years of teaching the annual rate of teacher turnover has been estimated at 20% to 50% (Cochran-Smith, Cannady, McEachern, Piazza, Power & Ryan, 2011; Gilbert, 2011; Perrachionne, Rosser & Peterson, 2008). Hughes (2012) asserted that the annual turnover of teachers in a southern state with more than five years experience was approximately 13% to 15% of a randomly selected pool of 782 teachers. Investigating the conceptual framework of educational change has shown that teacher retention is an essential element in sustaining change (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Fullan, 2007, 2009; Hargreaves, 2002, 2005).

The research is rich with descriptions of what factors drive a teacher to consider leaving the profession. Ware and Kitsantas (2007, 2011) point to the lack of teacher inclusion in decision making and lessening of teacher autonomy in the classroom as factors that influence teacher commitment to the school. When a school or district incurs high turnover of leadership, teachers are impacted and will tend to question their commitment to the school and the teaching profession (Gu & Day, 2010).

A study of Florida high needs schools investigated what essential strategies or working conditions would attract and retain teachers (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). The researchers surveyed 97 high school teachers for the factors would influence teachers

to remain in high needs high schools. Teachers responded that autonomy in curriculum matters, targeted professional development, and more inclusion in school based decisions were key components that would provide reasons to remain. Considering that Florida provides salary incentives to work in high needs schools, Greenlee and Brown noted that salary incentives do not explain the annual turnover rate of 33% in high needs schools. Teachers experiencing success in high needs high schools were highly likely to remain with or without salary incentives.

NCLB also provides alternative pathways for individuals to pursue a teaching license. The impact on teacher retention rates of alternate route teachers has been investigated. Ng and Peter (2010) interviewed five alternate teachers who were leaving the profession after two years. The exit interviews of the alternate route teachers revealed that their reasons for leaving were inadequate support from school leadership, student discipline, little autonomy regarding curriculum, and the added pressures of workload. The pressures of the added workload borne by the high stakes environment created by NCLB and the adverse effect on teacher retention was first reported by Brill and McCartney (2008). The researchers asserted that using student performance on high stakes achievement tests to evaluate teacher success was becoming a key reason some teachers leave the profession.

Since the enactment of NCLB, the blueprint of public education has been altered. The growth in charter schools has added to the discussion of teacher retention. A comparison of teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention between charter schools and traditional public schools was undertaken by Wei, Patel and

Young (2014). The survey data of 2,273 teachers found that charter schools have a higher annual rate of teacher turnover (55%) than public schools. The reasons for lower rates of teacher retention were found to be perceived lack of support, little collegial collaboration, and unclear purpose (Perrachionne, et al. 2008). Renzulli, Parrott and Beattie (2011) added that the demands of workload, work hours, and loss of autonomy in the classroom were also driving considerations for charter school teachers leaving the teaching profession.

International studies conducted in Malaysia (Saad, 2012), Canada (Klassen, 2010), the United States (Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010) and Australia (Buchanan, 2010) have provided insights about the universality of teacher resilience and job satisfaction. Klassen's study indicated that workload requirements were adding to levels of stress which was a source of growing job dissatisfaction and had implications for retaining teachers. In Malaysia, Saad's study (2012) showed that teachers were most concerned with the loss of autonomy in curriculum, planning, and classroom matters. Buchanan (2010) reported that job dissatisfaction was often caused by the decreased autonomy in curriculum and the education reform movement. Interviewing 21 former teachers provided insights of the personal anxieties the former teachers experienced when deciding to leave the profession. The participants agreed that the workload was an initial point which began a series of personal reflections about why they struggled to remain. Much like teachers in the United States, the Australian teachers (Buchanan, 2010) were faced with high stakes testing scores forming a basis for teacher accountability. The participants presented

the concern that collegiality was impacted by the competition that resulted from test scores. The Australian public education system also has a provision for private educational management entities that parallel the U.S. concept of charter schools. Buchanan asserted that there are structural dissonances between teachers' expectations which will continue to add to teacher attrition unless ameliorated.

School culture, workload, student discipline, and the effect of student achievement as factors affecting teacher attrition was the subject of a statewide study of southern teachers. (Hughes, 2012) Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of school climate strongly determined their desire to engage or consider leaving. One finding that Hughes reported that was unexpected was that teachers working in the lowest socio-economic schools were more likely to remain to retirement compared to teachers in schools with the highest socio-economic status. Hughes reasoned that teachers "were satisfied with their school facilities and resources" (p. 254). Salary incentives have sometimes been offered to attract teachers to work in high need schools. However, using an online survey for teachers in high need schools, Petty, Fitchett and O'Connor (2012) reported that the issues of class size, workload, collegial interaction, autonomy, and school leadership were more important to retaining teachers than offering salary incentives.

Hargreaves and Goodson's (2006) longitudinal study of education change addressed the topic of teacher retention, teacher recruitment, and planning for teacher succession. The study involved schools in the United States and Canada. Hargreaves and Goodson noted that the younger generation of teachers bring more technology

savvy, are more confident about their own learning, yet resent the processes of reform that they perceive undermines teachers' professional image and working conditions. The study found a dislike of the standardization current reform initiatives have brought. The core of younger teachers surveyed indicated they would not be remaining in the teaching profession.

Developing teacher resilience is a strategy for sustaining educational change. Leaders who collaborate with teachers to develop processes and plans will engage the strengths of the combined generations within a school and safeguard teacher resilience and commitment to the school's goals (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006; Gu & Day, 2010).

Conclusion

The research studies examined in this review of the literature represent a range of methods which included quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. As previously stated, there is a lack of current literature that addresses sustainable educational change for schools-within-schools and the combined effects of school reform policies that have evolved from NCLB. The literature review presented the conceptual framework of educational change integrating Fullan (2007), Giles and Hargreaves (2006) concepts of educational change, and Hord's (1997) processes for sustaining educational change. The results of large scale studies examining educational change efforts was presented. A brief summary of studies of schools-within-schools was provided, and the need to consider teacher resilience as an integral part of sustaining educational change was presented. Section 3 will explain

the research design and methodology of the study. Section 4 will include a discussion of the findings of the study. In Section 5, I reflect on and provide an interpretation of the findings, discuss the implications of the findings, and provide recommendations for possible actions and further research.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate and understand the anomaly of a SWS that has established a history of continuation for more than a decade. The research questions for the study were.

1.   How do CA teachers explain the success of their SWS?

2.   What have been the experiences of CA teachers working in a SWS?

3.   What are CA teachers' perceptions of their continued desire to work in a SWS?

To investigate the research questions, the case study methodology guided this study in order to examine and offer an in-depth description of this case within its actual venue. Employing a case study methodology provided the opportunity to investigate the perceptions of CA teachers' perceptions to understand their actions within the SWS environment (Denscombe, 2009; Strike, 2010; Yin, 2008).

Selection of a Qualitative Research Design

Researchers have demonstrated that a problem in SWS is the lack of sustainability beyond 3 to 5 years (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Lee & Ready, 2007; Raywid, 1995, 1996; Ready et al., 2004). The qualitative case study methodology was selected to explore CA teachers' perceptions about why their SWS has continued to succeed for more than 12 years. Yin (2012) stated that a case study answers "the desire to derive an up-close or otherwise an in-depth understanding of a…case set in their real-world context" (p. 4). Denscombe (2009) claimed a case study is "better

suited than numbers to gaining an understanding of the subtleties and complexities of the study" (p. 4) within the natural setting of the phenomenon being investigated.

Qualitative research is described as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Denscombe (2009) and Strike (2010) characterized qualitative research as a holistic examination of a social phenomenon that emphasizes the interdependence of the experiences and meaning of the individuals rather than an analysis of cause and effect. The nature of qualitative research is not to just understand a subject or problem (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The objective of qualitative research is to learn what is important about the problem to those being studied (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). This study was guided by the need to acquire an in-depth understanding of how and why CA has been a successful SWS as seen through the perceptions of CA teachers. To acquire this understanding required a qualitative approach. Quantitative methods emphasize the analysis of cause and effect through the use of statistical analysis (Denscombe, 2009; Stake, 2010). The intention was not to statistically measure CA teachers' perceptions; therefore, a quantitative methods was not selected.

Case Study Approach

When a unique topic of study requires that the researcher gain an understanding of aa specific unit it is necessary to consider a case study approach. According to Yin (2014), a case study is a research approach that gives researchers the opportunity to maintain "the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events" (p. 2) and provides an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon

within a group or institution. Stake (1995) stated that the emphasis of a study is on the uniqueness of the case and of most importance is understanding the case itself. Stake (2010) defined a case as a bounded system. Yin (2008) suggested that a case study is suitable when (a) the research questions posed are how or why questions, (b) the researcher has not controlled the event, and (c) the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context. Because I addressed a problem positioned within a specific setting, a case study approach was the most appropriate approach to provide an in-depth description about a SWS setting (Creswell, 2007; Denscombe, 2009; Stake, 1995). For these reasons, I selected the case study methodology to examine how CA teachers perceive and understand the success of their SWS. The unit of analysis was defined as CA.

Alternative Qualitative Approaches

Several other qualitative research methods were considered to determine their appropriateness for use in this study. An ethnographic study was considered but not selected because the purpose of such a study is to study a culture of society through participant observation (Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 2011). Ethnography includes an extended observations of a group in which the researcher is deeply involved with the daily lives of the group (Creswell, 2007). This study was not designed to actively observe the culture of classroom teachers. The focus of this research was on the perceptions of the teachers of a SWS and the information these teachers would contribute in developing thick descriptions of the unit of analysis.

The design of a qualitative study is not intended, like a quantitative study, to prove or disprove a theoretical framework .According to Green (2014), it may be possible to design a study without using a conceptual or theoretical framework. Green suggested that a grounded theory approach in which "theory generation comes from the data" (p. 35) can help to develop its own theoretical framework. To consider a grounded theory approach as an option, the focus would be on finding an emerging theory grounded in the data (Merriam, 2009). Because I did not seek to develop a theory, grounded theory was not deemed to a suitable research approach.

Undertaking a case study methodology will require a specific, uniques unit of study. According to Creswell (2007), a case study is a research method that involves the study of an issue within a specific setting. Merriam (2002) asserted that by concentrating on a single phenomenon the researcher can provide a deep description of the phenomenon. The unit of analysis distinguishes the study, not the topic. For this case study the unit of analysis was defined as CA. For this research study, I planned to capture CA teachers' perceptions and gain an understanding based on the meanings which the teachers gave to the phenomenon.

Researcher's Role

In this qualitative case study, the responsibility for collecting and analyzing data was solely the role of the researcher. I had no previous experience working in a career academy, selecting students for the CA, or developing curriculum for the academy setting. As a special education teacher within the comprehensive high school where the SWS is housed, I serve students whose learning challenges do not

meet criteria for enrollment in CA. This is my 14th year as a special education teacher in the comprehensive high school. This is my 21st year as a special education teacher.

As a special education teacher, I do not have any interaction or have any authority over the teachers of CA. My professional relationship with the CA is that of a colleague rather than an administrator who has authority over the participants, and thus should not affect data collection.

Experiences and Biases Related to the Topic

In documenting and reflecting on my personal views and perspectives, I will use my reflection to be aware of how I interpret the data. As a parent whose children were gifted and talented students, I am an advocate for gifted and talented programs. Because the CA program is comprised of gifted and talented learners, I used my personal bias in a positive way reflecting on how I interpreted the data in light of my views. Throughout the interview process, journaling, and data analysis, I documented my possible personal biases and reactions. I continually reflected on all data sources to identify and account for my biases (Fischer, 2009; Probst & Berenson, 2014). Throughout the data analysis process, I continued to review the data to ensure that my personal biases were identified so that I could limit the influence of bias in the interpretation of the data.

Ethical Protection of the Participants

As the researcher, I followed protocols to ensure that the study was grounded on ethically sound practices and aligned with Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I began by receiving written permission from the school district

and high school principal (Appendix A) and Walden University's IRB (IRB #: 01-07-15-00031672) to conduct the study. All CA teachers qualified to participate in the study were sent an e-mail and informed consent forms requesting that they participate in the study (Appendix B). The informed consent forms included a description of the protections required by Walden University's IRB. Informed consent forms stated that participants could leave the study at any time for any reason without reprisal. Study participants were informed during their participation that they would not be subjected to any physical, mental discomfort, harm, or danger. The informed consent forms outlined the steps that were taken to protect individual confidentiality. Participants were assured that any information would be kept confidential. To safeguard the confidentiality of participants, I did not include in the narrative report any names, length of service, subject, program assignment, gender, or anything else that could identify the participants of the study.

To maintain privacy, all interviews were conducted at a location outside of the school after school hours so that others on staff did not know who was participating in the study. I transcribed all intereviews verbatim. Numbers were assigned to each participant to protect their identites. All data were stored on a password-protected personal computer and will be protected for a period of 5 years as required by IRB.

Research Context

This study was conducted at an urban public high school located in the northeastern region of the United States. The pseudonym for the local site will be Carraria Academe. During the year in which the study was cndcuetd, the total student

enrollment for Carraria Academe in Grades 9-12 was 485. The total student

enrollment for the comprehensive high school in Grades 9-12 was 584, and the public

high school was restructured in 2002 to settle a 16 year long desegregation lawsuit.

The restructured high school contained a selective career-oriented academy. The

career-oriented academy is housed in a separate building on the comprehensive high

school campus. The majority of teaching staff for Carraria Academe were recruited

from the existing county-wide career academies school system. Students attending

Carraria Academe are subject to a selection process. The Bordertown High School

had not consistently achieved legislated performance goals and had been labeled as an

underperforming school, with reported achievement gaps between student

populations.. This resulted in the high school being designated a "Focus School.".

The assigned label is also shared by Carraria Academe.

Participant Selection

Criterion sampling was used to select participants for this study. The teaching

staff of Carraria Academe comprises approximately one half of the teaching staff of

the whole school. Most of the teachers at the research site have experienced working

in a school-within-a-school. Carraria Academe teachers with at least five years'

experience at the research site were be recruited to participate in the study. Eight

teachers volunteered to participate and met the selection criteria for the study. Miles

and Huberman (1994) maintain that the selection of a sample is driven by the

conceptual construct of the research questions. Out of a sample pool of 30, eight

teachers who met the criteria volunteered to participate in study.

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews

The initial phase of data collection included procuring permission to access the teachers from the Superintendent of Schools and the school principal. After receiving permission from the Superintendent of Schools and the school principal, I sent recruitment invitations by email to potential participants. Included in the email was a copy of the consent form for the potential participants to review. Potential participants were contacted within one week of the email. When participants agreed to be included, either by email or signed consent forms sent via inter-office mail, I coordinated a time with each teacher participant to discuss the purpose of the study. I also discussed the assurance of participant confidentiality with the participants. I concluded with scheduling a time for conducting each interview. The interviews were conducted in a location outside of the school at a place convenient for the participant.

I used a digital recorder to record in-depth interviews following the interview protocol (Appendix C) with each participant. I also ensured that participants clarified any responses that were are not clear to me to confirm that individual experiences were captured fully. The interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The detail and rich context description is rooted in the Carraria Academe teachers' first hand experiences and was used to generate the information that I analyzed and synthesized (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seidman, 2012).

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is the cyclical process of organizing the

data, classifying the data, categorizing the data, searching for patterns in data, and

synthesizing the data. Stake (1995) described data analysis as the process of creating

meaning from raw data. Miles and Huberman's (1994) methods for analyzing data

was used to examine and report on the case in this research study. Data was analyzed

through a two-cycle process that included provisional coding and pattern coding.

Provisional Coding

Provisional coding started with a master list of codes generated by the

researcher prior to fieldwork. Codes were generated from the literature review and

conceptual framework to anticipate the codes that might appear in the data before

they were examined (Miles & Huberman, 1994). According to Miles and Huberman,

a "start list" (p. 58) can range from 12 to 50 codes. For this study, during Cycle 1, the

provisional coding method was used, as explained by Miles and Huberman, (1994) to

create a predetermined list of 15 to 30 codes derived from the conceptual framework

and the review of literature (Appendix D).

Pattern Coding

After completing the interviews, I transcribed the responses verbatim and

then examined all of the transcriptions to identify patterns. After each interview, I

coded the data from the transcribed interview responses. The pattern coding method

was used, as explained by Miles and Huberman (1994), to pinpoint emerging themes

and condense large quantities of data into smaller units. Pattern codes were derived from the participant interview data. Pattern codes are the explanatory codes that were developed from the provisional coded data. Pattern coding was conducted during Cycle 2 of the data analysis. The analysis was used during data collection to narrow the data related to the research question during fieldwork (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The process began with a review of the provisional codes from Cycle 1, so that codes were grouped according to similarity.

Next, the data was reviewed to assign pattern codes to emerging themes from the interview data. Third, the pattern codes were used to describe major themes from all data. For instance, I used a pattern code noting school autonomy (SA) as a theme to develop a statement that described this major theme or pattern of action. I continued to seek themes and categories that were consistent in the data. A search for holistic descriptions and themes was used to shed light on the case in order to connect themes and categories to the findings.

Hatch (2002) warned researchers to search through the data for any evidence that does not fit within the emergent themes. "The search for counter evidence is vital to any study … it's the researcher's obligation to be alert continually to disconfirming evidence throughout the analysis process" (p. 171). Patton (2002) stated a, "systematic search for alternative themes, divergent patterns, and rival explanation enhances credibility" (p. 553). For discrepant data that do not fit the codes, I acknowledged these codes and listed them as discrepant data in Section 4 as a part of my analysis of the data.

Narrative Report

In this qualitative case study research, a narrative report provided a detailed description about the relevant findings for each research question that were answered by participants in the study. Once I assembled all the raw case data, I wrote a case study narrative. Patton's (2002) process of constructing a case study narrative was used as a guide for writing the narrative report. First, I used the coded data from the interview transcripts that were used to address each research question to discuss the themes and the categories that emerged from the data. Then, I identified core consistencies by discussing the relationships among the themes in order to obtain meaning and to obtain information from the data to include in the narrative report. Finally, I completed the narrative report by writing a descriptive story about the case in order to provide the reader with the information that the reader will need to understand the case study.

Validity and Reliability

Establishing trustworthiness is crucial to developing a valid study (Patton, 2002). The findings of my study were made more valid and reliable through the use of coding/re-coding, reflexivity, and dense description (Creswell, 2007; Denscombe, 2009; Kreifting, 1991; Merriam, 2002, Stake, 2010). Corroboration of the information related to the findings was reached when these different strategies concur (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995).

Coding-Recoding

To increase the dependability of my study, I conducted code-recode procedure for data analysis. After coding segments of data, I recoded data and continually compared the data until saturation for themes had been accomplished (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Kreifting, 1991; Merriam, 2002). Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) referred to this process as elaborative coding. Coding and recoding also assisted in identifying any disconfirming cases within the study (Morrow, 2005).

Reflexivity

The second strategy that was used to ensure reliability and validity was reflexivity. This ensured correct interpretations of the interview data. Employing reflexivity in qualitative research requires researchers to continually assess their own background and interests throughout the collection and analysis of data. Kreifting (1991) noted that qualitative research positions the researcher, as not only interviewer but also as participant. Thus the researchers must analyze themselves in the context of the study. A method recommended is to keep a field journal of details regarding the setting, interviews, and personal memos throughout the study (Kreifting, 1991; Stake, 2010). Throughout the study I kept a field journal to describe the research process as I as I implemented it.

Dense Description

Throughout the course of the research study, I kept a detailed field journal which contains descriptions of the settings, interviews, personal memos, and comments about coding. Denzin (1989) stated" thick descriptions are deep, dense, detailed accounts…. Thin descriptions by contrast, lack detail, and simply report fact" (p. 83). Creswell and Miller (2000) added that providing dense descriptions provides the opportunity for readers to capture the essence of what the participants experienced.

Summary

In Section 3, I provided an introduction, explanation, and justification of the research design and restated the research questions. I explained (a) the context for the study, (b) my role as researcher, and (c) ethical considerations for gaining access to and selecting research participants. After providing a description of how the data was collected and a description of data analysis process, I explained the details of the narrative report. Section 4 consists of a presentation from findings based upon the analysis of data collected. Section 5 concludes the study with a discussion of the findings and recommendations for further research.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

SWS have not succeeded beyond 3 to 5 years (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Greenfield & Klemm, 2001; Lee & Ready, 2007; Raywid, 1995). The school in this study is a SWS. CA has maintained its longevity since its inception in 2002. It was not clear why CA has been a successful SWS. CA represents an anomaly. Data were collected from teachers of CA and analyzed to identify teachers' perceptions of this SWS's success. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) two cycle process of provisional coding and pattern coding. During Cycle 1, provisional coding began with a master list of codes derived from the conceptual framework and review of the literature (Appendix D). During Cycle 2, pattern coding methods were used to pinpoint emerging themes derived from the participant interview data. The themes that emerged were (a) leadership changes, (b) shifting vision, (c) loss of autonomy, and (d) structure. The emergent themes are embedded in the findings of the research questions.

Data Generation

In order to examine the perceptions of CA teachers regarding the success of their SWS and their resilience to remain at CA, all full-time CA teachers with at least 5 years of experience were invited to participate in the study. Eight teachers indicated their willingness to participate in the study. The participants were interviewed individually at a place outside of school and at time deemed convenient for the participants within 2 weeks of the receipt of signed consent forms.

An interview protocol (Appendix C) was used to focus each discussion and allow participants to offer detailed responses to the questions. Open-ended questions were used in order to allow participants' freedom for the responses they chose to make. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by me. Concurrent with the interviews, a research journal was kept for notes, memos, questions, reflections, and for checking participant responses to verify emerging themes or understandings.

Findings

During the process of analyzing the data of this case, I found that the participants responded to interview questions by comparing their expectations of teaching in CA when they were recruited to the realities that they encountered at CA in the present. Each of the participants of the study had experienced the influences of numerous changes in CA since its inception. The themes that emerged from the data were (a) leadership changes that have influenced policy changes, (b) shifting vision from a clear unified small learning community to a loosely amalgamated unit, (d) loss of teacher autonomy as a result of policy changes, and (d) self-directed structure of honors and advanced placement classes to limited honors and advanced placement assignments. The emergent themes are embedded within the research questions.

Findings of Research Question 1

How do CA teachers explain the success of their SWS?

CA has been able to continue for more than 12 years since its inception in 2002. The participants were asked to explain their perceptions of why this longevity

has been possible despite the research showing that SWS have not been sustained for a period longer than 3 to 5 years (Lee & Ready, 2007; Raywid, 1995).

Since the establishment of CA, the number of student applications has exceeded the number of available spaces. Each spring, CA begins the application process for incoming first-year students. The available spots number approximately 125 to 130, of which half are allocated for local students. The consistently high number of applications and limited space has made CA a desirable school of choice. Several reasons underlie this trend of a high level of applicants versus available spots. Participant 1 believed that it was due to the "core academies: information systems, finance, biomedicine, pre-engineering, and law and public safety… This is "what … is keeping us alive." Because acceptance to CA is highly selective, this has created an impression, for parents and students, of being special. Participant 5 felt it was because of the parents: "They don't want to send their kids to…the local traditional high school." Consequently, "the number of applications is outrageous, like 500 for about 100 spots" (Participant 5).

When the participants were pressed to further explain the apparent disparity between the volume of entrance applications and the availability of student seats, the belief of parental choice surfaced. Attending CA is not an automatic entry like a local high school. Resident students and out-of-district students must meet the entrance requirements. CA conducts interviews and orientation sessions for parents and students to ensure that there is an understanding of the school's expectations for students and parents. Because CA is a choice, students can be released to their home

district if they fail to maintain CA's academic requirements. Participant 6 expressed that strong parental buy-in exists when considering CA: "the fact that the parents buy-in is why they send their kids here."

CA draws at least half of the student enrollment from out of the district. The result of this inflow has changed the diversity of the entire campus. The greatest effect of this diversity was evident in the student population of CA. The nonresident students are from different cultures and traditions, which adds to the depth of the CA community. Drawing a portion of the student body from out of district has altered the ethnic diversity of the school. Prior to the establishment of CA in 2002, the ethnic distribution of the comprehensive high school was 91% Black and Hispanic (Education Law Center, 2015). The ethnic diversity of the combined school culture in 2013 was 74% Black and Hispanic (See Table 1). Teachers viewed the increased ethnic diversity as another reason for parental preference for CA. Because cultural diversity at CA is viewed by "the kids and the families… as an advantage," Participant 7 noted that they are "are interested in something more." And see it as "a greater [learning] opportunity" (Participant #6). Furthermore, from the time CA first opened, there has been a steady increase of Asian students attending. Participant 2 observed that "the fact that we have so many Asians, and the Asian culture is so respectful of education", this reinforced both their involvement and preference for CA.

Being a magnet for high achieving students has resulted in increased achievement scores. Acceptance into CA is based on evidence of students' academic

achievement through transcripts, an entrance exam, interviews, and a placement test.

Students begin their studies at an honors level, fashioned after international

baccalaureate, with an emphasis on advancing towards advance placement courses.

CA students have built a reputation for students being accepted to highly ranked

colleges. Participant 2 observed, "We're getting very good results… placement to big

[Stanford, Columbia, Princeton, Cornell]. Parents look at these results and continue to

be impressed and [want to] send their students here."

Table 1

Changes in Ethnic Diversity: Before and After Carraria Academe

	2000 - 2001 Bordertown High School	2012 – 2013 Bordertown High School with Carraria Academe
White	4%	10%
Black	61%	42%
Hispanic	30%	32%
Asian	1%	15%
Other	4%	1%

Note: Adapted from Education Law Center. (2015). Data and research: Enrollment by race/ethnicity by county, district, school and year. www.edlawcenter.org.

Parents intend to give their children every possible advantage when

considering college placements. CA has maintained a positive reputation with

colleges. Participants were excited to discuss the results of college acceptances CA

has been able to build since the inception of CA. Participants 3 and 5 noted that "we

get kids accepted to Princeton and Stanford practically every year." Participant 4

added "Columbia, which we use as part of the advertising we do when promoting

CA."

CA has continued to see a large number of applications for a limited number

of spots. Parental buy-in and staff buy-in has been a key component for sustaining

CA. The ethnic diversity of CA may also influence students and parents to apply to

CA. The parents have seen that CA has consistently prepared students for college as

evidenced by the placements of students in nationally known and competitive

colleges.

Findings of Research Question 2

What Have Been the Experiences of CA Teachers Working in a SWS?

In the process of instituting CA, █████████, the founder, set about to

create a learning community by actively recruiting teachers who would be engaged in

the process of forming a normative school culture that would define CA (Chance &

Chance, 2002).

Teachers recruited to work in Carraria Academe were invited to work in a

new school that was to be a separate school dedicated to Honors and Advanced

Placement classes. Participant 2 remarked that during the recruitment process, "I was

promised this would be a separate school and I would be teaching Honors classes".

Participant (8) was personally recruited by █████████ to, "to teach the most

advanced classes…college level courses… which is my area of expertise". With the

Carraria Academe administration and teaching staff in place, all were required to

attend an intensive summer training conference.

The summer conference was intended to institute the process of designing a learning community. Hord's (1997) model for a sustainable learning community was based on this essential framework of principles: (a) shared and supportive leadership, (b) supportive conditions of relationship and trust, (c) shared visions and values, (d) a supportive structure, and (e) a collective application of goals and vision. The enculturation of CA teachers during the summer conferences was designed to engage CA teachers in establishing expectations and standards for the CA school culture. The curriculum for Carraria Academe was written by the teaching staff during this conference. "Dr. Goodstone wanted to create a certain culture with CA. We were to be our own learning community. This kept us focused so we could develop, nurture, and sustain our 'Academy Way', as we named it", recounted Participant 7. During this summer conference, teachers were provided guidance in the pedagogy for honors classes, which was fashioned after the International Baccalaureate diploma program. "This is where we built CA standards", said Participant 4. The summer conference provided an exceptional opportunity to promote a unified learning community dedicated to the same mission. From the very beginning stages of Carraria Academe, the teaching staff and administration constructed a vision and mission for this new school. The process of enculturation held another benefit for CA teachers, a deep sense of autonomy for the school was cultivated. Participant 7 claimed, "It was pretty heady being a part of this incredible new school and we're all working together to make it happen".

To be successful as a teacher at Carraria Academe, it was necessary to take ownership of that vision of Carraria Academe. Engaging in this development cultivated a sense of identity for the new school. The school culture that evolved was a source pride for CA teachers. Strike (2004) asserted that such engagement creates a school ethos that is firmly grounded in the vision and mission. This shared pursuit of a common vision provided CA teachers with the opportunity to become a unique learning community.

During the conference CA teachers developed the school's Honors and AP curriculum. The school day for CA would be longer than the comprehensive high school. CA classes were scheduled for 60 minute intervals which, too, was longer than the length of the comprehensive high school's courses. CA had their own principal who was instrumental in creating the collaborative organizational structure of their learning community.

The source of pride, traditions, and autonomy being formed at the early stages were later challenged as leadership changed in the district. The foundation of CA's enculturation process was put to a serious test the very first year Carraria Academe opened. Students from the comprehensive high school showed their dislike for CA by attempting to disrupt CA classes. Participant (1) remarked "[students] from the comprehensive high school would cross the campus and try to open my door and… interrupt my class yell obscenities at me and my students." Adding to understanding the initial opening of CA, Participant 6 believed that "the local community felt that…CA had gotten an unfair share of resources."

Preparing to ready CA for its opening, state funds were provided to upgrade the building CA would occupy and supply this new school with computers, books and supplies. There was community displeasure towards Carraria Academe. Participant 6 remarked, "…mostly because the local community… thought that CA had gotten an unfair share of resources".

A point taken from my research notes indicated that the initial funds for CA were provided by the State and not from the local district's funds, and that 50% of CA enrollment was from the local community. The Superintendent and the administrative team worked diligently to bear the pressure for CA and move the school forward. "The influence ███████████ had with the Board of Education ensured that CA would survive the initial clamor", claimed Participant 4. The difficulties Carraria Academe experienced during in the first year were observed in prior studies of school-within-schools conducted by Lee and Ready (2007) and Raywid (1995, 1996). The administrative team and CA teachers were determined to press on with the full support of the Administration and the Board of Education.

In year two, as planned, Carraria Academe added a new class of freshmen growing to approximately 200 students. The process of enculturation created a learning community determined to succeed. As the fourth year began for CA, the assistant superintendent assumed the superintendent position, and the principal of CA, was assigned principal's duties for both CA and the comprehensive high school. The district and the high school underwent a series of leadership changes over the next 6 years.

The series of changes for Carraria Academe began when their principal assumed responsibilities for both campuses. The principal was instrumental in the summer conferences. The Board of Education decided to terminate the summer conferences and to merge the daily schedules for both campuses. The daily schedules for both programs were merged, thus eliminating CA's 60 minute classes. Reaction from CA teachers was not positive. "Combining schedules required us to add days" and with only 47 minutes, "our classes" slowly eroded down,' where we cram [med in] as much as we could", stated Participant 6. Participant 1 remarked that the "fiddling with schedules" may have been because, "there was a perception of elitism on the part of the other high school teachers" since" we were project based."

As the schedules merged the class assignments for some of the CA teachers began to be modified to include classes with comprehensive high school students. The scheduling moves were instituted without any input from CA staff. The merging schedules and classes was disruptive for the CA learning community. "I was recruited to teach the most advance classes [yet] I was [now] assigned to teach remedial classes for comprehensive high school students," stated Participant 7. "When you plunk a student in a class with an honors teacher without teaching the [honors]teacher that you've got to teach a different way to this student, you have set everybody up for failure," stated Participant 5.

To accomplish the schedule modifications, honors classes previously designated to CA were assigned to teachers in the comprehensive high school. CA teachers perceived the assignment of honors classes to the comprehensive high school

as a challenge to the vision and structure of the CA learning community. The honors curricula were designed by CA teachers during the summer conferences where they were provided guidance in the pedagogy for honors classes. Participant 3 questioned the reasoning for the change "…there's no recognition on the part of [current] administration… how we developed the curriculum standards for the honors courses …nor who trained them [comprehensive high teachers] in our honors pedagogy?"

The greatest area of concern expressed by the participants was the number of leadership changes. Beginning with the first year of Carraria Academe (2002) and the present (2014) there have been five district superintendents. CA initially had their own principal who was instrumental in creating the collaborative organizational structure of their learning community. Then that principal was assigned the additional responsibility of both campuses. As explained by Participant 7, "When ▉▉▉▉▉▉ became principal of both [campuses], he was too busy to give us any guidance".

▉▉▉▉▉▉▉, Superintendent, and ▉▉▉▉▉▉ Principal, served the district until 2007, when they retired. Since 2007, there has been three new Superintendents and three new principals. Each time there was a leadership change, CA was challenged to explain the school-within-a-school plan. Despite the leadership turnover, Carraria Academe survived,   still receiving more entrance applications than available seats. Responding to the turnover of leadership at both the district and school level, Participant 5 remarked, "[since CA began] I've have had five superintendents… and nine principals. I mean that's insane". Another participant (Participant 4) chuckled, "just for fun I used to keep a chart on my wall. Each time I

had a new principal I would cross out a name, and crossed it out and crossed it out…I threw out the chart". The series of leadership changes has affected the morale of CA teachers. The effect of these changes was summed up by Participant 3, "…we managed to maintain while ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ was still on campus and after [he retired] morale got really, really low".

The style of management noted by Participants 3 and 5 when ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ was principal of only CA, "…, we had a lot of input. We were involved in solving issues for the school [CA]." When ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ retired, the new Superintendent exercised a top down management style. This change in leadership style was an abrupt change for CA teachers who needed to adjust. Participant 1 remarked "We had a lot of say in how we would run things. Now …we don't." In discussing the series of changes, Participant 4 said "hey now it's up to us to maintain…to find a way to make this work."

The overall impact for Carraria Academe as a learning community is beginning to display a complacency with the changes in leadership. CA teachers perceived the leadership changes as a challenge to the learning community they had collaboratly built.   CA teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the loss of their inclusion in decision making. Because CA teachers had structured Carraria Academe on the premise of collaborative leadership, the general consensus of CA teachers is a loss of autonomy. Diminishing the autonomy of their learning community has weakened the commitment of CA teachers to fully devote allegiance to leadership.

The perceptions of CA teachers is that there currently is little appreciation or understanding of the values, vision, and goals that Carraria Academe was intended to accomplish. Remarks of participants concerning the vision for CA also showed a great deal of frustration. "I used to be a part of this greater team, now I just run a program", said Participant 7. Participant 8 stated,, "there is no clear vision for CA expressed by administration." When questioned for further explanation Participant 6 responded, "there is no respect for the core faculty that was recruited to implement the school plan…there is a disinterest by administration". Carraria Academe was planned as a small learning community with teachers who were recruited to implement a vision. The perception of the loss of autonomy was expressed by Participant 4, "we were a small learning community in the purest sense…now we are a traditional high school with a lot of programs", because, "of the merged schedules and teacher assignments."

Considering the myriad of changes in Carraria Academe, participants were asked to think about their perceptions for the future of Carraria Academe. The overall consensus of the participants was dispirited. "My concern is that the standards we worked so hard on [in the summer conferences] will be diminished", stated Participant 2. Another participant (1) lamented,"…things have changed and morphed and….that's the reality."

However, there were several participants who held a positive perspective about the future of CA. These participants noted that the continued success of CA was demonstrated by the high number of applications and parental support .

Responding to the negativity of all the changes Participant 5 said, "I'm not certain that's really accurate…sometimes negative voices are louder that those who are positive. We've been very successful and probably will be for long time." Participant 3 remarked, "I think it's going to be around because …. [many parents] want a program like this for their children". While Participant (4) stated, "what CA has become is the vision that … administrators are most comfortable with…a traditional high school. We're still successful… so CA will be around awhile."

The teaching staff for Carraria Academe collaborated to organize a school that was to be college major oriented and to produce an entire honors and advanced placement curriculum. Initially, Carraria Academe staff were recruited to create a small learning community based on a school vision and mission developed by the staff in partnership with leadership. Over time, the implementation of the CA program was tested by district policy changes that merged the CA program and teachers with the comprehensive high school program. In part this change altered what was perceived as the original school-within-a-school vision. However, because of its enduring popularity, the CA school continued to be a successful academic alternative to the comprehensive high school. In the Section 4 the apparent reasons for this enduring success will be discussed.

Findings of Research Question 3

What Are Carraria Academe Teachers' Perceptions of their Continued Desire to Work in a School-Within-A-School?

Sustaining change requires the need to persevere when critical events occur. Despite the changes in leadership since the beginning of CA, the staff of CA has remained relatively stable. Although the influence of leadership weighs heavily on teacher commitment to a school, Carraria Academe has not undergone a large turnover of teaching staff. Resilience is an essential element in sustaining educational change, which CA teachers have shown.

The participants interviewed stated a number of reasons why they have considered remaining at Carraria Academe. From the beginning of CA in 2002 to the present, the turnover rate of CA teachers has been low. Teachers have left Carraria Academe; however, most of those who left did so because of retirements. The study participants have seen CA grow from its first incoming class of 100 students to the present enrollment of approximately 495 students.

Since CA is a Choice School, students are selected from a large pool of applicants. CA teachers had mentioned that a reason for staying is the demographic makeup of the out-of-district students. The designation of the school as a Choice school allows Carraria Academe to attract students who have displayed strong academic achievement. Participant 2 expressed this point, "When you see CA classes you know the classes will be well behaved and respectful, for the most part. You don't get difficult behaving kids". The pride in having a history that draws a steady flow of interest to enter CA showed in the comment that Participant 4 made, "the thing I can point to is that the number of applications we get every year keeps going up…because we have returning families…who send their kids to CA."

The selective entrance process also presents the opportunity to shape an academic learning environment. Participant (7) remarked that remaining at CA is due in part to being able to build a more diverse inclusive school culture that extended beyond the local community. Participant 6 stated, "What we've done by bringing…good students from out of district to fill out half of each entering class has made it so that we have continued to build a culture of success". Adding to the positive point of wanting to stay at CA Participant 2 noted, "…we have the advantage in CA of a culture that understands that… the kids and families can take further advantage of a great opportunity". Parental support is evident when choosing Carraria Academe. Because attending CA is a choice, parents and students are aware of the expectations of CA. "Because we choose you, you choose us… the fact that you buy in and you send your kid to us," claimed Participant 1. Parental support is very strong at CA, although the level of parental involvement has proven to be overwhelming on occasion. "Oh… there's hyper-vigilance on the part…of the parents, sometimes…because the parents are always attentive to their kids' achievement", exclaimed Participant 3. The opportunity to expect more from students is received well from the parents and students. "I can expect more from my kids. I can give them something to do and not have to watch over them to make sure they are doing it, well, most of them" stated Participant 5. CA teachers appreciate the level of parental support. This level of support is seen in the number of families that encouraged all of the siblings to attend CA.

The reputation over the past twelve years of Carraria Academe has provided a stream of students who recommend CA to friends and families. "Because we have returning families, relatives and neighbors show strong interest is Carraria Academe" Participant 6. "…it is the legacy kids. We have a lot of friends of kids who have come here and maybe the other districts aren't so strong. For, instance we have one entire family of siblings…everybody from one family", proudly stated Participant 4. The pride in the reputation of CA has also been noted by the participantswho refered to the number of applications that regularly exceed the number of available spots.

This reputation is supported by the fact that yearly applications exceed the available spots. "Well the way the admissions registrar speaks about it, there are 350 to 400 new applications," for approximately 125 slots stated Participant 6. "College acceptances regularly show strong results, with students receiving entry to colleges like Columbia, Princeton, Stanford, Carnegie Mellon not to mention the available regional colleges and universities", said Participant 7. "Parents know that we are able to place students pretty well in colleges....and parents look at results and …continue to be impressed. Many of the students we get come from towns either where there is not much opportunity or we have a better school", responded Participant 2.

There are reasons that CA teachers remain, but this low rate of turnover is not to be taken for granted.. One participant who has remained at Carraria Academe, Participant 8, remarked, " [the reason they stay,] "is because the pros outweigh the cons… right now''. Throughout the interview process, participants spoke of their disappointment with changes in the program.

Carraria Academe has undergone a series of leadership changes since the beginning of the third year. In the course of these changes, CA has nevertheless sustained a strong reputation that attracts large numbers of students. Throughout the years CA teachers perceive that their value to the district has been diminished. Since, "administration stopped defining a CA teacher [as only honors teachers] about six years ago…in the minds of CA teachers they diminished our status as CA teachers", expressed Participant 2. The many school leadership changes has steadily eroded teacher's confidence in the mission CA teachers had been recruited for. The changes in leadership has led some CA teachers to question the support for Carraria Academe. Participant (4) asserted, "…we don't have the fight we once had…we don't to lose that… I think there's an underlying fear that could happen". Participant 6 added "there's little support [from administration] and also less criticism… so we feel like we are in limbo." Participant (8) commented that the influence of policy changes, "Carraria Academe has strayed …from the initial expectations we had." When pressed to further explain why a teacher might stay, participants expressed that it is difficult to leave something they have invested so much in. Participant 7 added, "…because I always felt that Carraria Academe is my child and I really do not want to leave."

The signs of staff frustration are beginning to become evident. CA teachers have expressed that their perceived loss of autonomy in matters of curriculum and inclusion in school based decisions are key components in their job satisfaction and commitment to the school. Several participants took issue with the negativity

surrounding CA and contended, "sometimes the noise is louder than the issue" (Participant 3). Participant 5 said, "we need to rephrase the narrative and speak to the strengths of CA and modernize our brand."

Discrepant Cases and Non-confirming Data

Throughout this study participant Carraria Academe teachers described their experiences of working in a school-within-a-school. In spite of the organizational changes that took place over time, participants expressed their understanding of why Carraria Academe remains in the district. The overall consensus of participant interviews reveals that Carraria Academe has been successful in attracting high achieving students from outside the local district because parental buy-in and staff buy-in has been a key component for sustaining CA. Two of the participants disagreed with the other six participants about the reasons for the district continuing CA. Participant 5 and 6 stated CA the only reason it would continue it is that is "was cash cow" and brought in additional money to the district.

Evidence of Quality

Establishing evidence of quality is crucial to developing a valid study (Patton, 2002). The findings were subjected to coding/re-coding, reflexivity, and dense description to ensure reliability and validity of the study's findings (Creswell, 2007; Kreifting, 1991; Merriam, 2002, Stake, 2010). Corroboration of the information related to the findings was reached as these different strategies reached saturation (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995, 2010).

Coding-Recoding

To increase the evidence of quality of my study I conducted code-recode procedures for data analysis. After coding segments of data, I recoded data and continually compared the data until saturation for themes had been accomplished (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Kreifting, 1991; Merriam, 2002). Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) referred to this process as elaborative coding. Stake (2010) emphasized the organization of data collected so that data may be subjected to continual review and recoding. Coding and recoding also assisted in identifying any disconfirming cases within the study (Morrow, 2005).

Reflexivity

The second strategy that was used to ensure evidence of quality was reflexivity. This ensured correct interpretations of the interview data. Kreifting (1991) noted that qualitative research positions the researcher, as not only interviewer but also as participant; thus the researchers must analyze themselves in the context of the study. Employing reflexivity in qualitative research requires researchers to continually assess their own background and interests throughout the collection and analysis of data through memos, notes and coding information for each interview throughout the study (Kreifting, 1991; Stake, 2010). The field journal also assisted in providing dense descriptions of the research process throughout. (Appendices E and F).

Dense Description

Throughout the course of the research study I recorded notes for each interview, personal memos, and comments about coding in my research journal. Denzin (1989) stated," thick descriptions are deep, dense, detailed accounts…. Thin descriptions by contrast, lack detail, and simply report fact" (p. 83). Creswell and Miller (2000) added that providing dense descriptions provides the opportunity for readers to capture the essence of what the participants experienced.

Summary

From the results of the interviews, the researcher drew several conclusions. Carraria Academe teachers have a positive perception of the longevity of their school-within-a-school. CA teachers perceived that the consistently large number of entrance applications was due to the high demand by parents to have the choice between a career oriented academy and a traditional high school curriculum. The offerings of Bio-Medicine, Pre-engineering, Information Technology, Law and Public Safety, and Finance are appealing career prospects. The process of selectivity provides the opportunity to attract families that are willing to actively support the school.

Another reason for CA's longevity is because of CA's history of college placements. Each year, students from CA are accepted to premiere named universities and colleges. Students and parents choose to enter Carraria Academe to provide a perceived advantage in the college application process.

The diversity of the campus has provided another dimension to the image of CA as a well-rounded learning environment. Within CA there has been an increase in

Asian families who seek diverse and challenging schools for their children. The inflow of non-resident student achievement results and college placements of CA has attracted different ethnic groups which has added some balance to a school that was 91% Black and Hispanic to 62% Black and Hispanic and 25%, and 13% Asian and White.

Coding interview data revealed that CA teachers had extremely positive experiences during the first three to four years of CA's existence. Carraria Academe teachers were recruited to begin a new school. The teachers were required to attend summer conferences where they would collaborate on the standards, curriculum, structure and vision for Carraria Academe. The summer conferences provided the opportunity to build a unified learning community dedicated to the vision they created.

The changes in leadership in year 3 began to shape the negative perceptions of Carraria Academe teachers. The participants expressed a deep loss of autonomy, shifting values and vision, and changes in the structure of their school-within-a-school. Since the third year of Carraria Academe, leadership has changed numerous times at both Central Administration and the high school. The merging of principal duties diminished CA teachers' autonomy. The learning community CA teachers collaboratively built was challenged with each successive change in leadership. The experiences of Carraria Academe teachers has led to perceptions that is little appreciation or understanding of the values, vision, and goals that Carraria Academe was created for. However, because of its history of entrance applications outpacing

the availability of student spaces, Carraria Academe continues to be a successful school of choice.

Interview data revealed that Carraria Academe teachers remain committed to the learning community they had collaborated to establish. Carraria Academe teachers expressed that parental support is very strong. CA teachers are proud of the continued numbers of entrance applications that exceed availability. Furthermore, CA teachers perceive the college placement history of their students as supporting their vision. The challenges posed because of leadership changes have had a negative impact on teachers. However, CA teachers remain committed to the learning community they built at the beginning of Carraria Academe.

Carraria Academe, a school-within-a-school, has been in existence for 12 years. In this time CA teachers enjoyed the experience of building a learning community that attracted high achieving students from a broad geographic area. CA teachers are wholly invested in the learning community they built 12 years ago even in the face of numerous changes.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the anomaly of a successful secondary SWS program that has been in operation for more than 12 years. I investigated teachers' perceptions of working in this alternative learning environment and sought to understand their resilience in confronting the ongoing challenges to the program. This section contains a summary of the perceptions of teachers at CA who have experienced working in a SWS for more than 5 years. I also present the interpretation of the research findings, conclusion, implications for social change, and recommendations of the researcher.

Interpretation of Findings

Interpretation of the Section 4 findings on the SWS case can be framed by relating the findings to the research studies discussed in the review of the literature. Three conclusions were derived from an analysis of the data. Teachers at CA claimed to have a positive perception of the success of CA believing that the selective entrance process attracted high achieving students from outside of the district. CA teachers perceived that parental support for CA has led to consistently high numbers of applications which exceed the availability of seats and affirm the value of CA as a learning community. It is also apparent from the data that CA has created a socially cohesive learning community that has positively influenced the local community and their commitment to the CA program (Strike, 2004; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009).

Many CA teachers viewed the implementation of the school's program in largely positive terms, yet felt that the series of leadership changes experienced by the school adversely affected that implementation.The experiences and views of the teachers reflects Fullan's (2007) three stage model for sustaining educational change. The manner in which the stages of initiation and implementation are put into practice determines how well the change initiative will progress (Fullan, 2007). CA staff were recruited and were committed to a small learning community. The initiation stage of change for CA was designed as a collaborative process carried out through summer conferences for CA staff. During the summer conferences, CA teachers and administration collaborated to produce a common school mission which resulted in (a) shared and supportive leadership, (b) supportive conditions of relationship, (c) shared vision and values, (d) a supportive structure, and (e) a collective perception of goals and visions for CA (Hord, 1997). During the implementation stage, the teaching staff and administration of CA partnered to produce an entire honors and advanced placement curriculum, which reinforced the collaborative learning community and school culture developed during the summer conferences (Strike, 2004).

Since the loss of the school's founder, a series of leadership changes have impacted the perceptions of CA teachers. Changes in superintendents and the merging of the school principals' responsibilities challenged the source of CA teachers' pride and autonomy in guiding CA. Over time, CA teacher came to believe that there was little appreciation or understanding of the values, vision, or goals that CA was founded on by the district and the school leadership. Changes initiated by the district

administration to the CA program were seen by CA teachers as merely expedient and did not have their buy in, which resulted in the loss of goodwill and trust of by the CA community (Harris, 2011).

In studies conducted by Raywid (1995) and Lee and Ready (2007) of SWS, the perceived loss of autonomy and diminished value by leadership were identified as critical factors responsible for the lack of success for SWS programs. These factors became evident early in the implementation stages of the SWS initiative, after a period of about 3 to 5 years, and caused the SWS program initiative to flounder.

The conclusion of this study, which is supported by the literature on school change, is that the significance of the initiation and implementation phases in the making of this SWS program was critical to its success. In the initiation phase, CA teachers and leadership collaborated to form a socially cohesive identity as a learning community. However, that identity was tested as the implementation of the CA program was first initiated (Fullan, 2007; Hord, 1997; Strike, 2004). Yet, the SWS academy persisted and was successful. From the standpoint of the literature on SWS initiatives, its continued success is an anomaly (Lee & Ready, 2007; Raywid, 1995).

The partcipants indicated that CA did not undergo a wholesale turnover in staff even in the face of the series of leadership changes. CA teachers expressed that it was difficult to leave because of how much they remained invested in the mission of CA.

The success of this SWS continues to rest on the strength of the educators' attentiveness to this mission formed during the school's initiation and founding; this

mission was retained over a decade of program implementation. Mutual trust occurs in a learning community when the opportunity to "shape a shared culture in which teachers can develop common understandings of goals, methods of teaching attend common solutions" (Chang & Kong, 2012, p. 265). CA teachers were afforded an opportunity to form a shared culture when starting CA.

Sustaining educational change requires the collaboration of school leadership and the teachers involved (Fullan, 2007). Consistency in leadership is critical to implementing the vision and goals of the intended change (Florian, 2000). Raywid (1995) and Lee and Ready (2007) showed that recurring changes in SWS programs were prevalent. Lee and Ready stated that SWSs "were morphing back to comprehensive high schools" (p. 165) due to repeated leadership changes. The frequent leadership changes experienced by CA teachers tended to erode the program's original autonomy as a SWS academy, especially in matters of curriculum and the inclusion of teaching staff in school-based curricular decisions. Saad (2010) and Petty et al. (2012) asserted this kind of staff involvement is essential in teacher satisfaction and commitment to a school. Further, district leadership attempts to restructure proven program practices diminished CA teacher commitment and instilled in them a sense of mistrust. School leadership's lack of engagement and commitment to CA teachers' identity and mission as a learning community were viewed as administratively expedient and resulted in the loss of goodwill in the CA community (Coleman, 2012; Harris, 2011). In the face of these on-going disruptions the CA, community remained resilient (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Taylor, 2013).

Several key studies provided a framework to understand the anomaly of CA as an educational change initiative (Fullan, 2007; Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Greenfield & Klemm, 2001; Lee & Ready, 2007; Raywid, 1995). CA follows Fullan's (2007) three stages of development; however, I found that continuation of the SWS initiative became problematic with leadership changes in the school and district and the merger of the curriculum and teaching staff with the comprehensive high school.

Giles and Hargreaves (2006) contributed to understanding Fullan's (2007) three stage model of educational change by describing the forces working against the sustainability of innovative school programs and the factors that support teacher resilience (p. 125). The addition of a new school within an existing school can challenge the existing values, resources, and traditions of the host school and "create animosity and resistance" (Fullan, 2007, p.125). "Second, innovative schools seem to possess a predictable evolutionary lifespan" which follows Fullan's three stages, but over time leads to a trend of degradation (Fullan, 2007, p. 125). Finally, sustainable implementation and continuation of innovative school change is weakened by "historical critical incidents or changes in the external contexts," such as the changes in school leadership, teaching staff, and curriculum described in Section 4 (Fullan, 2007, p. 125). Of equal importance are the factors which Giles and Hargreaves (2006) described that contribute to sustainability and resilience and that may explain the anomaly of CA's survival as a SWS. In examining several innovative school initiatives, Giles and Hargreaves found that schools which created "a self-conscious

identity as a learning organization and professional learning community" had a better chance "to offset the forces that threaten . . . sustainability" (p. 151-152).

Like Giles and Hargreaves (2006), Raywid (1995) emphasized "context-centered explanations" to understand why schools within schools become "unworkable" (p. 110). Similarly, Greenfield and Klemm (2001) questioned why a "seemingly successful" SWS initiative "began to fall apart" (2001, p. 2). Like Raywid (1995) they conducted an intensive case study of a high school SWS by examining the "advantages" and disadvantages" of the evolving program. They posed three questions about the "conditions" which led to its failure, and concluded that these questions could be "addressed by reviewing the program's history within the context of the research on change efforts" (Greenfield & Klemm, 2001 p. 19). Greenfield and Klemm confirmed "the importance of teacher inclusion" in the change process made it possible for a SWS to commence. However, sustaining a SWS requires "the maintenance of open lines of communication" between teachers and administrators, and school leaders "need to be acutely aware of the possible consequences of shifting the goals of a program once it is underway," but in their study were not (p. 21-22).

 Examined within the context of the published SWS literature, Carraria Academe's twelve year history reflects the strengths and shortcomings of this alternative model as found in these research studies.

Conclusion

Given the above discussion, I have to conclude that Carraria Academe presents an anomaly for the school-within-a-school literature on educational change.

Typically, research has shown that school-within-school initiatives do not tend to last beyond three to five years. CA has flourished for more than 12 years. Carraria Academe is an approved school of choice which offers out of district students the chance to attend without any expense. The process to be admitted to Carraria Academe is selective, and the high number of applications and limited space has made CA a desirable school of choice. CA teachers believe this accomplishment is a result of their commitment to the values and vision of the school. CA teachers appreciate the level of parental support. This level of support is seen in the number of families that encouraged all of their siblings to attend CA. The strong parental buy-in for considering Carraria Academe as a high school of choice has been a key component for sustaining the CA school community. Teachers remain at CA because they have a continuing investment in the school's mission and culture, which rests on the foundation of Carraria Academe's initiation by the original school leaders and founders.

Another way Carraria Academe presents an anomaly is the resilience CA teachers have demonstrated throughout the numerous leadership changes. A stable and invested leadership are critical to maintaining teacher commitment and teacher satisfaction. The turnover rate for the teachers at Carraria Academe has been very low. The designation as an approved Choice school (Inter-District Public School Choice Program, 2010) allows Carraria Academe to attract students who have displayed strong academic achievement. The selective entrance process also produces the opportunity to shape a learning environment. Teachers remain because they still

have opportunity to maintain and develop the school's culture. However, the frequency of leadership changes has significantly affected how CA operates. CA teachers perceive that there is little support by district and school leadership.

The resilience exhibited by CA teachers has provided the foundation for the longevity of Carraria Academe. Sustaining educational change requires collaboration of the stakeholders responsible for implementing change initiatives (Fullan, 2009, Good & McCaslin, 2008). CA will need to move beyond resting on past accomplishments and take an activist approach to renew its collaborative learning community model wherein vision and goals can regain an ownership by CA teachers and ensure continued longevity and a successful change initiative.

Implications for Social Change

This research study may add new knowledge useful for teacher, school leadership, policymakers, and other educational researchers who are seeking to further understand the critical factors that sustain educational change initiatives, in this case for school-within-a-school programs. Fullan (2007) stated that a critical dilemma for sustaining educational change initiatives is often because top-down administration fails to gain commitment and ownership from the members of the learning community who are to implement and sustain the change. From a broader perspective, the results of this study underscore the importance of understanding how implementation depends on the collaboration of teachers and school leadership.

Recommendations for Action

The leading insight taken from this study affirms that collaboration is critical to the process of instituting education change. When teachers perceive they are supported and respected by their administration and colleagues they are eager to commit themselves to a school's vision and goals. Committed teachers will undertake an active leadership role to advance this vision for the entire school community. It is this kind of support that can create a successful school-within-a-school learning environment.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study did not include four additional areas that should be considered for further research: perceptions of district and school leadership, perceptions of teachers of the host school for SWS, perceptions of parents, and perceptions of students. Sustaining educational change requires collaboration of all stakeholders (Fullan, 2007, Harris 2011). Further examination with regard to educational change initiatives through the lens of district and school leadership, teachers of a host SWS, parents, and students are necessary and recommended to the capture a full picture of the case.

District leadership guides the overall strategic planning for the schools while school leadership focuses and directs the character of a school (Elmore, 2007; Florian, 2000). District and school leadership can generate buy-in for teachers, parents, and students for change (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). Further study from

the perspective of district and school leadership concerning initiation and implementation strategies that lead to sustainable change is needed (Fullan, 2007).

Additional examination of the perspective of parents and students in the educational change is necessary. Since parents and students are the significant recipients of change, understanding parental and student perspectives of their confidence and support for educational change initiatives would add to the literature for sustaining educational change.

Examining the perspectives of teachers of a host school for SWS is needed to better understand how to sustain change initiatives (Raywid, 1995; Lee & Ready, 2007). Further study of the conditions that will instill a traditional school to engage in change initiatives, especially with the school-within-a-school paradigm could make available unlimited possibilities for sustaining educational change.

Final Summary

This study examined the anomaly of a successful school-within-a-school. The study investigated teachers' perceptions of working in this alternative learning environment, and their resilience in confronting the ongoing challenges to the program. Specific suggestions for improving a school-within-a-school were given. All data were gathered from teachers who have taught in theSWS for a minimum of five years, so that the suggestions given may be easily applied in other school situations.

The success of Carraria Academe continues to rest on the strength of teachers' attentiveness to the mission formed during the school's initiation and founding and

retained over a decade of program implementation. Since this educational change initiative has continued to be successful, the implication of collaborative implementation found in this study is crucial to school leaders who seek to lead productive and successful learning communities.

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Appendix A: Letters of Cooperation

Interim Superintendent of Schools

Date

Dear Edward Meidhof,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled <u>Teacher Perceptions about Sustaining a Successful School-within-a-School</u> within the Dwight Morrow/Academies@Englewood High School. As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit participants, collect data via confidential personal interviews and disseminate the results. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization will have no responsibility to provide any facilities or services to conduct interviews. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting. I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Office of Principal

Date

Dear Edward Meidhof,

Based on the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled <u>Teacher Perceptions about Sustaining a Successful School-within-a-School</u> within the Dwight Morrow/Academies@Englewood High School. As part of this study, I understand that you will recruit participants, collect data via confidential personal interviews and disseminate the results. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

I understand that you will not to use school facilities to conduct interviews. I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Principal

Appendix B: Letter of Consent

Consent Form
Personal Interview

You are invited to take part in a research study of teacher perceptions in a school-within-a-school. The researcher is inviting only full-time academy teachers to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named <u>Edward Meidhof</u>, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as special education teacher in the comprehensive high school, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences and resilience of teachers working in a Choice school which is within the framework of a comprehensive high school.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- You will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately 45-60 minutes.
- You may be contacted for a focus group interview lasting approximately 45 minutes.

Here are some sample questions:

- What are your thoughts on how the designation as a "Focus School" impacts your professional image?

- Can you describe your experiences as a teacher in Choice school program housed within a comprehensive high school?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at the academies will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress of becoming upset. Being in this study would pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The potential benefits of being in this study include the opportunity to contribute to positive social change by adding to the current scholarly knowledge on school organizational structures, and policies and the impact on teachers. Your participation in this study will assist the researcher in exploring the potential of teacher collective efficacy in building a viable school culture.

Payment:

There is no payment for participation in this study.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name, length of service, subject or program assignment, gender or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. All interviews will be transcribed verbatim and saved in a password protected file on the researcher's home computer. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the research via email: cell phone 973-981-1179 or email edward.meidhof@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her telephone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 01-07-15-0031672 and it expires 01-06-15.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form for you to keep.

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed name of participant   _____

Date of consent   _____

Participant's signature   _____

Researcher's Name: Edward F. Meidhof

Researcher's signature   _____

Include a copy of your curriculum vitae—your academic resume—here. The

CV may be done in either basic outline form or full-sentence form. The CV must

conform to the margin specifications of the rest of the document, be included in the

pagination, and be listed in the TOC.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

1) Why was the Choice school program created within the comprehensive high school?

2) How has the Choice school program affected the public perception of the whole school?

3) In what ways, if any, has the Choice school program influenced the diversity of the school?

4) Describe what a "Focus School" is.

5) How has the designation of being listed as a "Focus School" affected you personally?

6) How has the designation of being listed as a "Focus School" affected you professionally?

7) Describe your experiences as a teacher in the Choice school program?

8) What are the advantages of being a teacher in the Choice school program?

9) What are the disadvantages of being a teacher in the Choice school program?

10) What are your concerns about the future of the Choice school program?

11) How would you explain the success of Carraria Academe?

Appendix D: Provisional Master Coding List

Sustaining Educational Change	**SEC**	**RQ/IP**
Sec Initiation	Sec-In	2.7
Sec Implementation	Sec-Imp	2.1
Sec Continuation	Sec-Cont	1.11
Sec Competition between Schools	Sec-Comp	2.2
Sec Historical cycle of change	Sec-cylchng	2.4,2.5,2.6
Sec Historically critical incidents	Sec- critin 1	1.1, 2.7

Shared and supportive leadership	**SSL**	
Ssl Teacher perceptions of school organization 1.1,1.11,2.4,3.3,3.9	Ssl-org.tp	
Ssl Top down vs bottom up	Ssl-tpdwn	2.7
Ssl Administration – teacher perceptions	Ssl-Adm.tp	2.7
Ssl Central administration – teacher perceptions	Ssl-CA.tp	2.7
Ssl Board of Education – teacher perceptions	Ssl-BOE.tp	2.2, 3.3

Supportive conditions – relationships and trust	**SCRT**	
Scrt Curriculum	Scrt-curr	1.1, 3.3
Scrt Collaborative community support	Scrt-comm.spt	2.2, 3.3
Scrt Teacher commitment	Scrt-tc	3.8, 3.9
Scrt Teacher resilience	Scrt-tr	3.3, 3.9, 3.9
Scrt Coherence	Scrt-Coh	2.2, 2.4, 3.3
Scrt Cohesion	Scrt-chsn	2.4, 2.5, 2.6
Scrt Care	Scrt-care	1.1, 2,4, 2.6
Scrt Contact	Scrt-contac	1.7, 2.2

Shared values and vision	**SVV**	
Svv Administration perception of vision 3.3	Svv-adm.pv	1.11, 2.2, 2.4,
Svv Teacher perceptions of vision 2.2	Svv-tch.pv	1.8, 1.9, 2.1,
Svv Desegregation lawsuit	Svv-deseg	1.2, 3.3
Svv Future of CA 3.10	Svv-future	3.3, 3.8, 3.9,
Svv Faculty ownership of strategies for change	Svv-fo.st-ch	2.1, 2.5, 2.6
Svv Buy in - genuine or false buy in	Svv-buyin	1.1, 2.2,3.3

Supportive conditions – Structures	**SCS**	
Scs Separate facilities	Scs-sep.fac	1.1, 2.2, 3.3
Scs Teacher perceptions of school processes	Scs-tp.sch.proc	1.1, 2.6, 2.7
Scs Merging of roles	Scs-aff.v.local	2.4, 2.5, 2.7
Scs Cultural clash – expectations school	Scs-cul.clsh	2.2, 3.3
Scs Stable environment	Scs-env.	2.5, 2.6, 2.7

Collective learning and application	**CLA**	
Cla Designation as Focus school	Cla-Foc.sch	2.4, 2.6, 3.8
Cla Environment stability	Cla-env.	2.5, 2.6, 2.7
Cla Affect on personal perception	Cla-pers.perc	2.4, 2.5
Cla Affect on professional perceptions	Cla-pro.perc	2.4, 2.6
Cla Needs, values, priorities 3.10	Cla-nvp	2.7, 2.8, 3.9,
Cla Growth of programs 3.10	Cla-grw.prog	1.1, 1.11, 2.2,

Adapted from: Miles & Huberman (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook. 2nd ed. Thousand

Appendix E: Sample Transcript

Interview with XX 1/20/2015
Public Library – 4pm – 5:30pm

EM: I will be recording our conversation and transcribing our interview later.

#1: That's awesome.

EM: How… what have been your experiences been as a CA teacher been because it is a school-within-a-school ?

#1: At the beginning or overall?

EM: At the beginning

#1: when we came here I remember uh the first year two months were here I was located in two rooms, with one being located across from the cafeteria, with the 9th grade house located on the second floor. All we had was this floor and the downstairs. And I taught with my door locked because the 9th graders from the CP would try to open my door and interrupt class. They would come by my room and bang on the door, or the air conditioner outside my room and yell, excuse my language F.. the Academy. So the first two months were rough. When we went to the first pep rally we were booed, the first two years we were booed.

Uh... I think the first two years they sat us apart, which didn't help. And we were not welcomed and we just kind of hunkered those 100 kids and the CA staff members.And that was a little disconcerting. But I loved what I was teaching and loved the group kids that I had. Then it kind of morphed, you know, we became we got out bell schedules mixed that was around year five, I think. Um.. and that was disheartening, because we lost our 60 minute classes. and as a.... teacher it was nice to have 60 minutes, especially when you are project based .

EM: So the structure of CA was disrupted because of the changes you...

#1: UhHuh

EM: went through?

#1: Yeah and like things that we started with we lost .And there was about I would say a 2 year period I would go home and cry because something I helped to create was being totally destroyed.

EM: Why did you stay?

#1: sigh... fear yeah

EM: Fear?

#1: yeah fear because I made a commitment to Dr. G, we all did, to stay 5 years and I wanted to honor that. Fear of leaving the kids because I had grown to love then, every single one. where ever they were

from, I don't care where there from. If you're here...If I'm going to be the Honors at HS, I don't care, the kids who are in my class I know are not your traditional high school kids because they picked the class, they picked the focus.

When I got tenure I was so excited I went "Okay I'm good!" Then after tenure everything started to fall ... the wheels began to fall off the bus.

EM: How so?

#1: that's when the bell schedules changed, uh the classes were mixed. There was a push that year to simply put kids in CA classes when those student weren't ready for it. That's when such a disservice to both kids who were here and the kids who were stuck here. That kinda ... there was a push back and that stopped which was good. Fiddling with schedules I think that there's there might be a perception of elitism on the part of CA teachers because they teach CA students. I think I'm lucky in that I don't have to deal with the CP teacher issues that I did in my other public high school experience.

EM: Okay, fair enough. Obviously you have a very strong group here at CA.

#1: Yeah.

EM: Why do you think that is so?

#1: sigh... I think the demographics of our kids might have something to do with it. The fact that we have so many Asians and the Asian culture is so respectful of education that pushes their involvement. It is just part of their culture, and I don't know it is as much a part of as much as it is in the Asian culture.

EM: Obviously enough for sure. What are your concerns about the future of CA?

#1: I'm concerned that the kids who are in district are not as prepared for us as they were in the beginning. No, not now. I don't. I think that we've had enough success for people to know who we are. Just the fact that we are still getting 500 applications a year is insane. That's mind boggling.

EM What is the advantage of CA? Since, you have experienced both a comprehensive high school and CA... what are the advantages of CA?

#1: The buy in I think. I think that the kids know and the parents know that it's not your traditional high school and we're going to expect that you will work your butt off. And um.. I think that's big, that's number one, And I think our diversity is amazing.

Appendix F: Samples of Field Notes

1/14 In the process of collecting signed consent forms and arranging mutually convenient meeting times and places the participants expressed very high interest in telling their story about CA.

1/20 #1 Very receptive. Mentioned that parental support was strong because of the required buy in when their student was accepted to CA.
Was recruited out of a distinguished high school from another county. When hired was asked to make a commitment for 5 years. Bought in because she was promised an honors program that she would write, implement and manage and it would be a separate entity. Her body language showed a great deal anxiety when discussing her perceptions for the future of CA. We have no captain.
Leadership changes had a negative influence. She misses the bottom up approach of her original principal who was responsible for CA. Not too kind in describing the various principals or Superintendents who followed Dr. G's demise. Very agitated when discussing loss of autonomy for curriculum and policies.
    Memo: The most troubling point for this SWS was that the core leadership of the district replaced the entire administration from Superintendent down to principals. New leadership was moving away from the core of CA.
    I was amazed by the extent of nuances that are captured on the recordings as I was transcribing the interview! I found myself humbled by the experience of hearing, seeing and feeling a participant's perspective.
    I must constantly reflect on my own biases to ensure trustworthiness of my role as participant/researcher so I can bracket any biases during the analysis phase. Do not express any agreement or disagreement with participants…just ask, look, and listen.

1/22 #2 impressed with parental involvement and support, though at times is overwhelmed by some of the parents. Would rather be overwhelmed than have little or no parental involvement. Remarked that there is a cultural divide between CP & CA. CA students buy in and work hard to remain in CA. CP often has students who perceive that school is an entitlement without a need to worry about failing out of school.
Mentioned the lack of support of school administration and central administration. Is concerned about mixing CP with CA students in that CP students lacking requisite skills do not make any effort to acquire these skills.
Administration displays a lack of vision for CA and CP. She stays because she is dealing with, primarily, honors students who are eager to succeed. Very calm and thoughtful in her responses. Remained positive about CA's future.
    Memo: If lack of vision is due to a top down management philosophy, then what can be to "right the ship?"
    Reflection: CA literally imports a culture because of the selection process. 60% of CA are high achieving students wanting to have a focus on pre-engineering, technology, etc. The overall result for the whole school is a cultural clash between CA &CP..
1/24 #3 Very honest responses. It was clear that she is very disappointed in CA now compared to the beginning. Remarked that the loss of Dr. G. was an omen of what was to come. The void left by Dr. G. and the pent up disdain for CA by "local" leadership would exact a price for CA.*Memo: It is apparent that Dr. G's influence exceeded the local district. DOE was very receptive in supporting CA…providing millions in seed money to get started.*

1/28 #5 She was well versed in the history of CA's development. She was recruited from the County school personally by Dr.G. Mentioned the funding mechanism and perceived it as a tool for current Admin to keep CA. Discussed lack of vision and leadership. Success of CA was due to sheer volume which has sustained momentum

Reflection: If CA continues to be left alone without key leadership that supports the vision and goals of CA was purposed for, how long can CA continue to be anomaly, i.e. successful, before it decentralizes to just an elective program overall?